

Adiala Jail officials summoned
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court on Monday summoned Adiala Jail officials to respond to a petition filed by PTI founder seeking access to basic facilities and personal communication rights. Pakistani cuisine recipes The petition requests the restoration of newspaper and television access, permission for telephonic contact with his sons, and medical consultations with his personal physician.



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Donald J. Trump returns to power

— sworn in for 2nd term as US president, says in first speech ‘golden age of America’ is starting

WASHINGTON (Reuters): Donald J. Trump pledged to rescue America from what he described as years of betrayal and decline in his inaugural address on Monday, prioritising a crackdown on illegal immigration and portraying himself as a national savior chosen by God. "First, I will declare a national emergency at our southern border," he said. "All illegal entry will be immediately halted and we will begin the process of returning millions and millions of criminal aliens back to the places from which they came."

The speech echoed many of the themes he sounded at his first inauguration in 2017 when he spoke darkly of the "American carnage" of crime and job loss that he said had ravaged the country. Trump, 78, took the oath of office to "preserve, protect and defend" the US Constitution at 12:01 p.m. ET (1701 GMT) inside the US Capitol, administered by Chief Justice John Roberts. His vice president, JD Vance, was sworn in just before him.

Trump will be the first felon to occupy the White House after a New York jury found him guilty of falsifying business records to cover up hush money paid to a porn star. Trump



intends to sign a raft of executive actions in his first hours as president, incoming White House officials said on Monday, including 10 focused on border security and immigration, his top priority.

In addition to declaring an emergency, the president will send armed troops there and resume a policy forcing asylum seekers to wait in Mexico for their US court dates, officials told reporters. He will also seek to end so-called birthright citizenship for US-born children whose parents lack legal

status, a move some legal scholars have said would be unconstitutional.

The inauguration completes a triumphant comeback for a political disruptor who survived two impeachment trials, a felony conviction, two assassination attempts and an indictment for attempting to overturn his 2020 election loss. "The journey to reclaim our republic has not been an easy one, that I can tell you," Trump said, before referring to the assassin's bullet that grazed his ear in July. "I was saved by God to make America

great again."

The ceremony was moved inside the Capitol due to the cold, four years after a mob of Trump supporters breached the building, a symbol of American democracy, in an unsuccessful effort to forestall Trump's loss to Democrat Joe Biden, 82. He said he returned to the presidency confident and optimistic that "we are at the start of a thrilling new era of national success", adding that a "tide of change is sweeping the country and sunlight is pouring over the entire world and America has the chance to seize this opportunity like never before".

Trump said there were "plentiful" challenges facing his administration but they would be "annihilated by this great momentum that the world is now witnessing in the US". Going on the attack, he said: "Our government confronts a crisis of trust. For many years, a radical and corrupt establishment has extracted power and wealth from our citizens while the pillars of our society lay broken and seemingly in complete disrepair."

He criticised the prior government for failing to protect American citizens while "providing sanctuary and protection to dangerous criminals ...

Pakistan welcomes Trump's second term

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's top leadership has congratulated Donald Trump on assuming second term as the 47th president of the United States on Monday and expressed hope that both countries would further cement bilateral ties under the new US administration. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in a post on X, said: "My warmest congratulations to @realDonaldTrump on his assumption of office as the forty-seventh President of the United States of America. I look forward to working with him to strengthen the enduring Pakistan-US partnership." "Over the years, our two great countries have worked together closely to pursue peace and prosperity in the region and beyond for our peoples & we shall continue to do so in the future. My best wishes to President Trump for a successful second term in office," he added.

President Asif Ali Zardari has also congratulated Donald Trump for assuming charge as the 47th President of the United States and expressed well wishes for him, the PPP media cell quoted him as saying.

that have illegally entered our country from all over the world". Trump criticised the US public health system for not delivering in times of disaster and still consuming resources, along with the education system.

"All of this will change starting today." He said his reelection was a "mandate to completely and totally reverse a horrible betrayal ... and to give the people back their faith, wealth and democracy and indeed their freedom". Trump vowed: "From

this moment on, America's decline is over." He said that over the past eight years, "I have been tested and challenged more than any president in our 250-year history, and I've learned a lot along the way." Recounting his Pennsylvania assassination attempt, Trump said: "I was saved by God to make America great again," prompting a standing ovation from those in attendance.

(Continued on Back Page)

Operationalisation of Gwadar Airport a milestone

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday calling it an example of Pakistan-China friendship, said that the operationalization of Gwadar International Airport was a great step forward to strengthen connectivity within Pakistan as well as the entire region.

The prime minister, in a statement, expressed satisfaction as a Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flight landed at the Gwadar Airport, making it the first commercial aircraft to arrive at the facility. He said that with the inauguration of Gwadar Airport, another milestone has been achieved to link Gwadar with Central Asia and East Asia besides providing linkage between the Middle East and Gulf states.

The prime minister said that the opening of Gwadar International Airport would realise the dream of development of Pakistan and the region through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

"Today, we have come closer to fulfilling the joint commitment of the Chinese President Xi Jinping and Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif for the development of Pakistan and the region through the CPEC. By the grace of Allah, CPEC started during the tenure of Nawaz Sharif and is now achieving important milestones under his leadership," he remarked.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the entire nation was grateful to the Chinese leadership and the government as the country always played a key role in the development of Pakistan. He also lauded Defence



Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfaraz Bugti and his government, security personnel and military leadership for their tireless efforts to ensure the completion of the airport.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed the relevant authorities to prepare a comprehensive report for the construction of new modern hotels and other facilities through joint ventures and public-private partnerships to promote tourism in the country.

"With the availability of modern facilities, tourism will be promoted across the country", the prime minister said while chairing a meeting regarding Capital Development Authority (CDA) affairs here. The prime minister appreciated the performance of CDA for successfully organizing the recent international conferences and other events in the federal capital.

"The initiation of international conferences in Pakistan is the certificate of our success on the diplomatic front," he said adding that the confidence of the friendly countries had been restored due to the continued efforts of the incumbent government.

The prime minister emphasized the need to further improve hotels, hospitals,

and other facilities to host international-level conferences and events in the country.

He directed to ensure provision of the international standard facilities for guests coming from friendly countries. He also instructed the CDA to further improve facilities for the residents of the federal capital.

The meeting was informed that the pre-feasibility reports regarding the construction of new hotels and the revival of non-operational government buildings in Islamabad had been prepared. The meeting was attended by Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema, Chairman CDA and other top officials.

Shehbaz says no negligence will be tolerated in preparations of Hajj 2025: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reviewed preparations for Hajj 2025, directing that no negligence in preparations will be tolerated.

"Pilgrims are the guests of Allah Almighty, therefore no negligence will be accepted in terms of services and assistance for them," the prime minister stressed. Chairing a meeting to review preparations for Hajj 2025 here, the prime minister directed to ensure all possible facilities and assistance to the Hujjaj (pilgrims) during the upcoming Hajj.

Govt rejects PTI's demand

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided not to form a judicial commission on the May 9 incident, as the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) demanded, potentially creating a deadlock in negotiations between the government and the PTI.

According to sources, the government's negotiation committee has prepared a response to PTI's demands. The ruling party has indicated it will not establish a judicial commission regarding May 9, following advice from its legal team against doing so.

Sources say the ruling coalition believes a judicial commission cannot be formed on cases already under court proceedings. Judicial commissions are only established for matters not being discussed in court. Challans for the May 9 events have already been presented in courts, there are no political prisoners regarding May 9, said the sources.

The written response reportedly states that details of missing persons and detainees from Nov 26 must be provided. Without names and details, no steps can be taken for their release.

The government committee is expected to submit its written response to the National Assembly speaker within a few days. After receiving the government's reply, the NA speaker will decide on holding the fourth round of talks.

During the third meeting between the government and PTI committees, the PTI submitted written demands. These included forming a judicial commission on the May 9 and Nov 26 incidents, as well as releasing Imran Khan and other party leaders and workers.

Gohar gives govt 7-day ultimatum

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar gave 7-day ultimatum to the government to form judicial commission on May 9 incidents.

"We'll not hold the fourth meeting with the government negotiating team if there is no judicial commission in next seven days," said the PTI chairman. Talking to media outside the Adiala Jail on Monday, Gohar said that PTI is adamant on its earlier demands.

He said that PTI really wants to continue negotiations with the government. Speaking on the occasion, PTI chairman urged PML-N's Senator Irfan Siddiqi not to disrupt the political dialogue between the government and opposition.

Feb 8 to be marked as 'Day of Development & Progress'

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Taro on Monday said the government would complete its maiden year on February 08, 2025 which will be commemorated as the "Day of Development and Progress".

"Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has decided to celebrate the February 8 as the Youm-e-Tameer o Taraqi because this year, we have achieved many milestones including the economic growth," said the minister while talking to the media after witnessing the final match of Media Cricket League which featured 67 matches with participation of various media teams.

He congratulated the Khyber TV on winning the final of the tape ball tournament, and also the Jang Media Group team which was the runner-up of the competition. All the media channels must organize

such tournaments, he said while assuring them of the full support of the Ministry of the Information and Broadcasting in organizing such events which resonated a good message across the country.

There is a need to hold more such tournaments that promotes healthy competition and sportsmanship, he said while reiterating the commitment of the government which believes in the promotion of sports and games. He said the consecutive victories of the Pakistan cricket team is a manifestation of the government's commitment, which has been hunting the remarkable talents by organizing various trial camps.

"We are going to host the International Champions Trophy after a hiatus which will restore the cricket festivity in the country and promote the game in Pakistan," he said, adding the fans would also get the chance to watch the international

players playing on Pakistani grounds.

He appreciated the critical role played by Interior Minister and Pakistan Cricket Board Chairman Mohsin Naqvi in negotiating with the International Cricket Council for hosting the international tournament in Pakistan. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has fully empowered his team in this regard, he added.

All arrangements regarding the Champions Trophy are complete, he said calling it a proud moment for the country to host such a big event. Recently, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was held in Pakistan after 27 years, he said while recalling the government's achievements including its initiatives for the economy that had restored the confidence of international institutions. He said it has been decided to confer awards on high achievers on February 8 for their achievements during this year.

The Frontier Post

Iran's CGS calls on COAS
F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Major General Mohammad Bagheri, Chief of General Staff (CGS) of the Iranian Armed Forces, visited the General Headquarters (GHQ) and called on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), on Monday. During the meeting, both sides discussed matters related to the prevailing regional security environment and bilateral defence cooperation.

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CM approves initiating evening shift in primary schools

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Monday expressed concerns regarding the 46 per cent dropout rate among students who complete their primary education due to the lack of middle schools in the area, therefore, he directed the school education department to introduce afternoon shifts for middle school classes at primary schools, aiming to address this problem.

The meeting was held at CM House, with Minister of Education Syed Sardar Shah, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, PSCM Agha Wasif, Secretary of School Education Zahid Abbasi, Chairman of P&D Najma Shah, Secretary of Finance Fayaz Jatoi, Secretary of Colleges Asif Ikram, and other concerned officers in attendance.

Minister of Education Syed Sardar Shah and Secretary of School Education Zahid Abbasi briefed the Chief Minister and reported that there are 16.89 million children aged five to 16 enrolled in the province, which includes 5.20 million in public

schools and 4.01 million in private schools. Additionally, schools under the Sindh Education Foundation have 93,000 students, non-formal education serves 5.66 million children, and madrasas have 1.03 million students.

During the discussion, the Chief Minister pointed out two major challenges facing the School Education Department, enrolling 7.8 million out-of-school children and reducing the dropout rate, which currently stands at 46 per cent. He emphasised that these two challenges could only be addressed by strengthening both formal and non-formal education streams in terms of access, quality, and governance.

To a question, the CM was informed that there were 36300 primary schools and 4,600 post-primary/middle schools. The significant gap between the number of primary and post-primary schools contributes to the dropout rate.

Shah directed the education department to initiate post-primary schools during the second shift/afternoon shift in primary

schools, with plans to upgrade them to the middle school level.

Murad Shah instructed the education department to convert the Sindh Textbook Board (STBB) into a company, restricting its role to book publication and distribution only. The responsibility for textbook development will be transferred to the Directorate of Curriculum, Assessment, and Research (DCCAR).

The Chief Minister also directed the Minister of Education to reform DCCAR by converting technical positions to market-based roles, bringing in efficient technical human resources. He emphasized that private schools are significant stakeholders, catering to 40% of enrollment, and therefore must be properly regulated, monitored, and evaluated.

Murad Shah approved the creation of inspector positions within the Directorate of Private Schools to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation, including the implementation of a 10% freeship policy in private schools and proper inspections.

Sharjeel swears in newly elected leaders of HUJ

E.P. Report

HYDERABAD: Senior Provincial Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sindh Sharjeel Inam Memon attended the oath-taking ceremony of the newly elected body of the Hyderabad Union of Journalists (HUJ) at the Hyderabad Press Club.

Information Minister Sharjeel Inaam Memon administered the oath to the office bearers, which included President Senior Journalist Hamid Sheikh, General Secretary Ali Hamza Zaidi, Senior Vice president Faiz Khoso, Vice president Altaf koti, Senior joint secretary Muzaffar Rind, Treasure Danish Nafees and 18 members of executive council were included.

In his address, Senior Information Minister Sharjeel Inaam Memon congratulated the newly elected members and expressed his happiness that the journalists of Hyderabad consider him a dear friend. He emphasized the People's Party's commitment to supporting journalists, citing the efforts were taken for journalists in hard time by Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto.

Sharjeel Inaam Memon also highlighted the importance of independent journalism, stating that the



Pakistan People's party always believes in giving independent journalism a chance in the country. He criticized the previous governments duration and previous time of dictatorship for oppressing journalists, pointed out that peoples party were stayed along independent Journalists in past. He noted that the PPP remained a democratic party despite facing many unfair media trials.

In addition to discussing journalism, Sharjeel Inaam Memon touched on various development projects in Sindh. He mentioned that health is a top priority for the PPP government and that peoples of Sindh and journalists can receive free treatment at state-of-the-art hospitals including NICVD and Civil Hospitals. He also announced plans to upgrade the Civil Hospital in Hyderabad and create a mechanism of funding for health insurance for journalists.

Minister Information addressed the issue of encroachments on government transport land in Hyderabad, stating that they will be removed. He also announced that the transport department government of Sindh is wants to launch upcoming of EV buses and EV Taxies project service after it's successful run in Karachi next to Hyderabad and other cities of Sindh.

Regarding the construction of a canal system on River Indus in Cholistan Punjab, Sharjeel memon reiterated the government of Sindh and PPP's clear stance on the issue, emphasizing that there is no scope for robbing Sindh's water. He said that Sindh government wrote a letter to call meeting according to water act of Country. he mentioned Federal Government to soon call a Council of Common Interest (CCI) committee meeting to resolve this issue immediately.

He urged the federal government to work on the Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway urgently, citing its importance for improving traffic and avoiding accidents.

Minister Information concluded by requesting the Prime Minister to prioritize to complete the Projects of federal government either in pending and approved in Sindh. Specifically coding the construction of the Sukkur-Hyderabad M6 Motorway, emphasizing that the federal government's slow pace on projects in Sindh is harming not only the people of Sindh but also the entire economy of Pakistan.

The HUJ Oath taking ceremony were attended by Divisional Commissioner Hyderabad Bilal Ahmed Memon, Divisional Director Information Department Irshad Ali Chandio, Deputy Commissioner Hyderabad Zain-ul-Abdin Memon, SSP Hyderabad Dr. Farukh Ali Lanjhar and other officers.

Prosecutor general takes notice of brutal murder

LAHORE (APP): In a swift response to a tragic domestic incident, Prosecutor General of Punjab, Syed Farhad Ali Shah, on Monday took notice of an alarming case in Harappa, Sahiwal, where a father-in-law and his two daughters set fire on his daughter-in-law, Umme Kalsoom, following a minor domestic dispute.

The prosecutor general summoned the investigative officer and sought a progress review of the investigation under the Punjab Criminal

Prosecution Service Act, Section 3(10)(C).

During a briefing, the investigating officer informed the prosecutor general that the accused had been arrested and sent to judicial lock-up.

However, the prosecutor general raised concerns over the lack of recovery during the physical remand and the failure to investigate the case under the Anti-Rape Act of 2021, which mandates the investigation of such offenses under a Grade 17 police

officer. The prosecutor general also questioned the reason behind not pursuing the case based on legal merit.

In response, the investigative officer was unable to provide a satisfactory explanation for the shortcomings in the investigation.

Expressing dissatisfaction with the investigation's handling, Syed Farhad Ali Shah issued a formal memorandum to the District Police Officer (DPO) Sahiwal, instructing that the case be transferred to the SSOI Unit for further investigation under the supervision of a senior officer. He also called for an explanation regarding the non-implementation of the Anti-Rape Act and related regulations in this case.

Emphasizing the importance of justice, the prosecutor general reiterated that under the leadership of Punjab's Chief Minister, Maryam Nawaz, the protection of citizens' lives and property, along with the prompt delivery of justice, remains the government's top priorities.

Matric exam format changed, Islamic and PS marks increased

LAHORE (APP): In new academic year 2025, Islamic and Pak Studies' marks have been increased to 100 as earlier the both subjects were of 50 marks each.

In this connection, Punjab Text Book Board (PTBB) has published the new syllabus based textbooks of Islamic and Pakistan Studies. PTBB official sources told APP that a 100-mark exam of Islamic Studies will be taken in the ninth grade, while a 100-mark exam of Pakistan Studies will be taken in matriculation.

The Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board has sent a letter to all schools of the province, they said, adding all education boards

will take 100-mark exams for both subjects. The process of printing books for both subjects has also been started according to the new curriculum, they said.

Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) examination department sources here confirmed the decision about these two subjects, adding that now students in Punjab will be able to choice matriculate in 3 new groups.

In this connection the School Education Department (SED) has said that three more groups have been added, including with Matric Science and Matric Arts. Likewise, Health Sciences, Agriculture-Science and

Fashion Designing groups have also been offered for matriculation students.

To a query they said that students will be able to choose a group from the 9th class to the academic session of 2025. The School Education Department, in this connection has also released the subject list of the new groups.

Data was sought from the CEO and DEO regarding the selection of students from schools. The books of the new groups will be printed according to the number of children. The sources said that on the instructions of the Chief Minister of Punjab, various subject courses have been started for matriculation.

Call to utilize local resources to lessen debt burden

KARACHI (PPI): Expressing grave concern over rising loans of the country, Pasban Democratic Party (PDP) Chairman Altaf Shakoor here Monday said that the nation has to take efforts to break free from the debt trap as reports suggest that per person loan is now Rs 320000.

According to a statement

by PDP, he said every Pakistani is indebted due to the country's high national debt. Pakistan's debt has been increasing for years, and the average citizen owes a significant amount. As of September 2024, Pakistan's total debt was PKR 71.24 trillion, which is 67.2% of the country's GDP. This includes domes-

tic debt of PKR 47.16 trillion and external debt of PKR 33.062 trillion.

He said in June 2023, Pakistan's domestic debt was PKR 38,810 billion. However, in September 2024, our external debt was USD 133.5 billion. He said in June 2023, Pakistan's debt-to-GDP ratio was 74.8%. However, in

**OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT
GOVERNMENT MATERNITY HOSPITAL PESHAWAR**

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed bids are invited on single stage one envelop for the purchase of items given below at Medical Superintendent Government Maternity Hospital Peshawar for the year 2024-25 from the manufacturer, distributors and registered firm, sales tax, income tax, along with KPRA registration. All bids should reach to the office of the undersigned on or before 10-02-2025 at 11:00 AM through courier service or registry which will be opened on the same day at 01:00 PM in presence of the representatives of the firms by the purchase committee under the Chairmanship of the Medical Superintendent government Maternity Hospital Peshawar.

S.NO.	NAME OF ITEM	CALL DEPOSIT (CDR)
1.	Medical Gas (Oxygen Gas)	30000/-
2.	Laboratory Items / Reagents, Lab Chemical	50000/-
3.	Contingency	50000/-
4.	Repair of M & E / furniture	30000/-
5.	Stationery items	20000/-
6.	POL	50000/-

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

01. Procurement would be carried out through KPRA Rules 2014.

02. Preference will be given to the local firm/supplier.

03. The list of items, specifications and other terms and conditions can be obtained from the office of Medical Superintendent Government Maternity Hospital Peshawar, during office hours, upon written request.

04. Firms/Suppliers must have valid income tax, Sales Tax and KPRA certificate/Registration.

05. Bidders must provide their best and final unit prices as per specification. No negotiations will be allowed during the process.

06. The bid must be valid for 60-days after its submission.

07. Bids/quotation having alternate rates shall be rejected.

08. Envelope of Bid received without specification shall be rejected.

09. Rates should be valid till 30-06-2025.

10. Bid documents must be computerized along with the stamp and signature of the authorized person of the firm and those with hand written, open tag, non-bidding, loose paper and doubtful (misprinting, overwriting and manipulation) will not be accepted.

11. The successful bidder shall sign an agreement deed with the Medical Superintendent.

12. Address name of contact person and Phone/Cell Numbers should be clearly mentioned on the envelope.

13. Envelopes must be marked Confidential clearly.

14. The Competent Authority has the right to accept or reject any or all bids as per KPRA Rules.

15. Call deposit must be attached by the name of Medical Superintendent Government Maternity Hospital, Peshawar.

16. In case of missing any of the above mentioned and other prescribed terms and condition the bid should be rejected.

17. The purchasing committee has the right to cancel or accept all or any quotation / bid at any time due to any reason to be explained.

Medical Superintendent

Government Maternity Hospital Peshawar

INF(P) 162/25

Lanjar orders investigation into attack on Domki

KARACHI (PPI): Sindh Home Minister Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar, while speaking to the media at the Sindh Assembly building premises, strongly condemned the attack on former MPA Mir Ghalib Domki and ordered an investigation into the incident.

According to a statement issued from Sindh Home Ministry, he stated: "Miscreants are present everywhere, but the police will achieve success soon." One bandit involved in the attack on Domki had been killed while the police were taking steps to arrest others involved in this incident.

Lanjar clarified that the incident was not a tribal conflict, so such impression should not be created. He informed that Mir Abid Jatoi had gone for meeting Mir Ghalib Domki following the incident.

The Interior Minister emphasized the government's clear policy on law and order, stating that there will be no compromise on it. The home minister said mentioned that the miscreants are trying to exert pressure, but they will fail.



**OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
PESHAWAR INSTITUTE OF CARDIOLOGY
MTI - PESHAWAR**

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Ref:01/2025

Applications are invited for the following vacancy at PIC-MTI,Peshawar purely on Contract basis as per the following conditions:

S. NO.	NOMENCLATURE OF POST	GENDER	AGE (YRS)	QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE
1.	Medical Director	Male/ Female	N/A	Qualification and Experience: Candidates will have a Medical Degree with a record of excellence in clinical care, and have at least three years experience in leading a major hospital clinical unit in any clinical discipline. Record of excellent clinical care and administration in Cardiology or Cardiac Surgery would be an advantage. Responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensuring clinical excellence in all aspects of hospital function.Developing new clinical programs.Developing a patient friendly environment.Developing an annual clinical budget.The Medical Director will report to the Board of Governors.

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

HOW TO APPLY:

1. Job applications for the above positions should be submitted online by creating profile on PIC-MTI online job portal i.e. <https://careers.pic.edu.pk>. Applicant is required to register and update his/her profile along with all details i.e. personal information, qualification and experience etc.

2. After completion of the creating profile on Job Portal, the candidate is required to apply for the desired position available on the Portal. Once the Job application is complete, a filled Job Application Form will be sent to the applicant via registered email.

3. Applications accompanied with complete Job Application Form (received from Job Portal) along with Academic Credentials, Qualification, Experience, and CNIC photocopy duly attested with respective original bank deposit slip/bank draft must be received at below address through registered courier service, in the name of "Hospital Director, Peshawar Institute of Cardiology MTI".
Receipt Account No. 0083-0000-0165-1008 Bank of Khyber, Phase 5, Hayatabad Branch, Peshawar (as processing fee, non-refundable) as per the fee schedule given below:

PAYMENT SCHEDULE	
Description	Payment
Sr. 01	Rs 1000/-

4. Candidates are advised to complete the online job application form with full diligence and concentration and verify all details before applying for job.

5. The service of the candidates will be governed under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Medical and Teaching Institution Reforms Act, 2015 including its amendments and Regulations of the institution.

6. Candidates should be eligible in all respects including qualification (Degree and Diploma), experience (only post-qualification experience will be considered which is duly issued by either the Administration / Human Resources or Establishment department of the institution concerned with proper references and date of issuance), age (calculated as on last day of the advertisement) before the closing date of the advertisement.

7. The following applications will be subject to disqualification and will not be entertained:

a) Incomplete applications i.e. Missing Job Application Form, Missing or irregular experience certificates as mentioned in serial 3, Missing Diploma or Degree as per requirement/criteria.

b) Late submission i.e. applications received after the due date.

c) Application received without processing fee shall not be entertained.

d) Candidates will be disqualified if found of any perjury in documentation/credentials at any stage of the process or employment.

e) Attempts to influence any member of the recruiting committees.

f) Attempts to obtain support for his / her candidature by improper means.

g) Emails or by-hand submissions will not be entertained.

h) For a qualification to be valid, a degree is a must, the mere submission of a marks sheet/ Transcript/ DM/C/ course completion certificate will lead to applications deemed incomplete and will, therefore, be rejected.

8. An application received after the closing time and date shall stand automatically rejected.

9. Candidates already in government service should apply through the proper channel, along with NOC from the concerned organization, clearly stating the length of service and other particulars. In case of appointment, the candidate will become a full-time, institutional employee and will have to resign from his/her existing employment with any-other public/private entity national or foreign, including, but not limited to civil services of Pakistan.

10. Only shortlisted candidates will be called for interviews.

11. Candidates claiming age relaxation shall complete all the requirements and due process at the time of applying for the job.

12. The decision of the competent authority shall stand final.

13. No TA/DA will be admissible for the Test/Interview.

14. The institution reserves the right to decrease/increase the positions or revoke the hiring process at any stage without assigning any reason.

15. The last day of applying for the above advertisement is 05-02-2025.
PIC-MTI is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender and culture. We further encourage individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups, and persons with disabilities to apply.

SECRETARY - BOARD OF GOVERNORS

PESHAWAR INSTITUTE OF CARDIOLOGY
MEDICAL & TEACHING INSTITUTION, PESHAWAR
Email ID: prerecruitment@pic.edu.pk
Plot No.5-A, Sector B-3, Phase-V, Hayatabad Peshawar - Pakistan

INF(P)236/25



PESHAWAR: Minister for Higher Education, Meena Khan Afridi, chaired a review meeting of Islamia College University Peshawar regarding the financial sustainability of the university.

Transgenders deserves treatment with dignity: PHC observes

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Justice Sahibzada Asadullah of Peshawar High Court (PHC) observed that transgender individuals deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. He emphasized that transgender people are an integral part of society and deserve equal treatment under the law, on Monday.

The court was hearing a case involving the alleged uploading of a nude video of a transgender named Ayan Ali alias Dolphin. The accused Ijaz Baghi was arrested by the police and

denied bail by a lower court. The prosecution alleged that Ijaz had committed a serious offense by uploading the video, which went viral on social media. Ijaz's actions had caused harm to the transgender community, the prosecution stated.

After hearing the arguments, the court directed the investigation officer to present the record on the next hearing, which has been adjourned until January 24.

Court grants status quo against Islamia shops auction at Khyber bazaar

Civil Judge Peshawar Zahid Ullah has granted status quo against the auction of shops in the Khyber Bazaar owned by Islamia College Peshawar. The judge has also sought a response from the college administration.

The court was hearing petitions filed by shopkeepers who are existing tenants of the college's property in Khyber Bazaar. The counsel Sattar Khan advocate informed the court that the petitioners have been renting around 80 shops in the area for a long time. However, the college

administration has scheduled a new auction for January 22.

The petitioners requested the court to stay the auction of their shops, pending a decision on their petitions. The court granted their request, staying the auction of the petitioners' two shops until the next hearing.

The court allowed the auction of other shops to proceed but stayed the auction of the petitioners' shops. The judge sought a response from the Islamia College administration and adjourned the hearing until January 30.

KP Health Department hosts monthly DHO conference

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In a bid to enhance transparency and improve efficiency, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Health Department to hold its monthly District Health Officers (DHO) Conference today under the chairmanship of Advisor to the Chief Minister for Health, Ihtesham Ali. The conference to be attended by Secretary Health Mr. Adeel Shah, Director General Health Dr. Muhammad Saleem, Additional Directors General (ADGs), Regional Directors General (RDGs), all DHOs, and Program Directors.

The primary objective of the conference is to conduct a comprehensive review of the performance of all DHOs across the province. In his statement, Advisor to the CM for Health Ihtesham Ali emphasized the department's commitment to accountability and results-driven governance. He stated,

"Until now, past performance has been noted, but moving forward, any officer demonstrating poor performance will face strict disciplinary action."

During the conference, the performance of DHOs to be evaluated based on key metrics, including vac-

ination coverage, medicine supply, outpatient department (OPD) services, functionality of medical equipment, staff performance, and surprise visits conducted in their respective districts. Highlighting the need for reform, Ihtesham Ali remarked, "Today, it will become clear who is truly committed to their responsibilities and who is holding their position due to political influence. Poor performance will no longer be tolerated."

The advisor further stressed that without significant improvements in primary healthcare, the overall health system cannot

not be effectively transformed. He urged all officers to dedicate themselves to improving their performance, failing which decisive action would be taken against them.

This conference will mark a crucial step toward the department's ongoing reform initiatives aimed at delivering better healthcare services to the public. Ihtesham Ali reiterated the government's resolve to ensure transparency and performance-based accountability in the health sector, ensuring that inefficiency is rooted out and the best possible healthcare facilities are provided to the citizens.

Meeting discusses ways to improve financial crisis of Islamia College University

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Higher Education, Meena Khan Afridi, chaired a review meeting of Islamia College University Peshawar regarding the financial sustainability of the university on Monday.

The meeting focused on measures taken to come out of the Islamia College University from its current financial crisis and to make it financially sustainable. The meeting was attended by Vice-Chancellor, Registrar and other concerned officials of the university while relevant officials from the Higher Education Department also present on the occasion.

The provincial minister was briefed on the business models and revenue-generation plans of Islamia College University. The briefing included discussions on the revenue that could be generated by leasing out shops in Khyber Bazaar and Hari Chand, Charsadda, at market rates.

Furthermore, strategies to increase the university's revenue by June 2025 were thoroughly discussed. It was said in the briefing that the university has not hired any staff over the

past five years and has fired 238 contractual staff.

The minister was also briefed on various business models aimed at revenue generation. One of the strategies discussed was the potential use of the Islamia College building, it is said that the buildings of Islamia College University are available in the evening, new evening programs will be started to utilize these buildings which could help boost revenue. Other suggestions for increasing revenue were also explored in detail.

Provincial Minister for Higher Education appreci-

ated the efforts of the Islamia College University Vice-Chancellor and his team for their initiatives of the university financial sustainability and assured his full support in this regard and expressed confidence that universities facing financial crises would soon achieve financial stability.

The minister further directed the Vice-Chancellors of financially struggling universities to present business models and adopt short-term and long-term strategies. He expressed hope that these efforts would soon bring positive results.

Police officer sentenced for misuse of authority

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Judicial Magistrate Peshawar, Muhammad Khalil Khan convicted former Additional Station House Officer (SHO) Mithra police station Murtaza Ali for one-year imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs. 50,000 for misuse of authority.

The police officer was arrested from the courtroom and transferred to jail, on Monday.

According to the petition, Murtaza Ali, while serving as Additional SHO at Mithra police station, raided the house of the petitioner, Nisar, on October 24, 2019, along with other police personnel, without a warrant. He allegedly broke into the house, seized cash and arms, and arrested two brothers, Israr and Farooq, who were detained for four days.

The petitioner filed a complaint against the police officer under Section 200 of the Pakistan Penal Code, which led to an inquiry and subsequent court proceedings.

The court found the police officer guilty of misuse of authority and sentenced him to imprisonment and a fine.

The court's verdict stated that Murtaza Ali would serve one year imprisonment and pay a fine of Rs. 50,000. In case of non-payment of the fine, he would have to serve an additional month in jail.

The police officer was arrested from the courtroom and transferred to jail to serve his sentence.

Old industries also be granted subsidy: Ayub Zakori

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: President Industrialists Association Peshawar (IAP) Ayub Khan Zakori urged the government to provide subsidy on electricity and gas to old industries just like the new economic zones in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He expressed this during a press conference at the IAP office along with his cabinet members. He said that the increasing prices of electricity and gas had significantly raised the production cost, pushing the old industries to the brink of closure and threatening the livelihoods of thousands of workers.

He emphasized that the launching of new economic zones and provision of incentives to them was a good initiative, but old industries should also be included in these incentives to prevent their closure and keep the economy circle running.

Ayub Zakori stressed that thousands of people were employed in old industries, but due to rising electricity and gas prices, it was impossible to operate the factories properly and therefore, the federal and provincial governments should play their due role in this regard.

SAPHO Secretary General meets Swati



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Dr. Nizam Muhammad Darwesh, Secretary General of the South Association Public Health Organization (SAPHO), met with the Speaker of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Mr. Babar Saleem Swati, in the Speaker's Chamber. MPA Akbar Ayub Khan, Hamid ur Rehman, and the Special Secretary of the KP Assembly, Syed Waqar Shah, were also present at the meeting.

During the discussion, Dr. Nizam expressed his commitment to contributing to Pakistan, particularly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in the field of public health.

He emphasized the importance of enhancing the healthcare system through public-private partnerships and shared his extensive experience and knowledge of the latest medical advancements with the aim

of collaborating with Pakistani medical specialists to strengthen the sector.

Speaker KP Assembly, Mr. Babar Saleem Swati, appreciated Dr. Nizam's dedication and vision. He stated that initiatives like public-private partnerships play a key role in strengthening the public health system and providing quality healthcare services to the people. The Speaker also expressed keen interest in formalizing this collaboration by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between SAPHO and the KP Assembly.

The proposed MoU will focus on capacity-building programs and training seminars specifically for the KP Assembly's Standing Committee on Health. Additionally, it will provide opportunities for training healthcare professionals and promoting knowledge-sharing both within

Pakistan and internationally. Speaker Swati assured full support from the Assembly forum for these initiatives and committed to ensuring smooth coordination between SAPHO and the KP Health Department for effective collaboration.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Speaker KP Assembly, Mr. Babar Saleem Swati, presented a commemorative shield of the KP Assembly to Dr. Nizam Muhammad Darwesh as a token of appreciation. Furthermore, the Assembly Protocol Wing arranged a guided tour for Dr. Nizam and his delegation to significant locations within the KP Assembly, including the Assembly Hall.

This meeting represents a significant step towards improving public healthcare in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and fostering collaborative efforts for a healthier future.

Workshop on traffic issues in Peshawar Steps to be taken to resolve traffic issues: Riaz

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Under the directives of the provincial government, the District Administration Peshawar organized a significant workshop on the topic "Traffic Issues in Peshawar: Causes and Solutions". The workshop was held in collaboration with the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Peshawar, and was attended by public representatives, government officials, media personnel, the business community, minority representatives, lawyers, transport union members, students, and individuals from various walks of life.

Commissioner Peshawar Division Riaz Khan Mehsud, Deputy Commissioner Peshawar Sarmad Salim Akram, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Rao Hashim Azim, Additional Assistant Commissioner Amir Shehzad, and other officials actively participated in the workshop, engaging in

detailed discussions about traffic issues and their potential solutions.

Participants highlighted that the increasing traffic problems are negatively impacting urban life and emphasized the need for joint collaboration among all stakeholders to address these challenges. They called for the adoption of a comprehensive strategy to reform the traffic system. The workshop stressed the importance of practical measures and public involvement to resolve traffic issues. Suggestions included road expansions, the implementation of modern traffic management systems, and public awareness campaigns.

Experts and intellectuals shed light on the growing traffic problems and presented detailed recommendations regarding their causes and solutions. They stated that ensuring smooth traffic flow in major cities like Peshawar requires improvements in infrastructure, enhancements to public transportation systems, and the elimination of illegal

parking. Participants also emphasized the construction of underpasses at key locations, the establishment of appropriate U-turns, the provision of designated spaces for street vendors, modernization of public transport facilities, the elimination of illegal encroachments along roadsides, and the organization of public awareness campaigns.

The participants appreciated the efforts of the District Administration Peshawar, stating that this workshop not only helped identify problems but also paved the way for practical solutions in the future.

At the conclusion of the workshop, Commissioner Peshawar Division Riaz Khan Mehsud and Deputy Commissioner Peshawar expressed their commitment to making every possible effort to resolve traffic issues in Peshawar. They thanked the participants for their valuable contributions and stated that similar initiatives would be encouraged in the future to transform Peshawar into a model city.

CTO reviews security of traffic line



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Traffic Officer Haroon

Rashid Khan made a surprise visit to the Traffic Police Line to review the security situation and

other arrangements.

During the visit, he inspected the daily diary, records, personnel state-

ments, dispatches, uniform warehouse, Traffic Control Room, and various sections.

CTO Haroon Rashid Khan directed the traffic officers to provide all possible facilities, improve the security arrangements, and maintain cleanliness at the Traffic Line. He instructed the traffic officers and clerical staff to update records in a timely manner and maintain cleanliness.

He emphasized that the security of the Traffic Line would not be compromised. He stated that the department is committed to ensuring the smooth flow of traffic in the city and providing facilities and protection to officers and personnel.



PESHAWAR: Town 1 officials load hotel cylinders from a hostel into a truck during an encroachment operation at Haji Camp near Children's Hospital in Peshawar. — APP Photo



In brief

Kifayat named as Senator for four varsities F.P. Report

BANNU: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, appointed prominent constitutional and legal expert Kifayatullah Khan Azad, the founder of the National Democratic Movement, for four government universities at the same time, while the selection board for Bannu University of Science and Technology Bannu, on Monday. Previously, the governor has also appointed a member of the technical committee in the committee consisting of leaders of political parties after the All-Parties Conference, according to the details of the National Democratic Party. The main founder of the movement, Farz Bannu Kifayatullah Khan, a constitutional and legal expert, has been nominated as a senate member for Khushkhal Khan Khattak University Kirk, Lucky Marwat University, Gomel University Dera Ismail Khan, while his nomination as a member of the selection board of the University of Science and Technology Bannu. Meanwhile, An attack on Tanga FC check post near Utmaizai police station of Bannu, reports of minor injuries to FC officials, while the retaliatory action of the forces repulsed the attack, there were reports that the attackers were killed.

AWP hold protest F.P. Report

SHAHADKOT: Awami Workers Party (AWP) held protest rally against the auction of Sindh's lands, in Nasirabad city of Qamber Shahdadkot district, which turned into sit-in at the bypass road passing through various roads of the city, in which a large number of women also participated. Addressing the sit-in, Awami Workers Party General Secretary Comrade Sengar Noonari, District General Secretary Mansoor Hallaj and others said that the destruction of Sindh's economy by drawing a canal from the Indus River is a sword sharper than a sword. They said that grabbing land through corporate farming is an anti-people decision of the rulers, which has been rejected by all, while the sale of lands should be stopped and amendments should not be made to the IRSA Act. In addition to the Awami Workers Party, a large number of citizens from the Nari Jamhuri Mahaz, the People's Party (Shaheed Bhutto), the JSF (Arisar GROUP) and the Labor Union participated in this sit-in. They He warned the Sindh government to stop selling Sindh's lands at cheap prices, otherwise the scope of protests will be expanded throughout Sindh.

Cold weather in Balochistan

QUETTA (INP): Mercury further dropped after rainfall and snowfall at mountains in various parts of Balochistan as Met Office forecast rainfall in Quetta and other areas on Monday. The Met Office has forecast more rainfall and snowfall with strong winds in Quetta, Mastung, Ziarat, Pishin and other areas of Balochistan. The cold weather spell will be continued in Karachi as minimum temperature last night recorded at 11 Celsius. According to a weather advisory, weather conditions will likely turn cold to very cold and dry in Karachi and other parts of the province under the influence of a westerly wave over the next few days.



QUETTA: Chief Justice, Balochistan High Court, Justice Hashim Kakar administering oath to newly appointed judges, Justice Ayub Tareen and Justice Najmuddin Mengal.

Tribal women reluctant to lodge FIR

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: In 2024 out of 214 First Information Reports (FIRs) only two have been filed by the local women posing lack of awareness among the tribal womenfolk to seek justice against injustice done to them and to win their basic rights, women's rights activists said.

As per details, provided by the senior police official in the police station, Landi Kotal stated that in the last year only two local female residents had lodged FIRs in the police station. In the first one, a local woman of Neki Khel, a sub-tribe of Zakha Khel, had filed an FIR against domestic violence.

In the same way another female tribal had lodged an FIR, seeking justice for her murderer husband. The police official added that due to man dominated society, the women are reluctant to appear in person in front of police officials in the police station.

On behalf of them, their male relatives used to file their complaints, he maintained. An additional Station House Officer (female) Miss Mehak Pervaiz Maseeh was asked to comment on the matter and she said that in tribal society, women hesitate to come to the police station.

In short of female staff in the police station, local women did not want to share their miseries with stranger male police personnel but despite the fact 22 various types of women complaints had been filed last year. She added that if a separate office and female staff is provided to the Additional female additional SHO, women folk will be encouraged to

approach her office for seeking justice.

A local female journalist, Jamaima Afridi said that unfamiliarity with the prevailing justice system and lack of awareness among the tribal women were the main reasons that compels the local female to file complaints against wrong done to them. A women's disk should be set up in police stations to facilitate the female applicants besides the womenfolk should be aware of the mechanism and guidance should be placed to make possible for them to get speedy justice, she suggested.

She maintained that lodging complaint procedure for the tribal women should be simple and easy to avoid their repeated visit to the police station and men should be conscious of the legal consequences of the injustice he finds involved against women. When Maryum Bibi, head of Khwendo Kor, (female rights activist organization) was contacted on the matter she said that besides lack of basic facilities in the merged tribal region, no opportunities were existing for the womenfolk to get education, therefore they were ignorant of their rights.

Although the placed atmosphere was unsupportive, organizations like the women rights organization human rights department and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ombudsman were available to shield the women from any offense and to ensure their basic rights. As per available information the overall literacy rate of district Khyber is 49.4% while female education rate is 17%. In census reports, a total of tehsil Landi Kotal population is 312313, comprising male population is 163167 and female inhabitants are 149145.

Talash elders demand resolution to issues

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Local political and social activists of the Talash area on Monday have demanded the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to declare the area a separate tehsil and release adequate funds for the ongoing projects.

The demand was made during a multi-parties conference arranged by the Jamiat Ulema Islam Fazl at Talash with Qazi Rohullah in the chair. Representatives of different political parties and social organizations attended the event.

The participants expressed grave concern over the suspension of work on ongoing development projects, and shifting of some approved projects to other areas. The APC decided to form a grand jirga to meet the KP chief minister Ali Amin Gandapur for a lasting solution to the problems faced by local residents. The participants also expressed

concerns over the long delay in the construction of the Kalpani Talash bypass and establishment of post-graduate colleges for boys and girls in Talash valley.

The APC was addressed by the JUI-F local chief Mufti Bakht Sardar, KP former finance minister Muzaffar Syed Advocate, JUI-F provincial coordinator Qazi Ayazuddin, dispute resolution council district chairman Syed Hassan Advocate, former Tehsil Nazim of Jamaat-e-Islami Riaz Muhammad Advocate, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf district vice president Haji Muhammad Ali, President of Talash Qaumi Islahi Jirga Malik Muhammad Ibrahim, PPP's tehsil president Malik Barkat Khan, Anjuman Tajiran Talash president Dr Noor Muhammad, Talash Youth Jirga president Muhammad Raziq, social activist Fazl Wahab Swati, ANP tehsil president Haji Nadir Khan, former UC nazim Hakeem Khan and former Chairman

Haji Sher Muhammad.

The speakers demanded the federal government to establish a separate Nadra office for the area and provide the residents with gas connections. They said the construction of the Gopulum irrigation channel had been a long-standing demand of local farmers but the project was not approved by successive governments over the years.

Some of the speakers also raised fingers on performance of local hospitals, poor sanitation, imbalance in prices of consumer goods, routine traffic jams, roadsides' encroachments, and lack of a slaughterhouse in Talash. It was decided in the declaration that joint efforts would be made to resolve the public issues, while a 22-member Jirga would soon meet the chief minister Ali Amin Gandapur and elected members of the national and provincial assemblies to inform them about the issues faced by the local public.

Two women among 14 injured in Darra accident

F.P. Report

KOHAT: At least 14 people including two women were injured when a truck collided with a passenger coach in Kohat on Monday. Police said the accident took place near Matni Raheemabad, near Darra Adam Khail where a truck and a passen-

ger coach collided.

Upon receiving information, Rescue 1122 dispatched an ambulance and a rescue vehicle to the site. The rescue team provided immediate medical assistance to the injured and transported them to Lady Reading Hospital.

The injured include a 40 and 35-year-old women, 23-

year-old Shoaib, 50-year-old Ameen Jan, 40-year-old Raza Ali Khan, 38-year-old Noor Ali Khan, 24-year-old Khayam, 25-year-old Salman, 22-year-old Waheed, 31-year-old Fareed, and 40-year-old Sakhi Rehman. Three unidentified individuals were also among the injured.

Hamza Aamir

I lived, live& want to live in Peshawar..... only those who live & lived in their native city would understand this feeling. I often reflect on the state of our city and its potential for improvement. One fine morning, I embarked on a journey from Pakistan to Europe, flying out of Islamabad International Airport.

The trip from Peshawar to Islamabad, however, felt more exhausting than the eight-hour flight itself. Upon landing at Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris, I was struck by the orderly traffic and designated parking areas for taxis and private vehicles receiving travelers. It raised a pressing question in my mind: why is Pakistan not like this?

The stark contrast between Europe and Pakistan's traffic systems seems rooted in educa-

tion. Europe's higher literacy rate contributes to a populace that understands and respects traffic rules. In Pakistan, we often attribute such behavior to the fact that they are "Angrez Hai" or a "free and civilized nation." My entire Euro trip was stress-free when it came to commuting, with no concerns about chaotic roads or reckless driving.

On my return journey, we had a layover in Dubai. Walking out of Dubai International Airport, I observed an even more systematic traffic flow. What struck me most was that the majority of drivers in Dubai were Pakistanis and Pakhtun. These very people, who often disregard traffic rules back home, were strictly adhering to them abroad. This paradox posed an even more alarming question: why do these individuals follow rules in Dubai but not in Pakistan?

After much contemplation, I

A few good men

realized that our country lacks effective enforcement. Wrongdoers often escape penalties and even seem to benefit from shortcuts, fostering a culture where following rules is seen as naivety. As the saying goes, "Pakistan may theek banda hi ghalat hai" (In Pakistan, the honest person is considered wrong). Most drivers in Pakistan have never been educated about traffic regulations. Without proper education and awareness, how can we expect them to do the right thing?

Sundays at home often involve deep conversations with my father. One recurring question dominates our discussions: "How can we fix this country?" We concluded that addressing traffic issues could resolve half of Pakistan's problems. Fixing

traffic is not just about smoother commutes; it's about transforming the national mindset—eliminating the inclination to take shortcuts and fostering a culture of doing things the right way.

I decided to start with myself, committing to always drive by the book. Next, I began educating drivers around me. Witnessing them adopt safer driving practices and avoid shortcuts gave me hope. It became clear that people are willing to change; they simply need guidance. I observed that when drivers received even basic education about traffic rules, they felt a sense of pride and societal respect for their improved behavior. Sometimes, it feels like "law is above the law," especially when police vehicles travel the wrong way

CMT graduates take to streets for paid internship

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Students of CMT College, affiliated with Bacha Khan Medical College in Mardan, took to the streets to protest against the lack of paid internships. The protest took place in front of the college principal's office, with students demanding immediate provision of paid internships.

The protesters argued that nursing students at the college are being provided paid internships, while students from CMT College, despite having completed a four-year BS degree, are being denied this opportunity. The demonstrators deemed this disparity as unfair and unjust. The protesters urged that the issue be raised in the upcoming Board of Governors meeting, requesting the approval of paid internships for CMT College students. They expressed confidence that the board members would approve their demand.

The protestors carried placards with slogans demanding equal opportunities. They emphasized that CMT College is a government institution, and the students have paid high fees for their education. Despite completing their degrees, they have not been provided with any paid internship opportunities.

During the protest, a delegation of students met with Dr. Amjad Ali, Dean of Bacha Khan Medical College, who assured them of his full cooperation. Dr. Amjad confirmed that he would raise the issue in the upcoming Board of Governors meeting and would advocate for the students' demands.



Speakers at the protest highlighted that both the nursing college and CMT College operate under Bacha Khan Medical College. While nursing students are receiving paid internships, CMT students are being left out, which the protesters described as an injustice. They urged the authorities to extend the same paid internship opportunities to CMT College graduates.

Sajjad Khan, President of the Paramedical Association, criticized the government and educational authorities for neglecting CMT College students. He argued that after four years of education, denying paid internships is a grave injustice. He emphasized that if the government and institutions fulfill their responsibilities, CMT College graduates would be able to contribute better to society. The students demanded an immediate solution and called for the provision of paid internships to alleviate the mental distress they are currently facing.

Zakat committee administered oath: Member National Assembly (MNA) Mujahid Khan said that payment of Zakat is the purification of wealth. The wealthy class of the country should pay Zakat regularly from their wealth so that even the poor

sections of the society can easily lead a better life.

He expressed these views while addressing the oath-taking ceremony of Malik Jahanzeb, Chairman of District Ushr and Zakat Committee and other officials. On this occasion, Imtiaz Khan, Provincial Chairman of Ushr and Zakat Committee administered the oath of office to the newly elected chairman and members.

MNA Mujahid Khan said that the provincial government of Tehreek-e-Insaf is trying to provide maximum facilities to the poor. The schemes which were started by Imran Khan as the Prime Minister for the poor have been closed by the current federal government, due to which the poor life has become miserable and tighter.

Anti-encroachment operation held: Assistant Commissioner Katlang conducted a thorough anti-encroachment operation in the bazar during which illegally kept goods were confiscated from several shopkeepers. Illegal barriers and hurdles in front of the shops were also removed during the operation. AC Sahar Anwar while talking to journalists of Press Club Katlang said that encroachment in the markets will not be tolerated in any case as it causes hurdles to the public.

Arrangements at TDPs camp for victims reviewed

F.P. Report

HANGU: Commissioner along with deputy inspector general Kohat Region, Deputy Commissioner Hangu, District Police Officer and Additional Deputy Commissioner paid a detailed visit to the Camp set-up for the Temporary Displaced Persons (TDPs) of Kurram, on Monday.

Commissioner Kohat reviewed the relief activities, government initiatives, overall situation and facilities being provided to the TDPs as well as the current situation in the area. He also reviewed the camp's infrastructure, medical facilities, maintenance, services, food supply and security arrangements.

The purpose of the Commissioner Kohat Division's visit was to identify areas for improvement and ensure that TDPs get adequate support and resources. Motasim Billah Shah strictly directed the authorities concerned to ensure provision of all basic amenities of life including health, education and clean drinking water in the TDPs campus.

GDC Gumat principal arranges get together for former faculty: Principal Government Degree College Gumat, Kohat Dr. Wazir Shadan arranged a special program in honor of the retired Principals and Professors of his college, the other day.

The Program was presided by the retired



chairman of English Department Prof. Sajjad Ali Khan while attended by the founder Principal Muhabbat Khan Khattak, Prof. Taj Muhammad, Prof. Nasrullah Khan, Prof. Sajdar Ali Shah and Prof. Naushir Khan as the special guests. Prof. Javed Afridi, Dr. Banares Khan Khattak, Prof. Fazlur Rahim Fazil, Prof. Gul Qadir Khan, Prof. Mohammad Yasin, Dr. Mir Ghulam, Prof. Allahyar and Prof. Khalid Khan were the guests of honor on this occasion. Coordinator of JMC Prof. Mohammad Sadiq and Principal Government Degree College KDA Prof. Hamidullah Jan participated as special invitees.

On reaching the college, the entire staff under the leadership of Principal Dr. Wazir Shadan gave warm welcome to the guests, they were presented with bouquets, while the students showered them with flowers on entering the auditorium.

All the retired principals and professors were garlanded and Professor

Wahidullah Khan was garlanded by the Principal. On this occasion, Principal Dr. Wazir Shadan welcomed all the guests and appreciated the academic services of all the former principals and professors. He reiterated that his predecessor teachers will be followed and will make this college one of the foremost colleges of the province with their support.

Woman dies in mishap

MUZAFFARGARH (INP): A woman on Monday killed while another received injuries as two motorcycles collided each other on Muzaffargarh D.G Khan road.

The Rescue 1122 sources said, the motorcycles hit each others due to over speeding near Chowk, Quarshi on the road. As a result, a woman identified as Asia 20 years died on the spot while Faqir Muhammad 45 got injured, they added.

ect.

Currently, we are in the planning phase for remapping University Town, a key area in Peshawar. Our goal is to develop a systematic traffic plan that can later be extended to other parts of the city. This project has the potential to serve as a model for broader reforms, proving that with education, enforcement, and determination, we can bring order to Pakistan's roads.

Fixing traffic is not just a logistical necessity; it's a step toward creating a disciplined, educated, and progressive society. By addressing this issue, we can pave the way for a brighter future for Pakistan—one where following 'Rules' is a norm, not an exception. And finally, you need a few good men to educate and implement traffic norms in the country. Believing in this change is believing in a better Pakistan. We need a "few good men".



Joy fades as Gazans return to destroyed homes

GAZA (BBC): As Palestinians poured out the streets of Gaza to celebrate the ceasefire, moments of joy faded for many as they returned to their homes to be met by destruction. In Jabalia, a town in a northern Gaza that is home to the largest refugee camp in the strip, pictures and videos shared by residents revealed entire neighbourhoods reduced to rubble.

Returning to the al-Faluja area of Jabalia, Duaa al-Khalidi told BBC News: "I survived with my two daughters we came out from under the rubble of our house. "Here, beneath the debris, the bodies of my husband, my mother-in-law, and my sister-in-law have remained buried since 9 October." The 28-year-old mother of two continued: "I want nothing but their bodies so I can bury them with dignity." Jabalia camp, once home to over 250,000 Palestinians, became the site of the largest and most violent Israeli military operation during the war, with around 4,000 Palestinians killed, according to the Hamas-run health ministry.

Also returning to Jabalia, was Hussein Awda who documented his journey back from Gaza City. The professional weightlifter, who has represented Palestine internationally, lost 10 members of his family at the start of the war. "The best thing that happened today is that after 100 days, I was able to visit my family's grave and pray for them," he shared. He also posted a video revealing the devastation to his three-storey home and sports club he owns.

"Here I lost the people closest to my heart-my brothers, my sons, my source of livelihood. The war killed everything beautiful inside us." In the southern city of Khan Younis, armed Hamas fighters drove through the streets to cheering crowds and chanting, according to Reuters news agency. Hamas policemen, in police uniforms, were also deployed in some areas after months of hiding out of sight to avoid Israeli strikes. Gaza City resident Ahmed Abu Ayham, who has been sheltering with his family in Khan Younis, told Reuters that his home city was "dreadful". In the city, which has suffered the heaviest destruction according to experts, peo-



ple were seen waving the Palestinian flag and filming scenes on their mobile. But the 40-year-old said it was no time for celebrations despite the fact the ceasefire might save lives. "We are in pain, deep pain and it is time that we hug one another and cry," he said, Gazans were also on the move to the southern city of Rafah near the Egyptian border.

Mohammed Suleiman told BBC Arabic's Gaza Lifeline: "Thank God, we have received the news of the ceasefire coming into effect with joy and happiness. "God willing, things will change for the better and we will return to Rafah. I hope every displaced person will safely return to his home." Many fled the city after Israel ordered their evacuation before starting an operation in the southern Gaza city. In Rafah, Muhammad al-Jamal, a journalist for Palestinian newspaper Al-Ayyam, reflected on his own loss.

The house was razed to the ground; everything was reduced to rubble," he said. "The chicken coop and the fig tree whose fruits we shared together are now a thing of the past." The fragility of the ceasefire agreement became evident in its initial hours. The truce finally took effect after a three-hour delay, during which 19 Palestinians were reportedly killed in what Israel said were strikes on "terror targets". By the afternoon, three Israeli female hostages were back in Israel, as part of a six-week first phase that will see 33 hostages released. But people in Gaza remain fearful that the truce may falter once again. The families of 90 Palestinian prisoners are waiting anxiously in the occupied West Bank

for them to be released from Israeli jails as part of the Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal. Hundreds have packed into the town square in Beitunia, about one mile (1.6km) up the road from Israel's Ofer prison, waving Palestinian flags and chanting. Amid an atmosphere of excitement and nervous anticipation Diash Dara was waiting for her sister Hadil. The 32-year-old university administrative worker has been detained without charge for seven months. "I'm happy, I think, confused a little bit because of what happened in Gaza," Diash told the BBC.

"The most important thing is that they stopped the war in Gaza. Even if she wasn't released today, we [would] be ok with it. But at least the war has been ended." The majority of the 90 Palestinian prisoners expected to be released are women, as well as a number of children. Over the next six weeks, there will be more anxious days. Around 1,900 Palestinian prisoners and detainees from Gaza are due to be released in the first phase of the deal in exchange for 33 Israeli hostages, including the three women freed by Hamas in Gaza. One of the most high-profile prisoners is Zakaria Zubaidi, the former leader of the armed group al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in the northern West Bank city of Jenin. The 49-year-old has served time in both Israeli and Palestinian jails for multiple offences, including murder. He said he carried out a shooting attack in 2002 in which six Israelis were killed. Zubaidi was also in the news in 2021, when he tunneled out of an Israeli prison before being recaptured after five days.

Poland wants EU focused on security

POLOWCE, Poland (AP): Poland's six-month presidency of the European Union is firmly focused on security. As Europe's biggest land war in decades rages, fewer places highlight the challenges and contradictions of defending the bloc and its values more starkly than the border with Belarus.

Some 13,000 border guards and soldiers protect around 400 kilometers (250 miles) of border. It's become a buffer zone since Belarus' ally, Russia, invaded neighboring Ukraine three years ago. Similar fortifications farther north line Poland's frontier with the Russian region of Kaliningrad. Poland is Ukraine's top logistical backer. Most of the Western-supplied arms, ammunition and equipment helping to keep Ukraine's armed forces afloat transit through. Russia, meanwhile, uses Belarus as a staging ground for its invasion.

At the border near the town of Po'owce, a 5.5-meter (18-foot) steel barrier strung with razor wire and topped by security cameras separates once-friendly communities that war has turned into wary rivals. Drones, helicopters and armored vehicles keep watch. The border crossing is closed. Around 40 border guards and troops could be seen on Jan. 16, when the Polish EU presidency invited 60 reporters from international media to witness the security effort. The road was strewn with layers of concrete obstacles and concertina wire likely to dissuade an advancing army. Border guards peered into Belarus.

It's needed, the government in Warsaw says, because Russia and Belarus are waging a particular kind of hybrid warfare: helping groups of migrants - mostly from Africa or the Middle East - to break through the border to provoke and destabilize Poland and the rest of Europe. "We have tightened our visa policy, and above all we have decided to suspend the right to asylum wherever we are dealing with mass border crossings organized by Belarus and Russia," Prime Minister Donald Tusk told reporters.

S Africa police launch manhunt

CAPE TOWN (BBC): South Africa's police have launched a manhunt for an alleged "kingpin", who is accused of controlling operations at an abandoned gold mine where 78 corpses were discovered last week.

The police force said officials had helped James Neo Tshoaeli, a Lesotho national also known as Tiger, to escape after he was pulled up from the mine in Stilfontein. More than 240 illegal miners were brought up alive from the mine after it had been blockaded for months by the police. Officers had cut off food and water supplies in an attempt to force them out of the mine.

Some of the miners accused Mr Tshoaeli of being responsible for "deaths, assault and torture" underground, a police statement said on Monday. Mr Tshoaeli is also alleged to have hoarded and kept food away from the other miners, many of whom appeared emaciated and weak when they surfaced from the shaft. Police commissioner Patrick Asaneng warned that "heads will roll" once they find the officials who helped Mr Tshoaeli escape, the police statement said.

In a candid appearance on South African channel Newzroom Afrika, police spokesperson Athlenda Mathe said the force was "disappointed" and "embarrassed". Ms Mathe said an investigation into the escape has been launched and that the probe would start with the police "looking internally". After months when access to the mine shaft in Stilfontein was blocked, a court ordered the government to facilitate last week's rescue operation. On Thursday, as the rescue came to an end, Ms Mathe said it would be a "mammoth task" to identify the 78 bodies that were recovered - partly because many of them were undocumented migrants.

US rejects Venezuelan President Maduro's re-election

CARACAS (AP): Things seemed to be looking up for Venezuela in 2022. Following years of authoritarian rule and withering economic sanctions, President Nicolás Maduro had agreed to work toward a democratic presidential election. The White House, in return, granted him a financial lifeline: a permit for US energy giant Chevron to pump and export Venezuelan oil.

Oil wells roared back to life and massive tanker ships returned to Venezuela's coast to be filled with heavy, hard-to-refine crude destined for the US. Maduro's promised election was neither fair nor free, and the longtime president was sworn in this month for a third six-year term despite credible evidence that his opponent got more votes. Yet, the sanctions relieve the US offered "to support the restoration of democracy" is still helping fill state coffers.

Venezuela's opposition says Maduro's government has earned billions of dollars from exports allowed by the permit. The White House has ignored calls from the main opposition coalition, as well as Republicans and Democrats in the US Congress, to cancel a permit that now accounts for around a quarter of the South American country's oil production.

Senior administration officials have struggled to explain why the permit has been left in place under questioning by reporters, saying only that sanctions policy toward Venezuela is frequently reviewed. President Joe Biden told reporters last week he "didn't have enough data" to adjust oil-related sanctions before he leaves office Monday. Venezuela sits atop the world's largest

proven oil reserves and once used them to power Latin America's strongest economy. But corruption, mismanagement and eventual US economic sanctions saw production steadily decline from the 3.5 million barrels per day pumped in 1999, when the fiery Hugo Chávez took power and began his self-described socialist revolution, to less than 400,000 barrels per day in 2020.

California-based Chevron Corp., which first invested in Venezuela in the 1920s, does business in the country through joint ventures with the state-owned company Petroleos de Venezuela S.A., commonly known as PDVSA.

The joint ventures produced about 200,000 barrels a day in 2019, but the following year, US sanctions imposed by then-President Donald Trump forced Chevron to wind down production. In 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to a 30% decline in the country's economic activity, Venezuela's Central Bank reported year-over-year inflation of over 1,800%. For many, rummaging through garbage in search of food scraps or valuable items became a common activity.

Locked out of world oil markets by US sanctions, Venezuela sold its remaining oil output at a discount - about 40% below market prices - to buyers like China and other Asian markets. It even started accepting payments in Russian rubles, bartered goods or cryptocurrency. Once Chevron got a license to export oil to the US, its joint ventures quickly began producing 80,000 barrels a day, and by 2024, they topped their daily output from 2019. That oil is sold at world market prices.

The terms of the license bar Chevron from directly paying taxes or royalties to Venezuela's government. But the company sends money to the joint ventures, which are majority-owned by PDVSA. "What Chevron is doing is buying oil from joint ventures," Venezuelan economist Francisco Rodriguez said. "This purchase of oil is what generates the revenue of the joint ventures," and that revenue pays taxes and royalties to Venezuela's government.

It is not clear exactly how Venezuela's government, which stopped publishing almost all financial data several years ago, uses this revenue. Neither the government nor Chevron have made public the terms of the agreement allowing the company's return to Venezuela. Chevron did not answer questions from The Associated Press regarding the joint ventures, including payments made to Venezuela's treasury. "Chevron conducts its business in Venezuela in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations," Chevron spokesman Bill Turenne said in a statement.

Economist José Guerra, a former economic research manager at Venezuela's Central Bank, said the license's impact is partly reflected in the nation's foreign cash reserves, which increased by roughly \$1 billion between February 2022 and November 2024, according to the institution's data. The government uses its dollar reserves in part to maintain an artificially low exchange rate between the US dollar and the Venezuelan bolivar. "The only explanation is that Chevron exports without discounts, it exports everything - the 200,000 barrels go abroad - and that is what is feeding the reserves," Guerra said.

Syrian defence minister rejects Kurdish mly bloc

DAMASCUS (Reuters): Syria's new defence minister said it would not be right for US-backed Kurdish fighters based in the country's northeast to retain their own bloc within the broader integrated Syrian armed forces.

Speaking to Reuters at the Defence Ministry in Damascus, Murhaf Abu Qasra said the leadership of the Kurdish fighters, known as the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), was procrastinating in its handling of the complex issue. The SDF, which has carved out a semi-autonomous zone through 14 years of civil war, has been in talks with the new administration in Damascus led by former rebels who toppled President Bashar al-Assad on Dec. 8.

SDF commander Mazloum Abdi has said one of their central demands is a decentralised administration, saying in an interview with Saudi Arabia's Asharq News channel last week that the SDF was open to integrating with the Defence Ministry but as "a military bloc", and without

dissolving. Abu Qasra rejected that proposal. "We say that they would enter the Defence Ministry within the hierarchy of the Defence Ministry, and be distributed in a military way - we have no issue there," said Abu Qasra, who was appointed defence minister on Dec. 21. "But for them to remain a military bloc within the Defence Ministry, such a bloc within a big institution is not right."

One of the minister's priorities since taking office has been integrating Syria's myriad anti-Assad factions into a unified command structure. But doing so with the SDF has proved challenging. The US considers the group a key ally against Islamic State militants, but neighbouring Turkey regards it as a national security threat.

Abu Qasra said he had met the SDF's leaders but accused them of "procrastinating" in talks over their integration, and said incorporating them in the Defence Ministry like other ex-rebel factions was "a right of the Syrian state".

Abu Qasra was appointed to the transitional government about two weeks after Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, the Islamist group to which he belongs, led the offensive that ousted Assad. He said he hoped to finish the integration process, including appointing some senior military figures, by March 1, when the transitional government's time in power is set to end.

Asked how he responded to criticism that a transitional council should not make such appointments or carry out such sweeping changes of the military infrastructure, he said "security issues" had prompted the new state to prioritise the matter. "We are in a race against time and every day makes a difference," he said. The new administration was also criticised over its decision to give some foreigners, including Egyptians and Jordanians, ranks in the new military. Abu Qasra acknowledged the decision had created a firestorm but said he was not aware of any requests to extradite any of the foreign fighters.

Trump vowed to end war in Ukraine quickly

WASHINGTON (AP): President-elect Donald Trump has pledged to broker a peace deal in Ukraine, but as he prepares to take office, peace seems as elusive as ever. Moscow and Kyiv are seeking battlefield gains to strengthen their negotiating positions ahead of any prospective talks to end the 3-year-old war.

In the past year, Russian troops have slowly but steadily advancing through Ukrainian defenses, seeking to establish full control of the four regions in the east and south that Moscow illegally annexed early in the war but never completely captured. It's also launching waves of missiles and drones to try to cripple Ukraine's energy network and other vital infrastructure. Ukraine, in turn, has tried to secure and extend its incursion into Russia's Kursk region. Kyiv's missiles and drones also have struck Russian oil facilities and other key targets important for Moscow's war machine. Both sides have taken tough negotiating postures that leave little room for compromise. Trump, who vowed during his campaign to settle the war in 24 hours, changed that time

frame earlier this month, voicing hope that peace could be negotiated in six months. His nominee for envoy to Ukraine, Keith Kellogg, says a deal could be brokered in 100 days. Russian President Vladimir Putin has declared Moscow's readiness for talks but emphasized that any peace deal should respect the "realities on the ground," a not-so-subtle way of saying it must take into account Russia's land gains. He emphasized in June that Ukraine must also renounce its NATO bid and fully withdraw its forces from Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson - the regions Russia annexed in September 2022 - demands that Ukraine and the West have rejected. Moscow also wants the West to lift its sanctions that has limited Moscow's access to global markets and dealt a heavy blow to Russia's economy. Massive military spending has bolstered Russian economic output that grew by nearly 4% last year, but the weakening ruble and labor shortages fueled high inflation and increasingly destabilized the economy. Last week, President Joe Biden sharp-

ened the pain for Moscow by expanding sanctions on Russia's vital energy sector, including its shadow shipping fleet used to bypass earlier restrictions.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's initial "peace formula" demanded Russia's full withdrawal from all occupied territories, but he later softened his position as Moscow continued to make gains, and he is no longer making that retreat a condition for talks. Zelenskyy has faced reluctance from some allies to offer Kyiv quick membership in NATO, but he insists on strong security guarantees from the US and other Western partners as the key element of any prospective peace deal. Zelenskyy has emphasized the need for a comprehensive agreement, not a temporary halt to hostilities that would only allow Russia to replenish its arsenal. He has pushed for the deployment of Western troops to Ukraine as peacekeepers. Putin has similarly rejected a temporary truce, pointing out that Russian troops are pressing an offensive and any break in the fighting would allow Ukraine to get reinforcements and supplies.

"The Russians are seeing that Trump is going to push for some kind of resolution or some kind of settlement, and they want to grab as much as they can," said Kurt Volker, who served as special representative for Ukraine in Trump's first term. Russia controls about a fifth of Ukrainian territory, including the Crimean Peninsula that was annexed illegally in 2014. It held the battlefield initiative for most of 2024, pressing offensives in several sections of the over 1,000-kilometer (600-mile) front line. Moscow's gains in the fall were the largest since the opening stage of the invasion. Ukraine has faced dire manpower shortages as it struggles to mobilize enough recruits to compensate for its losses and increasing desertions.

Michael Kofman, a senior fellow with Carnegie Endowment, observed that "stabilizing the front line is essential to buying time and forcing Moscow to reassess." He noted that Ukraine's mobilization rates fell considerably since summer and "manning levels continued to decline, especially among infantry units holding the front lines."

Biden he spends final full day as president in South Carolina

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP): Joe Biden spent his final full day as president in South Carolina, urging Americans to "keep the faith in a better day to come" and reflecting on the influence of both the civil rights movement and the state itself in his political trajectory.

On the eve of Monday's inauguration of Republican President-elect Donald Trump, Biden delivered a final farewell from a state that holds special meaning after his commanding win in its 2020 Democratic primary set him up to achieve his life's goal of winning election as president.

Biden spoke to the congregation of Royal Missionary Baptist Church about why he entered public service - Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy were political heroes, he said. And in a nod to South Carolina Democrats, he said: "I owe you big." The day before the federal holiday honoring King, the slain civil rights

leader, Biden struck a more hopeful tone for the future of the country than his televised farewell address, when he warned about an "oligarchy" of the ultra-wealthy taking root and a "tech-industrial complex" impeding the future of democracy.

"We know the struggle to redeeming the soul of this nation is difficult and ongoing," Biden said. "We must hold on to hope. We must stay engaged. We must always keep the faith in a better day to come." He added: "I'm not going anywhere" - and the congregation applauded. Biden later toured the International African American Museum in Charleston which was built on a waterfront site where tens of thousands of enslaved Africans were brought to the US from the late 1760s through 1808. He spoke about efforts to ensure an administration "that looks like America," pointing to people like Lloyd Austin, who was Biden's secretary of defense

and the first Black person in the job. Speaking of his nomination of Ketanji Brown Jackson as the first Black woman to the Supreme Court, he leaned toward the microphone and said: "And by the way, she's smarter than those guys." "We're proving that by remembering our history, we can make history," Biden said. As he spoke, at a Trump rally back in Washington, speaker after speaker slammed Biden's presidency before the president-elect got on stage, previewing what was to come after Trump takes office. Before the church service, as hostages started to be released under a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas that the US helped broker, Biden said "the guns in Gaza have gone silent." He noted that in May he had outlined the agreement to halt the fighting.

"Now it falls on the next administration to help implement this deal. I was pleased to have our team

speak as one voice in the final days," Biden said, before urging Trump to keep supporting regional allies and using diplomacy to maintain the hard-won deal. Biden has been dogged by critics who oppose his administration for shipping arms to Israel and say the US didn't push its ally hard enough to ease a humanitarian crisis in Gaza. As his motorcade moved through Charleston, a group chanted "Biden is a war criminal" and held a banner saying "Biden's legacy=genocide." After commenting on the ceasefire, Biden and first lady Jill Biden took their seats in the front pew at the church. At least several hundred congregants sang gospel songs, rising to their feet and swaying and clapping. A choir led the musical selections from behind the pulpit before the program later shifted to focus on King. Biden was introduced at both stops by Rep. Jim Clyburn, D-S.C., a key ally who called the president his "longtime friend."

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Without law and order, Gaza will be an uphill struggle for aid agencies

REGARDLESS of how the precarious plan for a phased ceasefire in Gaza proceeds, one inarguable fact will remain: Palestinians there need humanitarian help and they need it now. Earlier this month, UNRWA – the UN agency that supports Palestinian refugees – said that in December, 70 per cent of 190 planned missions to get aid into Gaza were denied permission by the Israeli authorities. This was highest denial rate in the preceding six months.

A combined lack of food, fuel, medicine, shelter and winter clothing is costing civilian lives, with children and the elderly being the most vulnerable. Babies have been needlessly freezing to death. If aid organisations cannot get supplies to those who need them, more deaths will occur even if Israeli air strikes and ground raids are suspended. However, there is another threat to aid operations – the dangerous breakdown of law and order.

In an interview with The National published on Saturday, Unicef communication specialist Rosalia Bollen – who confirmed that 1,300 lorries with aid were ready to enter Gaza once the ceasefire began – said the possibility of looting was a “deep, deep concern” for her agency and other humanitarian organisations. “Gaza doesn't have an operating environment that allows us to bring in supplies safely,” Ms Bollen said, adding that looting and the reduction of aid to a trickle had caused prices to surge.

Desperation creates horrific circumstances. Looting and the breakdown of order has occurred with the incessant targeting of all authority in the country. On December 2, UNRWA said it would suspend aid delivery through the Karam Abu Salem border crossing after another seizure and looting of lorries by gunmen. As Ms Bollen points out, such looting contributes to further scarcity, thereby creating a vicious cycle.

Such criminality has been allowed to flourish in part because of Israeli forces' repeated and deliberate targeting of Gaza's civil and security structures. Paramedics, civil defence workers, journalists and members of Gaza's Hamas-run law enforcement have been killed as the 15-month war dragged on. Israeli troops have also killed aid workers; in November, the World Central Kitchen charity was again forced to pause operations in Gaza after its staff came under Israeli fire for the second time in a year.

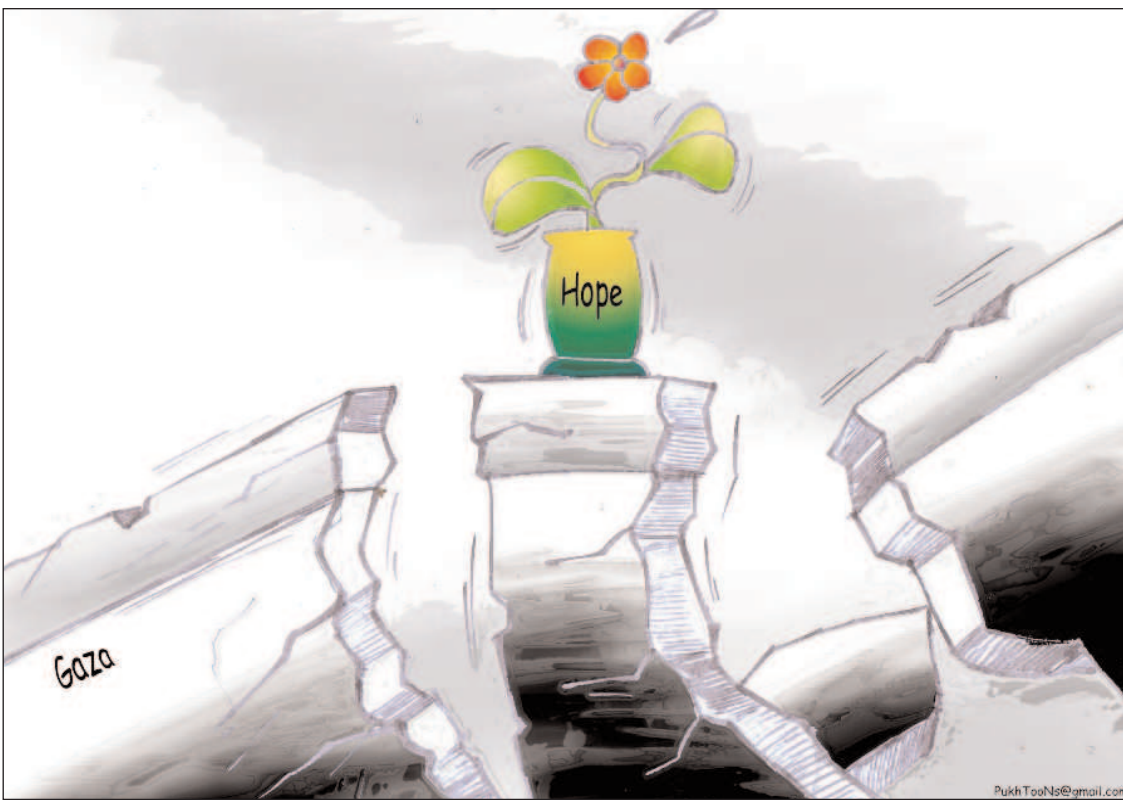
It is not surprising that this state of near-anarchy would enable criminal gangs to take advantage of the chaos to enrich themselves at the people's expense. Given this, a key priority for Gaza should be the restoration of law and order. Countries and aid workers are ready to help – the UAE's largest relief initiative is entering its biggest phase, with the aim of helping 9,500 displaced people living in shelters and temporary tents. But without a minimum level of security, it will be even more difficult for aid to reach the people it needs to.

There are no easy answers. At this moment, the two forces with the capacity to enforce some kind of stability are the Israeli military and Palestinian authorities of various backgrounds. This may appear to be an unpromising situation, but it is in Israel's longer-term security interests to avoid a chaotic humanitarian disaster just across its border. Gaza needs credible authorities to use any lull in the fighting to crack down on rogue gunmen and ensure the safety of aid convoys.

The key concern here should be for Gaza's civilians – without aid, more will die or be left with life-changing illnesses. For that to happen after the guns have fallen silent would not only be unnecessary, it would be unforgivable.

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Ceasefire without resolution: The unfinished struggle for peace

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

A ceasefire has finally been declared between Israel and Palestine, bringing an end to weeks of devastating conflict. This war, like many before it, has left behind a trail of destruction, immense human suffering, and deep political and social scars. While both sides claim justification for their actions, the toll on human life and infrastructure has been staggering, with the consequences of this latest conflict likely to be felt for decades.

In Palestine, the losses have been catastrophic. Thousands of civilians, including women and children, lost their lives. Entire neighborhoods have been reduced to rubble as airstrikes and artillery fire targeted residential areas, markets, and shelters. Medical facilities, including hospitals and clinics, were severely damaged or destroyed, leaving the injured without adequate care. Schools were turned into piles of debris, depriving children of education and safety. The economic losses are equally devastating, with estimates running into billions of dollars. Infrastructure essential for daily life, such as water systems, electricity grids, and transportation networks, has been obliterated, plunging many areas into a humanitarian crisis.

Israel, too, suffered significant losses, albeit on a smaller scale. Rocket attacks by Palestinian groups caused casualties and injuries among civilians, with many left to grapple with the trauma of living under constant threat. Residential buildings and public infrastruc-

ture were damaged, though the extent was far less than in Gaza. The Israeli government allocated substantial resources to its military operations and civil defense, straining the national economy.

The war left both sides with thousands injured, many of whom will bear lifelong physical and psychological scars. The destruction of homes, hospitals, schools, and places of worship on both sides symbolizes the indiscriminate nature of modern warfare. Yet, the disparity in destruction highlights the unequal capabilities and vulnerabilities of the two parties.

Questions about accountability and justice loom large. International law prohibits targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure, and both sides have been accused of committing war crimes. Will the international community hold perpetrators accountable? Historically, global powers have often chosen diplomacy over justice, with war crimes investigations either delayed or abandoned due to political considerations. The United Nations and human rights organizations have, once again, faced criticism for failing to prevent the conflict and protect civilians. Despite numerous resolutions and calls for peace, the UN's inability to enforce its decisions underscores its weakened role in global conflict resolution.

Will this ceasefire include measures to ensure that such wars do not recur in the future? Unfortunately, the agreement does not seem to

address the root causes of the conflict, such as territorial disputes, political tensions, and the blockade on Gaza. Without clear and enforceable mechanisms to address these issues, this ceasefire risks becoming just another pause before the next eruption of violence.

Are wars truly the solution to problems? This conflict serves as yet another reminder that war only deepens divisions, destroys lives, and perpetuates cycles of suffering. Every war leaves behind unhealed wounds and unresolved grievances. Diplomatic efforts and peaceful negotiations are the only viable paths to lasting solutions, yet these paths are often overshadowed by the destructive allure of military might.

What lessons have we learned from these wars? The repeated outbreak of hostilities between Israel and Palestine shows the failure of political and international systems to resolve deep-seated disputes. It also highlights the resilience of ordinary people who bear the brunt of these conflicts but continue to hope for peace. The lesson is clear: without justice, there can be no peace, and without addressing the underlying issues, temporary ceasefires are mere illusions of calm.

As the dust settles, the daunting task of reconstruction begins. For Palestine, rebuilding will require massive international aid. However, previous conflicts have shown that promises of assistance often fall short, leaving Palestinians to struggle with inadequate resources.

In Israel, while the damages are less extensive, reconstruction efforts will also demand significant investment.

The failure of the United Nations and human rights organizations in preventing this war and mitigating its effects cannot be ignored. Their inability to enforce international law and ensure the protection of civilians highlights the urgent need for reforms in global governance. Mechanisms must be strengthened to prevent conflicts, hold aggressors accountable, and provide justice to victims.

The road to peace is long and fraught with challenges. Both sides must engage in meaningful dialogue to address core issues and build trust. The international community must play an active role in mediating and supporting peace efforts. Reconstruction in Palestine should be prioritized, with transparent mechanisms to ensure aid reaches those who need it most.

Ultimately, the true cost of this war cannot be measured in numbers alone. Beyond the lives lost, the injuries sustained, and the buildings destroyed, the psychological trauma, loss of trust, and deepened divisions between communities are immeasurable. This ceasefire must be seen not as an endpoint but as a starting point for addressing the fundamental issues that lead to violence. The world must collectively reflect on whether it will continue to allow wars to devastate generations or work toward building a future where dialogue and justice prevail over destruction.

Trump's Day 1 agenda poised to reveal his priorities

Aziz Amin

WASHINGTON is holding its breath until Monday's inauguration of President-elect Donald Trump because of what he has threatened to do on his first day in office. Trump said at a town hall meeting in 2023 that, if he was elected for a second term as president, he would not be a dictator “except for Day 1.” On the campaign trail, he added that he wants to “close the border, and I want to drill, drill, drill” on the first day. People recall these words as they wait to find out which Trump will show up at the Oval Office.

There are differing opinions on what to expect on his first day. His political allies, as well as his opponents, agree that it will not be a usual day at the White House. Republican Sen. John Barrasso, the Senate majority whip, promised “shock and awe” and a “blizzard of executive orders.” Although all presidents sign executive orders on their first day in the Oval Office, Trump is likely to have a huge pile, reportedly more than 100. Still, there are others who predict this boasting will be more shock than awe, but even then it will not be a normal day.

Trump's agenda will be extensive, but he has his

priorities and these are the issues he is expected to act on immediately.

Immigration has been a top priority for Trump. He believes it is what got him elected and it is expected to be at the top of the list of executive orders. He has said he will use his authority to “close the border.” His press secretary Karoline Leavitt confirmed that immigration and the border with Mexico would be a priority.

She said: “We know that on Day 1 he is going to launch the largest mass deportation of illegal immigrants in American history.” However, this will present the new administration with a big challenge, both financially and logistically, and it will have a human toll on the millions who will be affected.

According to the Department of Homeland Security, there were an estimated 11 million immigrants who lacked permanent legal status in the US in 2022 and possibly qualified for deportation. The American Immigration Council calculated the cost of deporting these people, as well as “an estimate of the impact of deporting an additional 2.3 million people” who entered the US illegally across the

southern border and were released by the Department of Homeland Security between January 2023 and April 2024. It put the cost of deporting these two groups at \$315 billion, while cautioning that this was a conservative estimate.

This would be a massive operation. But something has to be done about immigration to fulfill the president-elect's promise to voters.

Another Trump priority is a possible pardon of the Jan. 6 rioters who were convicted of breaking into the Capitol building in 2021. He has vowed to pardon them, but there is uncertainty about his plans and whether he will do it on Day 1. Trump has recently avoided giving any details about this issue, leaving people guessing whether he will pardon only the nonviolent rioters or if there will be a blanket pardon. Vice President J.D. Vance seemed to rule out pardoning the violent offenders and distinguished between them and the peaceful protesters.

Stripping foreigners who are born in the US of the right to automatic citizenship, or birthright, is another potential first-day executive order. The 14th Amendment grants all persons born or naturalized in the US instant

American citizenship, but Trump wants to change that. This change will certainly prompt numerous legal actions by those opposed to the change and it could end up at the Supreme Court.

Trump is also considering another executive order on his first day in office that would prevent the enforcement of the ban on TikTok. This would give time to the popular video-sharing platform to find a solution, either through a sale or another alternative, after Congress passed a law banning it last year.

But what about the wars in the Middle East and Ukraine? Trump wanted a ceasefire in Gaza to come into effect before he took office and on Sunday he got his wish.

He also said many times during the campaign that he could end the war in Ukraine with a deal on his first day in office, although lately he has backtracked and started using the wording “very quickly.” The president-elect's advisers conceded last week that ending the war will take months, if not “even longer.”

But Trump is determined to fulfill his promises and the world will soon find out what America will look like for the next four years.

One more broken promise to close Guantanamo

Mansoor Adayfi

I was held in Guantanamo detention centre for 14 years without ever being charged with a crime. I was sent there when I was 19. I didn't know why I was being held, what I had done to be imprisoned, or when I would be released.

Like many of the other men at Guantanamo, I believed that the United States forces who held me would live up to their own ideals of law and justice and grant me the right to defend myself and prove my innocence. That never happened.

Instead, I was subjected to torture and continual harassment. I fought to be treated humanely and to be granted basic human rights, and after 14 years was released. Throughout my imprisonment, I imagined that one day the world would learn what happened to us and would demand accountability and justice. I thought once people knew, they would close this deplorable place.

It has been almost nine years since I was released. All this time, I have not stopped writing and giving interviews about what happened to me. The world knows, and yet, Guantanamo is still functioning.

Earlier this month, we marked the 23rd anniversary of its creation. Today we mark the last day in office of yet another US president who promised to close it and did not. One has to wonder after all the reports by the United Nations and various human rights organisations, media reports, documentaries, books, etc – why is this symbol of injustice still standing?

Guantanamo was established in the aftermath of 9/11, a tragic event that profoundly shook the world. In its wake, the US launched the so-called global “war on terror”, a campaign ostensibly aimed at combating terrorism but which, in reality, legalised torture, undermined international law, and dehumanised an entire faith community.

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Guantanamo became a blueprint for other forms of extrajudicial detention, torture, and human rights abuses worldwide. The prison's legacy is evident in the proliferation of CIA black sites, the normalisation of Islamophobia, and the erosion of international norms designed to protect human dignity.

The global war on terror — with Guantanamo as its most infamous symbol — institutionalised policies that dehumanised Muslims. It fuelled Islamophobic rhetoric, justified invasive surveillance programmes, and stigmatised entire communities as potential threats.

The US took the lead on all this, and many states followed suit, using US “war on terror” rhetoric to justify attacks on whole communities. The conse-

quences have been devastating for Muslim and other vulnerable communities.

At its peak, Guantanamo held approximately 680 men and boys, many of whom had been sold as “terrorists” to US forces in exchange for remuneration. This is what happened to me.

As of today, 15 men remain in Guantanamo. Some have been cleared for release but continue to languish in limbo, a testament to the failure of US systems to uphold even the most basic human rights. For these men, every day is a continuation of psychological and physical torment — a state of being neither free nor formally accused.

We have heard many promises that Guantanamo will be closed for the past 16 years. US President Barack Obama famously signed an executive order on his second day in office in 2009 ordering the closure of the facility. Then Vice President Joe Biden was standing right next to him, applauding. When Biden became president in 2021, he also made the same promise and he also broke it.

The prison still functions at an annual cost of around \$540m.

The continued operation of Guantanamo is not just a failure of policy but a moral stain on the US. It stands as a glaring contradiction of the ideals of liberty, justice, and human rights that the US claims to champion. Its existence undermines US credibility on the global stage and emboldens authoritarian regimes to justify their own abuses.

With every anniversary of Guantanamo's opening, I wait for the international community to wake up and demand action to close the military prison, provide justice to its victims, and ensure accountability for those responsible for its creation and perpetuation. Every year I am disappointed.

The Guantanamo military prison is more than a crime against its detainees

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For over two decades, it has symbolised systematic torture, arbitrary detention, and the weakening of the global human rights regime. Guantanamo violates the Geneva Conventions and embodies elements of crimes against humanity through its systematic abuse of primarily Muslim detainees.

As a new administration takes office in Washington, I have the same message for them as I had for their predecessors:

Close Guantanamo. Shut down the facility and end the practice of indefinite detention.

Secure justice. Release those cleared for transfer and grant fair trials to the rest.

Ensure accountability. Investigate and hold accountable those responsible for authorising torture, extrajudicial detention, and other abuses.

Acknowledge and apologise. Issue a formal acknowledgment and apology for the injustices committed.

Provide reparations. Compensate former detainees for the harm inflicted upon them.

Shuttering Guantanamo is not just about closing a physical location; it is about closing a dark chapter of history. It's about reaffirming the principles of justice, dignity, and human rights that should be upheld for all people, regardless of their origin or beliefs. Guantanamo must not see another anniversary.

— Aljazeera

Trump’s comeback will begin with a blast of executive power

DONALD Trump will flex one of the most intense and sweeping demonstrations of presidential power on the first day of any administration, seeking to fundamentally change America’s course by sundown on Monday.

On a frigid day that forced inside his swearing-in as the 47th president, Trump plans a blizzard of headline executive actions on immigration, energy production, transgender athletes and the pardoning of January 6 rioters.

His inaugural show of force — “close to 100 to be exact,” he said Sunday — will set the tone for a second term anchored on Trump’s strongman persona and vision of an all-powerful presidency, aimed at unleashing intense disruption at home and abroad.

But before he took office, outgoing President Joe Biden made his own extraordinary use of executive power that reflected an uncertain national moment, granting preemptive pardons to public servants deemed potential targets of Trump’s vows to seek retribution against his adversaries.

The list includes former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mark Milley, the nation’s former top infectious diseases specialist Dr. Anthony Fauci, and members of Congress and staff who served on the committee investigating the January 6, 2021, riot at the Capitol.

The pardons, which Biden stressed did not denote wrongdoing, also extended to police officers who testified before the panel.

Trump warmed up for his second inauguration at a Sunday victory rally in Washington, DC, that culminated in a spectacle that would have astounded generations of his starchy collared predecessors, showing off his lock-kneed, jerky dad dance with the Village People and their late 1970s hit “YMCA” — his political anthem.

His informality underscored how the former real estate magnate, tabloid villain and reality TV star has become a cultural figure among his millions of admirers.

That MAGA mystique is also rooted in his resilience — after surviving two assassination attempts, a pair of impeachments, four criminal indictments and one conviction. His return to power, using the same democratic process he tried to crush to avoid leaving office after the 2020 election, means his comeback is among the most stunning second acts in American history. It’s also a dark omen of how an imperialist president might try to use his new power.

Trump is no longer a

populist, nationalist aberration in a long line of post-World War II presidents who all operated with similar assumptions about American’s role in the world. His victory in November, making him only the second president to win nonconsecutive terms, means that he is a historically significant figure — whatever happens over the next four years.

And Trump scored two big wins even before he took office. First, three hostages were released Sunday to Israel by Hamas as part of a Gaza ceasefire deal being credited to his imminent arrival in office. Then, Trump, at least for now, saved TikTok, which briefly shut down to comply with a federal ban imposed over fears the social media site could be manipulated by China.

Each breakthrough

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demonstrated Trump’s flair for the statesmanship of a showman and his preference for the personal and improvisational use of presidential power. Since winning the November election, he has changed domestic and global political dynamics after months of an aging Biden fading from the scene.

But in the cases of TikTok and the Middle East, Trump’s initial “wins” Sunday will soon cede to far more complex negotiations and decisions that will call for intense presidential engagement and far-sighted strategic wisdom that he didn’t always supply in his first term.

Trump is already looking far beyond the tasks voters assigned him

Trump won last year’s election — only four years after he was turned out of office for failing to revive a disgruntled, pandemic-hit nation — because a plurality of voters was weary of high prices and a border crisis that Biden had denied, and they lost faith in the government’s capacity to help them.

So, an impatient electorate might not give Trump much time. And the success or failure of his second term could hinge on his capacity to do the basics — such as

Stephen Collinson

reduce the price of staples like eggs and milk, which he has already admitted will be tough to do.

But on Sunday, at his jubilant rally, Trump also raised expectations of transformational change in multiple areas. The history of the presidency, the evidence of his first-term chaos, and his narrow congressional majorities, however, suggest such change will be very hard to achieve.

“Everyone in our country will prosper. Every family will thrive, and every day will be filled with opportunity and hope,” he promised. “We stand on the verge of the four greatest years in America.”

Much of Trump’s appeal lies in his belligerence and outsider authenticity.

But the truth about his

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second term will be revealed only by looking beyond stunts and hyperbole to judge the depth and sustainability of his actions. His voters might love his aggression. And Trump has built a new coalition with more young voters, minorities and working-class Americans than before. But his behavior alienates the other half of the country. And the promise of inaugural eve will soon be swamped by the ugly realities of government, which are almost certain to split the Republican Party.

Expected “shock and awe” deportation raids and showdowns in Democratic-run cities are intended to make a political point, honor campaign promises and deter more migration. But they could also create a climate of fear that rebounds against Trump and Republicans politically and threatens the civil rights of American citizens and immigrants.

Still, the president-elect, who is constitutionally barred from seeking a third term, is leaving no doubt he aims to launch at a similar speed to one of the SpaceX rockets owned by Elon Musk, who came onstage Sunday to vow “significant change.”

“Starting tomorrow, I will act with historic

speed and strength and fix every single crisis facing our country,” Trump pledged at the euphoric victory party in Washington’s Capital One Arena.

A stunning comeback for a cultural icon

Four years ago, a chastened Trump bolted from Washington before Biden’s inauguration for a farewell ceremony at Joint Base Andrews. He was still in disgrace two weeks after the assault on the US Capitol by supporters fired up by election lies, and he signed off with: “Have a good life. We will see you soon.”

On that morning in 2021, no one could have imagined Trump’s stunning political resurrection, highlighted Sunday by a tour-de-force speech on a vast red stage before thousands of MAGA devotees.

“We won,” Trump said

at his first rally in Washington since January 6, 2021, underscoring how sufficient voters were so desperate for a shake-up of government that they were ready to move on from his behavior after the 2020 election.

The speech — a classic of his “weave” genre of rhetoric — blended demagoguery and comedy, searing anti-migrant rhetoric, warnings of impending world war, twisted facts, brashness and showmanship. He mixed in promises to end the war in Ukraine with riffs about claiming the spotlight at the 2026 FIFA World Cup in the US and the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles. His disdain for presidential decorum showed exactly why millions of Americans believe that he is their authentic voice.

“We are all going to be sworn in tomorrow, that’s the way I look at it,” Trump told his admirers.

Trump will benefit from the legitimacy conferred by his predecessor attending his inauguration — a privilege he denied to Biden. And unlike Trump in 2020, Vice President Kamala Harris accepted her defeat in a democratic election.

Furthermore, the authoritarian streak

revealed in Trump four years ago is why so many Americans are horrified by his return.

The rest of the world is also on edge: Trump has already sparked political crises from Canada to Panama to Denmark with expansionist rhetoric during the transition. Allies are nervous. But Trump can hardly wait for summits with tyrants he most admires, Xi Jinping of China and Vladimir Putin of Russia.

‘Days of Thunder’ lie ahead

The scope of Trump’s ambition is vast.

“By the time the sun sets tomorrow evening, the invasion of our borders will have come to a halt, and all the illegal border trespasses will, in some form or another, be on their way back home,” he said Sunday.

Aides revealed he’d sign some executive actions shortly after being sworn in and then more at Capital One Arena, the indoor venue for his inauguration parade.

He pledged to “defeat inflation” and provide the lowest-cost energy on Earth, cut taxes, slash prices, raise wages and return thousands of factories to the US with the use of tariffs. Trump said he’d end the war in Ukraine, stop “chaos” in the Middle East, prevent World War III, crush violent crime in cities, and rebuild the police and the military. He said he’d rebuild Los Angeles, where he plans to visit Friday, after its wildfires and make it more “beautiful” than before.

Even accomplishing a few of these goals would mark Trump’s second term as a miraculous success by modern standards. But he has to do all this as a lame duck, hampered by a minuscule GOP majority in the House of Representatives and the constant threat of a Democratic rebound in the 2026 midterm elections.

The president-elect does, however, have the advantage of doing the job once before — and having a clear sense of where he wants to go.

Trump allowed himself a rare moment of introspection during his rally, touching on his place in history — and the potential for his second term to leave a more robust and widely accepted legacy than his first.

“Someday, in 30 years from now, 40 years from now, 50 years from now, some of these young people are going to say, ‘I remember Donald Trump. He did a good job. He sent us on (our way). He gave us a path,’” he said.

But before then, there will be what Trump’s first-term political guru Steve Bannon has called “Days of Thunder.”

America and the world

better be ready.

— CNN

Truce deal phases could be skipped for resuming war

Michael Jansen

tion of Syria’s Golan Heights which Israel occupied along with East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza in 1967.

Netanyahu has a long list of favours he wants Trump to grant. Netanyahu seeks to dictate post-war plans for Gaza, including buffer zones, and management of Palestinian freedom of movement within the narrow coastal strip. He rejects any roles for Hamas and the West Bank-based Palestinian Authority and has suggested co-opting tribal elders to assume the administration although they have rejected this idea.

Arab governments have also refused to contribute troops to an international force to restore law and order to anarchic Gaza or provide reconstruction funds if Israel is directly involved.

Netanyahu seeks to shut down UNRWA at the end of this month, thereby depriving refugees of protection, shelter, food, education, health care, vocational training, and welfare services. Israel regards UNRWA as a quasi-state which preserves Palestinian identity and the Palestinian quest for self-determination in an independent state. Netanyahu rejects the “two-state solution,” which is backed by the international community.

Netanyahu also wants Trump to continue the provision of \$3.8 billion a year in US military aid to Israel and Trump’s support for or acquiescence in Israel’s annexation of the main illegal Israeli settlements in East Jerusalem and the West

Bank. What’s in the deal

which benefits 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza? During the first phase 1,000 Palestinians detained by Israel since October 2023 will be freed and 600 lorry loads of food, water, fuel and medicine are meant to enter Israel daily. Israeli forces will pull back from population centres and unarmed Palestinians will be able to return to northern Gaza. Ill and wounded Palestinian civilians and combatants will be allowed to evacuate to Egypt for medical treatment.

During phase two all Israeli captives are to be released and Israel will withdraw totally from Gaza. During phase three there will be negotiations about governance of Gaza, the bodies of dead Israel captives will return to their families, and reconstruction will begin. However, as mentioned earlier, Netanyahu

might skip the second and third phases and resume war on some pretext or the other. This would leave the people of Gaza, the UN, and international relief bodies only a brief window to improve the desperate situation of most Gazans. They could revert to inhuman pre-ceasefire conditions. These began to deteriorate two days after the October 7th, 2023, attack on southern Israel where Hamas killed 1,200 and abducted 251. Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant declared, “I have ordered a complete siege on the Gaza Strip. There will be no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed.”

This is exactly what has happened despite global pressure on Israel to provide Gazans with the necessities of life and avert war crimes and arrest warrants issued against Gallant and Netanyahu. Human Rights Watch, Al-Jazeera, and BBC Verify have drawn up separate reports which give an overall view of horrific conditions in Gaza. Ninety per cent of Gazans (1.9 million) have been displaced by Israeli bombing, shelling, and evacuation orders. More than 46,700 have been killed, 10,450 wounded, and 11,000 are missing, many under the rubble of their homes and shelters. Seventy per cent of fatalities are women and children.

A study by experts published this month in Britain’s medical journal The Lancet found fatalities could be 41 per cent higher than reported by the Gaza health ministry. Israel has deliberately obstructed Gazans’

access to potable water, food, and medicine. Ninety-one per cent have faced high levels of food insecurity and are at risk of famine. Half of Gaza’s 36 hospitals function only partially, and 1,060 medical personnel have been killed. Nearly 69 per cent of buildings in Gaza have been destroyed or damaged, 90 per cent of schools damaged and 83 per cent of mosques damaged or destroyed. Sixty-eight per cent of Gaza’s farmland has been ruined and agricultural infrastructure damaged or destroyed. In its 2025 world report HRW stated, “Israeli attacks and demolitions by combat engineers and military bulldozers (have rendered) much of the Strip uninhabitable, clearly constituting ethnic cleansing in some areas and violating Palestinians’ right to return.”

With Gaza ceasefire in place, the real work starts now

Chris Doyle

WHEN outgoing US President Joe Biden last week explained that the Israel-Hamas deal was broadly identical to the one he announced last May, he thought he was promoting his own role. In fact, it was a savage indictment of his own failure — a confession, even.

What Biden was confirming was that it was his abject refusal to put any pressure on the Israeli government that meant a further seven months were needed to get this deal over the line. More than 10,000 Palestinians were slaughtered in that time. The ethnic cleansing in northern Gaza could have been avoided. Biden was reaffirming his complicity, something he yet again reinforced when he admitted on camera that he told Netanyahu back in October 2023 that “you can’t be carpet-bombing these communities.” Biden had no qualms in being the main weapons supplier to a state that

was carpet-bombing civilians.

In contrast, Donald Trump showed that, just by rattling the Israeli cage ahead of his return to the White House, Netanyahu had no choice but to cave in. Trump made it clear there had to be a deal by the time of his inauguration on Monday. Many thought this was aimed at Hamas, but it was at Netanyahu too. Trump did not unveil some great act of diplomatic wizardry, but he put his foot down and Netanyahu had to respect his wishes. What few understand is that Biden is emotionally and by conviction pro-Israel, while Trump is pro-Israel only insofar as it overlaps with his own interests.

Trump’s ultimatum was one reason a deal was reached. The war has been costly to Israel, in terms of lives, the damage to its economy and its global reputation. The public pressure to get the remaining hostages out of Gaza was also getting to Netanyahu.

But this is not a ceasefire deal. It is, more accurately, a hostage exchange with the possibility of a temporary

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pause. The areas of disagreement remain larger than those on which there is agreement, not least on who gets to govern Gaza in the medium term.

Yet, from small beginnings, more may follow. The sheer wave of relief sweeping over the Palestinians as Israel stops its bombing and

killing is intense. Israelis and Palestinians alike have been overjoyed to

be reunited with their loved ones.

This will create its own momentum. Political leaders may be wary of going against the tide of public opinion and those publics clearly want an end to all this horror. Only the most extreme really want to dive down the hellhole of this once

again, but sadly they do exist. Spoilers will try to nix this nascent deal.

But for the first time in 15 months, hope has made an appearance. This has to be welcomed and embraced.

The challenges are immense. It will require one of the greatest ever international efforts to render Gaza inhabitable. The UN estimates there are 40 million tonnes of

commitments that Israel will resume military operations at this stage. This is in line with his own previous statements.

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The challenges are immense. It will require one of the greatest ever international efforts to render Gaza inhabitable. The UN estimates there are 40 million tonnes of

rubble in Gaza and these rubble mountains are infested with unexploded ordnance.

How will serious levels of humanitarian aid get into Gaza? Six hundred trucks a day, as stipulated under the deal, will not be enough given the colossal need.

The donor community has to read the riot act to Israel and pressure it to cancel its appalling legislation that will ban UNRWA’s operations. You cannot address the humanitarian crisis in Gaza without what is not just the largest humanitarian provider, but also the largest health and education service provider.

Yet the political challenges are just as tough. Who will rule Gaza? Hamas is not going to just give up what control it has. Israel will not accept any role for the group. Netanyahu hates the idea of the Palestinian Authority taking over, as that would bring Palestinian statehood closer again. Reuniting

the West Bank and Gaza would be a strategic disaster for the Israeli right.

Accountability still matters, above all, to make sure these atrocities never happen again. There should be a proper international investigation, in addition to those being conducted by the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice.

The real work has to start now. Many international actors, including the US, can never atone for their complicity in the genocide in Gaza, but they can help by ensuring that this process not only leads to a proper ceasefire, but also a meaningful end product — a full and final peace between these peoples.

If there is any serious intent to get such a peace, the US will need to roll back the Israeli settlement project in the West Bank and bury all plans for annexation. If Trump does that, perhaps he will deserve a Nobel Peace Prize.



In brief

Hamilton begins 'new chapter' at Ferrari

PARIS (AFP): Seven-time Formula 1 world champion Lewis Hamilton took his first steps as a Ferrari driver on Monday and expressed his delight at joining the iconic team. The 40-year-old shocked the paddock last February when he announced that after 12 successful years with Mercedes, he was departing for Ferrari. "Today we start a new chapter in the history of this iconic team, and I can't wait to see what story we will write together," he said in a press release as he appeared for the first time in Maranello, the headquarters of the Scuderia. Wearing a long overcoat, dark suit and tie with a white shirt, Hamilton presented a chic look as he posed in front of the former home of Enzo Ferrari, the founder of the famous Prancing Horse marque, according to photos released by his new team. Hamilton then went to the Fiorano circuit to meet team boss Frederic Vasseur, and Ferrari's managing director Benedetto Vigna. At Maranello, he was also able to talk to several members of the team with whom he will be working over the coming weeks, including Riccardo Adami, who will be his track engineer. "There are some days that you know you'll remember forever and today, my first as a driver, is one of those days," said Hamilton, who will partner Charles Leclerc as they bid to deliver a first Ferrari world champion since Kimi Raikkonen in 2007. "I've been lucky enough to have achieved things in my career I never thought possible, but part of me has always held on to that dream of racing in red. "I'm dedicated to bringing everything I have to deliver for the team, the wider organisation and the fans." Hamilton will step inside a Ferrari F1 car for the first time on Wednesday at the Fiorano circuit where he will be allowed a maximum of 1,000 kilometres with the 2022 model.

Smith hit by elbow injury

SYDNEY (Web Desk): Stand-in Test captain Steven Smith has given Australia a concern ahead of the series in Sri Lanka after picking up an elbow injury during the BBL. Smith, who has a history of elbow problems, sustained the injury to his right arm, the one he had surgery on in 2019, while throwing in the field for Sydney Sixers in their washed-out match against Sydney Thunder on Friday. It has delayed Smith's departure for the team's training camp in Dubai as he seeks further advice from a specialist, but a Cricket Australia statement said he was still hoping to leave later this week. Smith is due to lead Australia in the two Tests in Galle with Pat Cummins on paternity leave. Should he be unavailable it opens the door for Travis Head to captain in a Test for the first time. Australia retain hope that left-arm spinner Matthew Kuhnemann will be able to play a part on the tour despite having surgery on a fractured right thumb he sustained against Hobart Hurricanes last week. "He will remain in Australia while the surgical wound heals further," CA said. "He is planned to resume bowling this week with a view to joining the squad in Sri Lanka if he continues to progress well." With the injury being to Kuhnemann's non-bowling hand, his major challenge will revolve around batting and fielding.

England beat Pakistan in ICC U19 Women's T20 WC

JOHOR, MALAYSIA (APP): England's U19 Women's cricket team secured their first win in the ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup by defeating Pakistan's U19 team by six wickets at the Johor Cricket Academy Oval in Malaysia on Monday. England successfully chased down a target of 67 runs in just 9.2 overs. Pakistan who received one point from their earlier match against the USA that was washed out, now sits third in Group B with Ireland in fourth place. After winning the toss, England opted to bowl first. Pakistan struggled early, losing wickets regularly and collapsing to 35-5 before being all out for 66

runs in 18.5 overs. Zoofishan Ayyaz was the top scorer for Pakistan with 15 runs off 13 balls, while Komal Khan contributed 12 runs off 25 balls. For England, Amuruthaa Surenkumar was the standout bowler, taking 3 wickets for 17 runs. Tilly Corteen-Coleman and Olivia Brinsden also impressed with two wickets each. In response, England faced early challenges, slipping to 33-4. However, Katie Jones played a crucial role, finishing unbeaten on 20 runs off 16 balls. She formed a vital partnership with captain Abigale Norgrove, who scored 14 runs off 9 balls. Mahnoor Zeb took two wickets for

Pakistan. Scores in Brief: - Pakistan U19 Women: 66 all out in 18.5 overs (Zoofishan Ayyaz 15, Komal Khan 12; Amuruthaa Surenkumar 3-17) - England U19 Women: 67-4 in 9.2 overs (Katie Jones 20 not out, Abigale Norgrove 14 not out; Mahnoor Zeb 2-23) Player of the Match: Katie Jones (England U19 Women) Upcoming Fixtures for Pakistan (all at JCA Oval, Johor): - vs USA - January 18 (abandoned) - vs England - January 20 (England won) - vs Ireland - January 22 at 11:30 AM PKT

Australian broadcaster apologises to Djokovic

MELBOURNE (Agencies): An Australian broadcaster has apologised to Novak Djokovic for comments he made on TV that the 24-time Grand Slam champion considered "insulting and offensive". Channel Nine's Tony Jones shouted "Novak, he's overrated, Novak's a has-been, Novak kick him out" towards Djokovic fans while live on air at the Australian Open on Friday. As a result, Djokovic refused to do his usual on-court interview after Sunday's fourth-round win over Jiri Lehecka because of Channel Nine being official broadcasters of the tournament. Speaking at a news conference afterwards, Djokovic said Jones had "made a mockery of Serbian fans and also made insulting and offensive comments towards me". The 37-year-old added that it "was a very awkward situation for me". Jones said on Channel Nine on Monday: "I'm disappointed it came to this because the comments were made on the news on the Friday night which I considered to be banter and humour - which is consistent with what I do.

"However, I was made aware on the Saturday morning from Tennis Australia, via the Djokovic camp, that the Djokovic camp was not happy at all with those comments. "I immediately contacted the Djokovic camp and issued an apology to them - 48 hours ago - for any disrespect which Novak felt I had caused. "As I stand here now I stand by that apology to Novak if he feels any disrespect, which he clearly does. "The disrespect extends to the Serbian fans - over the years here there has been colour with them and passion and banter, and I thought that was an extension of that banter. Quite clearly that hasn't been interpreted that way. "I do feel I've let down the Serbian fans. I'm not just saying that to wriggle out of trouble, I genuinely feel for those fans." Djokovic, a 10-time champion at Melbourne Park, plays world number three Carlos Alcaraz in the quarter-finals on Tuesday. Channel Nine also apologised, saying "no harm was intended towards Novak or his fans". The Serbian Council of Australia has called for

Jones to be sacked, saying his comments were "offensive, racist and only serve to incite further discrimination of Australian-Serbs". Jones said he particularly felt he had "overstepped the mark" with his "kick him out" comment - which he accepted could be interpreted as a reference to Djokovic's 2022 deportation from Australia because of the country's Covid-19 regulations. "That has angered Novak - I completely understand that," said Jones. "It has been an unfortunate situation and one of personal angst for Novak and personal angst for me as well. The priority now is to focus on the tennis. He has an amazing match and I hope he can focus on that. "I can only again tell Novak what I told him 48 hours ago which is I do apologise if he feels I disrespected him. "I agreed to meet him in person, they came back and yes, that hasn't transpired yet but I hope it will happen in the next 24 hours." Tennis Australia said: "Novak acknowledges the apology has been given in public as requested and is now moving on and focusing on his next match."

Rashford not given up on playing for Man Utd again

LONDON (Agencies): Marcus Rashford has not abandoned all hope of playing for Manchester United again. Rashford has not featured for United since being substituted in the Europa League victory over Viktoria Plzen on 12 December, after which his training performances were called into question by head coach Ruben Amorim. The 27-year-old has been on the bench once in the intervening period, when he was an unused substitute in the 3-0 home defeat by Newcastle on 30 December. Asked about Rashford in the wake of Sunday's 3-1 loss to Brighton at Old Trafford, Amorim said

"it's his choice", which led to speculation Rashford had asked not to be considered. However, club sources do not believe that was what Amorim meant and feel the former Sporting boss was merely outlining Rashford's future is in his own hands. Sources close to the player have stressed Rashford wants to play for United and has no significant issue with Amorim and would play if he was called upon. Rashford has been linked with a number of European clubs and the likelihood remains he will leave on loan before the current transfer window closes at the beginning of February.

It is not known how often Rashford has trained with the first time since his exile from Amorim's matchday squad began. On Wednesday, cameras will be allowed into United's Carrington training ground to film the first 15 minutes of the club's pre-match session ahead of the key Europa League encounter with Rangers at Old Trafford. Both clubs are currently in a coveted top eight spot, with United in seventh on 12 points and Rangers a point and a place behind. However, 17th-placed Plzen, are just three points behind United with two games remaining and neither club is certain even of a play-off spot.



SYDNEY: Lauren Bell made the breakthrough for England.

PCB Level-2 coaching course concludes

LAHORE (PPI): The six-day PCB Level-2 coaching course concluded at the National Cricket Academy in Lahore. According to a statement by PCB today, the 30 participants underwent intensive coaching education, skill assessment, and various tests including theory test, video analysis test and one-on-one assessments. The PCB Level-2 coaching course includes both in-course and post-course assessments. Participants have been given various post-course assignments, which must be submitted within six months of the conclusion of the course. Successful candidates will be awarded Level 2 coaching certificates. The participants of the course included six Test cricketers, Azhar Ali (97 Tests, 53 ODIs), Bilawal Bhatti (two Tests, 10 ODIs, 9 T20Is), Naved Latif (one Test, 11 ODIs), Shadab Khan (six Tests, 70 ODIs, 104 T20Is), Wahab Riaz (27 Tests, 91 ODIs, 36 T20Is) and Yasir Shah (48 Tests, 25 ODIs, two T20Is). Pakistan internationals Asad Ali (four ODIs, two T20Is), Mohammad Kamran Hussain (2 ODIs) and former Pakistan Women's captain Bismah Maroof (136 ODIs, 140 T20Is) were also part of the contingent. The course was conducted by former Test cricketer Saqlain Mushtaq and former international cricketer Dr Imran Abbas, along with NCA coaches including Abdul Majeed, Ifthikhar Ahmed, Mahtashim Rashid, Rahat Abbas Asadi and Saboor Ahmed. Participants (in alphabetical order): Abdul Nasir, Afaq Rahim, Akhlaq Ahmed, Ali Manzoor, Asad Ali, Azhar Ali, Badshah Hussain, Bilawal Bhatti, Bismah Maroof, Fahad-Ul-Haq, Gulraiz Sadaf, Hammad Ul Hassan, Imran, Irfan Anwar, Kashif Parwez, Khalid Usman, Mohammad Asif Hussain, Mohammad Kamran Hussain, Naveed Ahmad, Naveed Latif, Pervaiz Iqbal, Rameez Ahmed, Sajjad Ahmed, Shadab Khan, Syed Ali Raza Naqvi, Syed Hashmat Ali Shah, Taimoor Khan, Umaid Asif, Wahab Riaz and Yasir Shah.

England thrashed in first T20 as Australia retain Ashes

SYDNEY (Agencies): Australia retained the Women's Ashes at the earliest opportunity with a 57-run thrashing over England in the first T20 at the Sydney Cricket Ground. England slumped to 141 all out in 16 overs after being set an imposing 199 to win, despite Sophia Dunkley's brilliant 59 from 30 balls in her first appearance of the tour. Dunkley put England in a great position by reaching 62-3 from the six-over powerplay and 96-3 at the halfway mark. But the last seven wickets fell for 45 runs as Australia turned the screw, with leg-spinners Alana King and Georgia Wareham taking 2-14 and 3-25 respectively. The victory gives Australia an 8-0 points lead in the multi-format series, meaning England can only draw if they win all of their remaining matches. Dunkley's fearless approach from number three was all the more impressive considering England had suffered another top-order failure, with openers Maia Bouchier and Danni Wyatt-Hodge falling for ducks in the first two overs. Nat Sciver-Brunt's 20 was the next top score as England buckled under the run-rate pressure, but they also paid the price for conceding too many runs via some loose bowling and several mistakes in the field despite winning the toss.

Beth Mooney made 75 from 51 balls at the top of the order for Australia, but she was dropped by Amy Jones on 16 and there was another missed opportunity on 23 when a miscommunication between Nat Sciver-Brunt and Charlie Dean saw them leave a straight-forward catch to one another and it eventually plugged in the outfield. Sophie Ecclestone's exceptional figures of 2-26 were an outlier in an unconvincing bowling effort, as every other bowler finished with an economy rate of more than eight an over. The second of three T20s, all worth two points each, takes place in Canberra on Thursday.

McCullum sees India series as prep for CT

KOLKATA (AFP): England coach Brendon McCullum said Monday he hopes his side emerge from a host of limited overs matches against India in "good shape" for the upcoming Champions Trophy. The tourists, led by Jos Buttler, will face India in the first of five T20 internationals at Kolkata's Eden Gardens on Wednesday. The India series marks England's first limited-overs tour under McCullum, previously in charge only of the Test side. "I'm desperate for us to play a really watchable brand of cricket," McCullum told reporters. "With the talent we have, there's no reason we can't." The teams will play three one-day matches, before they move into the eight-team ODI Champions Trophy starting February 19 in Pakistan and Dubai. "We'll use the next few weeks to try and hit the ground running, I'm sure there will be some times where we don't quite get it right," he added. "But, hopefully, we will chisel away at that over the next few weeks, and we'll be in good shape come that

Champions Trophy." The 43-year-old McCullum said Buttler, who will only play as a batsman and not keep wicket on the tour, will leave a lasting legacy as England's white-ball leader. "He's in a really good space, he's excited about the team we've got, and excited about the opportunity that sits in front of us," the former New Zealand skipper said. "I'm sure we'll see Jos over the next couple of years really enjoy himself, and hopefully finish with a real strong enjoyment for the game at the back end of his career." But India, led by Suryakumar Yadav, remain the favourites on home turf - and have been boosted by the return of fast bowler Mohammed Shami after he recovered from a foot injury. Shami, 34, last played for India in the ODI World Cup final in November 2023 and recently participated in a few domestic matches to mark his return to competitive cricket. "It's a really good sign for us," India's T20 vice-captain Axar Patel said. "We hope he continues what he did in the World Cup."

Injured Vlhova to miss Alpine skiing worlds

BRATISLAVA (AFP): Reigning Olympic slalom champion Petra Vlhova will miss the skiing world championships in Austria next month as she continues her recovery from a serious knee injury, her coach said on Monday. The 29-year-old tore her knee ligament as she fell during a World Cup giant slalom at Jasna in her native Slovakia exactly a year ago, on January 20, 2024. In December, Vlhova's team said her rehabilitation had been slowed by cartilage problems. "Petra's knee rehabilitation finally seems to be on the right track, showing encouraging progress day by day," Vlhova's Italian coach Mauro Pini said on Monday. "However, the setbacks experienced in December and January have unfortunately compromised the chance to participate in the World Championships in Saalbach," he added. The world championships will be held at Saalbach-Hinterglemm on February 4-16. "We had hoped to be in top form to compete for the medals, but sadly that won't be possible," said Pini.

Ruthless Swiatek beats Lys to make quarter-finals



MELBOURNE (Agencies): Iga Swiatek said she has not yet reached her "peak" after she ruthlessly moved past lucky loser Eva Lys in 59 minutes to reach the quarter-finals of the Australian Open. The five-time major winner dropped just one game as she ended Lys' his-

toric run with a 6-0 6-1 victory on Rod Laver Arena. It is the first time Swiatek, the second seed, has reached the last eight in Melbourne since 2022. "I'm still 23 years old, so there is a lot to improve always," Swiatek said. "I don't feel like I'm in my peak yet but matches

like that definitely give me confidence. I feel like I'm playing a good game." Shortly after the conclusion of her match on Monday, the World Anti-Doping Agency announced it will not appeal against the ban given to Swiatek for a positive test. She tested positive for

heart medication trimetazidine in an out-of-competition sample in August 2024. The International Tennis Integrity Agency accepted the test result was caused by contamination and Swiatek served a one-month suspension, which ended on 4 December. Swiatek, who defeated Britain's Emma Raducanu 6-1 6-0 in the third round, conceded just 10 points as she wrapped up the first set in 24 minutes. She had won 20 straight games across the two matches before Germany's Lys, ranked 128th in the world, eventually managed to hold serve. "Usually I don't feel comfortable with my game at the Australian Open, but this year it is a bit better," said Swiatek, who will replace Aryna Sabalenka as world number one if the defending champion fails to reach the semi-finals. Lys was the first women's singles lucky loser to reach the Australian Open fourth round in the Open era and she described her run in Melbourne as "the nicest week in my life". The 23-year-old had her flight home booked after losing in the final round of qualifying, but she was given a spot in the main draw following Anna Kalinskaya's withdrawal. "I've had a lot of nights where I was actually talking to my parents, often with tears, asking, 'When will the time come?'," Lys said. "Because I know I have the potential, but sometimes I was the only person that's really standing in my own way." Everything just came down to this week where on one side it's definitely the tennis I played, but also it was the luck in the beginning." Swiatek will face Emma Navarro in the last

eight after the American eighth seed clinched a narrow 6-4 5-7 7-5 win against Russian Daria Kasatkina, the ninth seed. Keys upsets Rybakina to reach quarter-finals. Earlier on Monday, Madison Keys upset sixth seed Elena Rybakina in three sets to reach the quarter-finals. The American 19th seed won 6-3 1-6 6-3 on Margaret Court Arena to extend her winning streak to nine matches. Kazakhstan's former Wimbledon champion Rybakina struggled with a back injury in the third round and despite rallying in the second set, was unable to combat Keys' aggressive approach. "Her serve is such a weapon, so I knew that if I could just try to make at least some of her service games a little bit competi-

tive, then I had a chance," said Keys. "So I was basically just trying to make anything that I could get my racquet on back over the net, which worked sometimes." Keys will play Ukraine's 28th seed Elina Svitolina in the quarter-finals after she beat Russian Veronika Kudermetova 6-4 6-1. Svitolina, 30, recovered from a poor start to reach her 12th Grand Slam singles quarter-final, before dedicating the win to her country. "This fighting spirit that I have is completely Ukrainian spirit that I try to show, that I try to represent, as well," said Svitolina. "For me to find a way to win matches, to find a way to bring a little light, a little win for Ukrainian people, is something that I feel I am responsible of. To bring the fight is the least that I can do."



In brief

Poet Abid Ali Abid remembered

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 54th death anniversary of renowned Urdu and Persian poet Abid Ali Abid is being observed on Monday. Abid Ali Abid was born on 17 September 1906 at Dera Ismail Khan. He graduated in law and joined the bar, but his literary inclination brought him to Lahore, where he studied Persian for his M. A. degree and started teaching Persian at Dayal Singh College, Lahore. With a keen understanding of Persian and English languages and their literatures, he developed a broader perspective in his critical writings. He thus created a discourse that was new to Urdu criticism. He was one of the initial drama writers and feature writers at the newly established Radio Pakistan Lahore in the late 1940s and 1950s. Abid Ali Abid also wrote poetry, but it was his criticism that earned him a place of distinction. His works include Usool-e-Inteqaad, Adab Ke Asloob, Shama, Yad-e-Baiza, Suhaag, Talmihaat-e-Iqbal, Tilasmaat, Main Kabhi Ghazal Na Kehna, Baresham Ood and Inteqaad. He died on 20 January 1971 in Lahore.

Police bust two bike lifting gangs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi District Police have busted two bike lifting gangs and arrested their five members on recovery of 10 stolen motorcycles, said a police spokesman here on Monday. He informed that Waris Khan police netted two accused namely Sheraz alias Sheri and Rameez, allegedly involved in bike lifting cases and recovered five stolen motorcycles. Similarly, Dhamial police rounded up three bike lifters, Faizan, Khurram and Shabrat Khan with five stolen motorcycles and other items. Divisional Superintendents of Police appreciated the police teams and directed to accelerate ongoing operation against bike and car lifters.

Police arrest 3 POs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police have arrested three suspects, including a proclaimed offender involved in the murder of three individuals and two members of an extortion gang who demanded PKR 10 million from a businessman under threat of death. A police spokesperson told APP on Monday that Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Police, Syed Ali Raza, announced the arrests during a news conference on Monday, adding that the suspects were apprehended during operations and police recovered weapons, ammunition, a motorcycle, and mobile phones used in the crimes. He said during a press conference at the Rescue 15 Field Office, DIG Raza said that the arrests were made as part of a focused campaign under the special directives of Inspector General of Police Islamabad, Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, to apprehend proclaimed offenders involved in serious crimes. DIG Raza explained that in Shahzad Town, a police team intercepted two suspicious individuals on a motorcycle. Upon being stopped, the suspects opened fire on the police. However, thanks to bulletproof vests and precautionary measures, the officers remained unharmed. DIG Raza said one suspect, identified as Ghulam Hussain Shah, was arrested on the spot with a 30-bore pistol, while his accomplice managed to escape.



ISLAMABAD: A view of dusty air covered Faisal Masjid during fast wind in capital city. —INP Photo

Gilani stresses strong Parliament-Media collaboration for societal welfare

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Monday highlighted the importance of a strong partnership between Parliament, the government, and the media to promote positive connections and a shared vision for societal welfare.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the 10th Annual Media Cricket League 2025 in Islamabad, Gilani highlighted the col-

lective efforts of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in supporting media houses.

"This collaborative approach has fostered a healthy and cooperative environment. Together, we can build a society where everyone thrives and contributes to national development," he said.

The Chairman congratulated the organizers and participants of the Media Cricket League and lauded

the Jang Media Group for successfully hosting this flagship event over the past decade.

He underscored the significance of such initiatives, and said, "These activities play a crucial role in providing a healthy environment for media personnel. They foster teamwork, sportsmanship, and a sense of camaraderie among media professionals while setting a positive example for society."

PIMS successfully running evening OPDs' service

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) has continued providing best medical services to incoming patients at its Out-Patient Departments' (OPDs) evening shift.

According to Dr. Mubashir Mushtaq Daba, Spokesperson to Executive Director PIMS, the OPD evening hour was started on the special instructions of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to ensure medical facility to maximum patients.

He said that more than 50,000 patients have been treated in the last few months. Thousands of patients are being provided medical facilities every day in the evening hours.

Last year, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif had directed the Prime Minister's Coordinator for Health, Dr. Malik Mukhtar Ahmed Barth to start the OPD at PIMS in the evening hours to provide the best medical facilities to the citizens of Islamabad.

He added with the efforts of Executive Director PIMS, Professor Dr. Imran Sikandar, the OPD in the evening hours was started in April last year, during which a total of 55,377 patients have been treated till now.

He said that a total of 859,000 patients got benefit from OPD in the morning hours since April last year while 500,000 patients visited the hospital's emer-

gency since April last year for emergency treatment.

Since the start of evening OPD services, medical facilities were provided to 3,309 patients in April last year and 7,234 in May.

Similarly, 6,394 patients were treated in June, 7,074 in July, 9,943 in August, 8,594 in September, 7,740 in October, 5,193 in November, and 5,700 patients in December.

He said that Executive Director of PIMS, Dr. Imran Sikandar has issued special instructions to every department of the hospital to fully satisfy every patient. He added the hospital administration and doctors are always ready to provide quality medical facilities to the patients.

Online shopping trend appears popular among public

ISLAMABAD (APP): The citizens of twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad are getting more interest in online shopping to avoid spending more time and saving travelling expenses.

According to a survey conducted, the trend of online shopping was increasing in population particularly in women.

Citizens claimed that this practice is more convenience, flexibility, with time-saving benefits.

"Online shopping gives me access to a global market, allowing to purchase products from retailers around the world and it's also reduces the need of physical stores and trans-

portation," a customer Shahida Perveen said.

She added "I prefer online shopping which is growing rapidly and social networks have become increasingly important platforms." Sundus Ali another customer said that "Online shopping has made my life so much easier. I can shop from anywhere, at any time, and have my purchases delivered right to my doorstep."

She said, "Online shopping saves time and effort, allowing me to browse and purchase products quickly."

Customer Zeba Hayat said "online shopping allows me to avoid crowded stores and shopping

malls". "I love how I can read reviews from other customers before making a purchase which helps me make informed decisions and avoid buying something that might not be right for me," She remarked.

She said that online retailers frequently offer discounts, promotions, and price matching, making it easier for us to discover and purchase products. Online shopping often provides better prices and deals compared to physical stores, she added. She said online shopping enables people with mobility issues or those living in remote areas to access products easily.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor selling sack of oranges along roadside in the federal capital. —INP Photo

Mian Javed slams PTI for lack of meaningful dialogue

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League (N) leader Mian Javed Latif slammed PTI, emphasizing that its leadership must adopt a more collaborative approach and shed its ego-driven mindset if meaningful dialogue is to take place.

In a recent interview with a private news channel, Mian Javed Latif launched a blistering attack on PTI, alleging that their negotiation goals were vastly different from their initial claims, exposing a shocking disconnect between their words and actions.

Mian Javed Latif strongly condemned PTI, holding them accountable for perpetuating a culture of revenge and chaos in politics over the past few years.

He emphasized that PTI's leadership has consistently prioritized personal interests and vendettas over the well-being of the nation, leading to a toxic and divisive political environment.

Responding to a query, Mian Latif said that the leaked call between Farah Gogi, Malik Riaz and Bushra Bibi is a damning indictment of the PTI government's corruption.

It clearly shows that they were involved in corrupt practices and using their influence for personal gain, he added. To another ques-

tion, Mian Javed Latif stated that the world powers currently exerting pressure on Pakistan are not opposed to Imran Khan, but rather are pursuing their own interests.

According to Latif, these powers utilize financial institutions as a means to achieve their objectives, implying a form of economic coercion.

Mian Javed Latif also criticized PTI for their handling of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project.

He alleged that PTI's leadership initially showed reluctance towards CPEC, which led to a slowdown in the project's progress.

HC emphasizes strengthening Pak-Singapore ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): High Commissioner of Pakistan to Singapore, Rabia Shafiq on Monday highlighted the longstanding strong growing bilateral relationship between Pakistan and Singapore, emphasizing continued collaboration at bilateral, regional and multilateral fora.

She stated that over the past few decades, Pakistan and Singapore had steadily cultivated its political economic and institutional partnership with Singapore. While engagements have laid a strong foundation for cooperation across multiple sectors, she stressed that there existed immense myriad potential untapped.

She made these remarks while addressing members of Singapore Press Club in

a gathering at Pakistan House, Singapore, according to a press release received here.

The event, attended by journalists and communication specialists, featured a display of books showcasing Pakistan's tourism potential and rich cultural heritage. Participants were also served with traditional Pakistani cuisine.

During her address to the journalists, the High Commissioner emphasized that both Pakistan and Singapore were committed to working together. While diplomatic ties have flourished, the economic and trade relationship between Pakistan and Singapore still holds untapped potential, the High Commissioner said.

Currently, the trade vol-

ume between the two countries stands at approximately US\$1.193 billion, which is relatively modest compared to other South Asian nations and the Halal products sector presents significant potential, she added.

She further said that another promising development was Pakistan's growing presence in Singapore's fintech ecosystem. Since 2019, there has been regular participation in the Singapore Fintech Festival, showcasing the innovative potential of Pakistani startups.

This engagement has led to increased participation by Pakistani companies in global fintech events, further expanding opportunities for collaboration, the High Commissioner said.

Citizens troubled over drain water seeped in gas pipelines

RAWALPINDI (APP): Dirty darian water and gutters' pathogenic materials have mixed in the gas pipelines creating mess for the citizens. The poisonous thick fluid has also entered in the homes through the gas connections. The worsening situation has created the environmental as well as domestic gas supply threats for the residents.

The residents of the Rawalpindi Cantonment area have complained about the issue to Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL), which sent its teams to flush out the drain water and other masses which have seepaged into the main gas sanctioning lines. However, the field crew of SNGPL could not do any needful.

"We have registered multiple complaints to SNGPL for an urgent action, but they came after one week and left the area without conclusive output", said Tahir Malik who resides in Tench Bhatta.

He further informed APP that the gas shortage has reduced to almost zero gas supply due the water dissolved masses.

Sidra Arsalan, another residents said she was facing the issue for last two weeks. "SNGPL crew came twice and pressured the main gas pipelines which flushed out black thick liquids mixed with gutter substances from the gas pipes. But they left the area saying that they would inform their seniors", sidra said expressing her annoyance over the prevailing situation.

Aziz Butt, another resident of the same area said that in addition to the gas supply stoppage, health issues could also emerge as endemic. "We are already facing the gas supply shortage, now the pollutants are entering in our kitchens spreading pungent smells and threatening our health's", he said.

On the other side, SNGPL officials visiting

the victims area informed APP that they were in effort to trace the spot where the gas pipelines and drain water got intermixed and would soon come up with the required maintenance.

"We gave pressure in the lines to flush out the mass present in them, we will inform the relevant department to trace the spot for needful maintenance", said one of the officials from SNGPL. Nonetheless, the issue remains stand-still which has furthered the severe gas supply facing many streets of Tench Bhatta.

A considerable decades old gas connections are found mixed with drains. This has weakened the material quality and ultimately perforated the main supply line. The residents have appealed to the concerned authorities to take up the issues for urgent redressal. They said they would organize a protest in case the issue is not addressed in coming days by SNGPL.

Need for coordinated efforts to save Youth from Tobacco hazards

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a significant step towards combating the growing tobacco epidemic among Pakistan's youth, the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) on Monday convened a two-day dialogue titled "Discussion on Sustainable Tobacco Control Measures: Protecting Youth from Emerging Health Risks." The participants emphasized the need for strengthening policy frameworks, enhancing enforcement mechanisms, implementing higher tobacco taxes, regulating emerging tobacco products, and developing innovative public advocacy initiatives to protect the health of future generations.

Barrister Dr. Muhammad Ali Saif, Advisor to Chief Minister KPK on Information and PRs emphasized on the grave implications of tobacco use on public health and its pervasive impact on society. "The health of our future generations is at risk, and it is a challenge we cannot afford to ignore," he remarked. "The consequences of inaction are severe, not only in terms of health but also regarding the economic burden and social costs that come with it. Collective action is imperative to safeguard our youth and protect the nation's future."

Dr. Khalil Ahmad, Program Manager at SPARC, highlighted SPARC's ongoing initiatives and stressed the urgency for immediate and sustainable interventions. "Tobacco use among our youth is a

growing epidemic that poses severe health, social, and economic challenges. We must implement robust measures to curb this trend before it spirals out of control," he asserted.

Prof. Dr. Matir Rehman, Dean of Allied Healthcare Sciences at the Health Services Academy (HSA), provided a comprehensive analysis of the tobacco epidemic. He stated that over 1.3 billion people worldwide use tobacco, leading to approximately 8 million deaths annually. In Pakistan, the economic burden of smoking on individuals aged 35 and above is estimated at PKR 615.07 billion. Dr. Rehman called for stringent regulations on emerging tobacco products such as e-cigarettes, highlighting their appeal to youth and the evolving regulatory challenges they pose.

Dr. Faouzia Hanif, Deputy Director at the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination, revealed alarming statistics about tobacco's health toll in Pakistan, with over 160,000 deaths each year attributed to tobacco-related diseases and nearly 1,200 children aged 10-14 years beginning to smoke daily. She underscored the need to strengthen existing laws and adopt new protective measures to reverse this troubling trend.

Dr. Muhammad Asif, Chief Health at the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, addressed the broader impact of tobacco on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like lung cancer, heart

disease, and chronic respiratory conditions. He emphasized the importance of an integrated approach combining health warnings, public education, and youth engagement.

Mr. Rao M. Rizwan from the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination highlighted the environmental consequences of tobacco farming, including deforestation and soil degradation. He urged for sustainable agricultural practices to mitigate these adverse effects. Other key representatives from Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), and PEMRA also attended the event and gave their remarks on important tobacco related issues including taxation, and role of media in shaping public opinions.

The event concluded with actionable resolutions, including raising tobacco taxes, regulating new tobacco products, and enhancing public advocacy. The dialogue brought together key stakeholders from public health, regulatory authorities, taxation, environmental sectors, and media to explore comprehensive strategies addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by tobacco use among youth. Attendees reaffirmed their commitment to collaborative action. Participants included representatives from government ministries, regulatory bodies, civil society organizations, media, and international health organizations, reflecting a united front for sustainable tobacco control.

Two killed in traffic accident

MAZAR-E-SHARIF (Amu TV): Two people were killed, and three others injured, in a traffic accident on the Mazar-e-Sharif-Hairatan highway in Balkh province, according to a statement from the Taliban. The accident occurred when a passenger vehicle of the "Pasu" model collided with a "Mazda" truck. The injured were transported to medical centers for treatment and are currently under medical care, the statement said on Monday.

Afghanistan seeks aid

KABUL (TOLNews): Amir Khan Muttaqi, the acting minister of foreign affairs, in a meeting with the Alexander Matheou, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) regional director for Asia Pacific, called for expanding healthcare services and humanitarian aid in remote districts of Afghanistan. He also emphasized cooperation in treating children with congenital heart defects.

Taliban trade minister holds talks with Iranian delegation on rail trade



KABUL (Amu TV): The Taliban-run commerce minister, Nooruddin Azizi, held discussions with an Iranian delegation on boosting imports and exports between Afghanistan and Iran via rail, according to a Taliban statement.

According to the Taliban's ministry of commerce, the talks focused on facilitating the transport of Afghan goods through Iran and Turkey to European markets, a development they described as a significant aspect of the negotiations.

The Iranian delegation, led by Morteza Jafari, the deputy head of Iran's Railway Operations, pledged to expedite the transfer of Afghanistan's export, transit, and import goods "in the shortest time and at

the lowest cost," the ministry said in a statement.

The talks come amid mounting concerns from economic experts over Afghanistan's growing trade imbalance under Taliban rule. Observers warn that a surge in imports coupled with a decline in exports has turned Afghanistan into a consumption-driven economy, exacerbating poverty and unemployment.

Russia recently reported that Afghanistan was its largest importer of flour globally in 2024. Similarly, both Pakistan and Iran have noted an increase in their exports to Afghanistan, though reports indicate that Afghanistan's exports to these countries have significantly decreased in comparison to previous years.

Taliban sentence four Kunduz musicians

KUNDUZ (Amu TV): Four local musicians, who were arrested by the Taliban intelligence on January 10 in Ali Abad district of the northeastern province of Kunduz, have been sentenced to 15 months in prison, a source from the province said on Monday.

The musicians were reportedly detained for hosting an overnight gathering and playing the dam-bura, a traditional string instrument, at a guesthouse in Khil-e-Gada village.

The detainees have been identified as Amir Shah, Almas, Feraidoun, and Shamsullah, all residents of Khil-e-Gada and Qasem Ali villages in the district.

Taliban have yet to issue any public statement regarding the case.

Since their return to power in August 2021, Taliban have banned music and musicians, besides other restrictions imposed by them on people's freedoms.

The UN and other organizations have repeatedly condemned such actions as violations of fundamental human rights.

900 Afghan migrants freed

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation of the Taliban has announced the release of 882 Afghan migrants who were detained by neighbor country police last week despite holding migration cards.

In a statement, the ministry stated that these individuals were freed through the efforts of the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation of the Taliban.

According to the statement, these individuals had been arrested by neighbor country in January.

The ministry also noted that 84 Afghan migrants remain in prison, and efforts are ongoing to secure their release.

The arrest of Afghan migrants in neighbor country has seen a significant rise in recent weeks, with dozens of individuals, including women and children, being detained daily by the country's police.

The detention of Afghan migrants in neighbor country has sparked widespread concern and criticism from groups such as the Afghan Human Rights Defenders Committee, the Afghan Embassy, human rights organizations, and some officials.

Meanwhile, neighbor country authorities and the Islamic Republic have reiterated their warning about the forced deportation of millions of Afghan migrants by the end of this solar year.

According to the Afghan Human Rights Defenders Committee, Afghan migrants neighbor country face harassment, extortion, forced deportation, and administrative challenges.

The committee has accused neighbor country of imposing severe psychological and financial pressure on Afghan migrants and called on the international community and human rights organizations to support Afghan migrants.

The increasing arrests and forced deportations of Afghan migrants in neighbor country underscore the urgent need for regional cooperation and humanitarian intervention.

The plight of Afghan migrants, including their vulnerability to harassment and extortion, calls for immediate action to safeguard their rights and well-being.

Chinese envoy calls for stronger ties, joint fight against terrorism

KABUL (Amu TV): Zhao Xing, China's ambassador to Afghanistan, emphasized the need to strengthen bilateral relations and tackle terrorism during a ceremony in Kabul on Monday commemorating 70 years of diplomatic ties between the two nations. Speaking at the event, Zhao outlined four key proposals for enhancing collaboration with Afghanistan.

"In today's complex international environment, China and Afghanistan must respect each other's core interests, build mutual trust, and expand cooperation in all areas," he said. "We must work toward a shared future."

He expressed China's readiness to partner with Afghanistan on the Global Development Initiative, saying, "China is prepared to work with Afghanistan to deepen economic ties and create opportunities for mutual growth."

Zhao also highlighted the importance of cultural and educational exchanges through the Global Civilization Initiative, adding, "We are ready to enhance cultural, educational, and health cooperation to strengthen mutual understanding and friendship between our two peoples."

Addressing security concerns, Zhao stressed the Global Security Initiative, stating, "China is committed to working with Afghanistan to combat terrorism



decisively, ensuring collective security and fostering a peaceful and stable regional environment."

Abbas Stanekzai, the Taliban's deputy foreign minister, reaffirmed Afghanistan's commitment to maintaining peaceful ties with China. "Afghan soil will never be a threat to China," he said, adding, "Our policy is not to interfere in the affairs of other countries, and we ask others to respect our internal matters as well."

The ceremony underscored the importance of bilateral cooperation in achieving regional stability and economic progress. Both sides reiterated their commitment to stronger ties, with Zhao concluding, "Together, we can create a secure, harmonious, and prosperous future for our region."

Rina Amiri steps down as US special envoy

KABUL (Ariana News): Rina Amiri, the special representative of the United States for the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan, has resigned from her position.

US President-elect Donald Trump prepares to take over. Amiri had worked to protect the rights of Afghan women after the collapse of the US-backed republic government in August 2021.

In a post on X on Monday, Amiri said Monday "will mark my last day as the US Special Envoy for Afghan Women, Girls & Human Rights. It has been a great honor to advocate for the courageous Afghan women and men at the frontlines of fighting for a rights-based & inclusive Afghanistan."

In a "farewell letter" she stated: "Above all, we must continue to work to convince the Taliban (Islamic Emirate) to reverse the destructive decrees that have stripped women and girls of their agency, mobility, education, livelihood, voice, and access to life-saving medical institutes.



"We must also continue to demand that the Taliban (Islamic Emirate) respect the rights of members of ethnic and religious minorities. They have created a culture of fear and intimidation, keeping Afghanistan locked in a cycle of dependency and poverty," she said.

Rina Amiri is an Afghan-born American diplomat and activist who has served as special envoy since January 6, 2022.

Accountability for death of activist demanded

KABUL (Amu TV): Richard Bennett, the United Nations special rapporteur for Afghanistan, has called for an investigation into the death of Hamza Ulfat, an activist.

Bennett described Ulfat's death as "disturbing" and urged accountability. Reports indicate that Ulfat was detained and tortured by the Taliban for his activism, according to Fareshta Abbasi, a human rights researcher at Human Rights Watch.

Ulfat is believed to have died shortly after his release from a Taliban prison, though the exact circumstances remain unclear.

"This is very disturbing and requires investigation and accountability," Bennett said.

Ulfat's death has drawn renewed attention to the plight of activists in Afghanistan. Numerous reports have surfaced of Taliban authorities detaining, torturing, and beating activists in prison since the group seized power in 2021.

Human rights organizations have consistently raised alarms about the Taliban's treatment of civil society members, warning that such actions undermine fundamental freedoms and further isolate

Afghanistan from the international community.

Hamza Ulfat, a social activist and teacher from Daikundi province, has died after enduring prolonged torture and imprisonment by the Taliban, according to sources who spoke to Amu Media.

Ulfat, 31, was a graduate of political science from Balkh University in Mazar-e-Sharif. During the final days of Afghanistan's republic government, he served as a commander in the public uprisings in Mazar-e-Sharif and maintained close ties with Commander Hassan Reza Hazara.

After the fall of the republic in 2021, Ulfat chose to remain in Afghanistan, becoming a prominent social and civil activist. His activism began during his university years and continued until his arrest by the Taliban.

Sources revealed that Ulfat was arrested by the Taliban's intelligence agency in Kabul one year ago. He was reportedly released in July last year but succumbed to his injuries several months later. According to sources, his death resulted from the effects of torture and physical abuse he endured while in Taliban custody.

Mother in Kunar gives birth to quadruplets

KUNAR (Khaama Press): Officials at the Kunar Provincial Hospital reported that a mother in the province has given birth to four babies, including one girl and three boys.

According to the hospital officials, the mother delivered the quadruplets via surgery on Sunday.

The hospital staff confirmed that the quadruplets consist of three boys and one girl.

Meanwhile, Ansarullah Hamid, the director of Kunar Provincial Hospital, stated that the mother and babies are in stable condition, with the babies' weights also being satisfactory.

This is not the first instance of quadruplets being born in Afghanistan. Similar cases have been reported in Herat, Ghor, Faryab, and several other provinces.

Doctors emphasize that such pregnancies require special care due to their complexities. Quadruplet births are rare and are often associated with risks such as premature delivery or low birth weight.

This comes amid the severe humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, with millions

affected by poverty, hunger, and displacement. Years of conflict and economic instability have left many reliant on humanitarian aid, particularly in remote areas where access remains a significant challenge. Vulnerable communities are often left without the assistance they need to survive.

The healthcare system is also in a critical state, with insufficient resources and a shortage of trained medical professionals. Maternal and child healthcare is especially at risk, as many pregnant women and newborns lack access to essential services, leading to high rates of preventable mortality. Specialized care for chronic conditions or high-risk cases is scarce, leaving countless individuals without treatment.

This comes amid ongoing challenges in addressing the root causes of poverty, displacement, and inadequate healthcare. The lack of sustainable solutions exacerbates the suffering of Afghanistan's population, highlighting the urgent need for international support to strengthen healthcare and provide essential humanitarian aid.

Stanikzai's call for policy change a 'promising development'

KABUL (Ariana News): Zalmay Khalilzad, the former US special envoy for Afghanistan, said Monday that the deputy foreign minister Shir Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai's remarks on the violation of women's rights was a "promising development".

On Saturday, Stanikzai criticized the ban on education of women and girls and appealed to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's leader to scrap the ban on education for women.

"We call on the leadership again to open the doors of education," he said.

He called the exclusion of girls from education an "injustice" on the part of the Islamic Emirate against 20 million of the 40 million people in Afghanistan.

Speaking at a graduation ceremony at a religious

school in Khost, Stanikzai said that the Islamic Emirate's stance was not in accordance with Sharia.

He said: "Today we are doing injustice to 20 million of the 40 million people. Will we not rise on the Day of Judgment paralyzed and having denied all rights? The right of inheritance is not given to girls. The right to choose a husband is not given."

"We get girls married in Baad practice. We don't allow education. We don't allow them to go to the mosque. The doors of the universities and schools are closed. We don't even let them go to madrassa. Are we acting in accordance with the Sharia?"

"Another issue is that the whole world has a problem with us on this issue. They criticize us about it. But the path we have taken is a matter of our own liking, not the Sharia," he said.

It is not the first time he has said that women and girls deserve to have an education. He made similar remarks in September 2022, a year after schools closed for girls and months before the introduction of a university ban.

But the latest comments marked his first call for a change in policy and a direct appeal to the Islamic Emirate's supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada.

Stanikzai is a senior member of the IEA and headed up peace talks in Doha, Qatar, prior to the collapse of the former government. As special envoy for Afghanistan, Khalilzad was lead negotiator during these talks.

On Monday, Khalilzad

Drivers urge completion of Kabul-Parwan road project

KABUL (TOLNews): Several drivers and passengers who travel on the Kabul-Parwan highway are calling for the completion of the construction of the second lane of this route.

According to them, the narrow width of the road has caused serious problems for freight and passenger vehicles in commuting.

The construction of the second lane of this highway, from the Bagram intersection to the Jabal Siraj district, covering a length of 25 kilometers and at a cost of 1.537 billion Afs, was initiated during the previous government and progressed 75%. However, with political changes and the transformation of the regime, the construction process was halted.

Taj Mohammad, a driver, said: "We request the Islamic Emirate rebuild the roads because this route is one of the key highways. We also request serious action in this regard."

Mohammad Sharif, a resident of Panjshir, stated: "Every time I travel on this



route, the most exhausting part is between Jabal Siraj and after the Tutumdara area." Mohammad Omar, a resident of Parwan, said: "We urge the Islamic Emirate to complete this road."

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Public Works has stated that the completion of the second lane of this highway is included in the ministry's

plans for next year.

Mohammad Ashraf Haqshenas, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Public Works, said: "The construction work of this highway from the Bagram intersection to Jabal Siraj had previously started, with about 23 to 25 percent remaining, and its completion is planned for next year."

The Kabul-Parwan highway, in addition to connecting the provinces of Parwan, Panjshir, and Kapisa to the capital, also links the northern and northeastern provinces of the country to Kabul, through which commercial goods are transported to Central Asian countries.

Over 65,000 passports issued in Nangarhar

J A L A L A B A D (TOLNews): Officials of Nangarhar Police Command have stated that more than 65,000 passports have been distributed in the province during the current solar year.

These passports were issued over the past 10 months to traders, patients, the elderly, and the public. Following the return of the

Islamic Emirate to power, the demand for passports in the country has increased significantly, and the distribution process has faced challenges.

Bilal Hilal, deputy director of the passport office at the Nangarhar Police Command, said: "So far, we have distributed 65,495 passports, including 57,185 online passports and 8,085

offline passports. The offline passports were distributed to patients, the elderly, and Mujahideen. Additionally, 25 commercial passports have also been issued."

Meanwhile, several Nangarhar residents have called on officials to provide more facilities in the passport distribution process.

Sayed Taieb Hamaad, the spokesperson for the

Nangarhar Police Command, said: "Currently, patients, the elderly, residency permit holders, and traders can visit in person and submit their passport applications."

"My son fell from a tree and fractured his spine in five places. We want his passport to be printed here in Nangarhar." Said Rohullah, a resident of

Nangarhar.

Kerim Shah, another resident of Nangarhar, added: "Along with the passport registration process, printing facilities should also be provided in Nangarhar to reduce the two-week waiting time, allowing people to receive their passports in this province," said Rohullah, a resident of Nangarhar.

21 Pakistani nationals rescued off Moroccan coast: FO

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Based on verified information, twenty-one Pakistani nationals have been identified among the survivors of a maritime incident near Dakhla, Morocco.

"Through our diplomatic mission in Rabat, immediate assistance has been mobilized for the affected nationals. The Embassy has arranged essential provisions including food, water, medicine, and clothing. Local authorities in Dakhla are providing shelter and medical care in response to our diplomatic outreach," Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release on Sunday.

Embassy's consular team was currently present in Dakhla to oversee relief operations and coordinate with local authorities.

The government remained in close coordination with relevant authorities in Morocco to ensure comprehensive support for the affected citizens and finalise repatriation procedures, the spokesperson said, adding "We are committed

to safeguarding the welfare of overseas Pakistanis and will continue to monitor the situation closely."

Names of the survivors are listed below.

1. Muddassir Hussain (CNIC: 34202-6131193-3, DOB: 5/3/1993, Passport: ZV6891933), Waseem Khalid (CNIC: 34403-4305069-9, DOB: 15/8/1988, Passport: WQ4110695), Muhammad Khaliq (CNIC: 34603-2353241-1, DOB: 18/1/1980, Passport: HF4102415), Abdul Ghaffar (CNIC: 33203-6590419-1, DOB: 12/12/2000, Passport: CE4184192), Gul Shameer (CNIC: 35404-5022277-3, DOB: 14/9/2003, Passport: UR5152771), Tanveer Ahmed (CNIC: 37302-7926447-9, DOB: 30/10/1992, Passport: WE1164473), Syed Muhammad Abbas Kazmi (CNIC: 34603-1372157-1, DOB: 24/5/1998, Passport: CR4851572), Ghulam Mustafa (CNIC: 34202-2841954-9, DOB: 26/6/2004, Passport: FE0879541), Syed Badar Mohy ud din (CNIC: 34403-4975003-7, DOB: 25/4/1989, Passport: AG0190032), Imran Iqbal

(CNIC: 34202-0847176-5, DOB: 20/2/1990, Passport: GF1331762), Shoaib Zafar (CNIC: 34402-3696128-9, DOB: 30/6/1989, Passport: BP5521285), Ali Hassan (CNIC: 34402-0896750-1, DOB: 15/6/2001, Passport: MT6807502), Syed Mehtab Ul Hassan (CNIC: 34202-6549895-1, DOB: 29/1/2005, Passport: UE6808951), Uzair Basharat (CNIC: 34202-3872445-7, DOB: 27/2/1997, Passport: DP3844452), Mohammad Asif (CNIC: 34301-1767148-7, DOB: 3/6/1975, Passport: DC1881482), Mujahid Ali (CNIC: 35404-4511945-7, DOB: 11/2/1993, Passport: VM1809453), Amir Ali (CNIC: 34101-4462488-1, DOB: 16/7/2003, Passport: ZK1824881), Mohammad Umar Farooqie (CNIC: 34503-0382485-5, DOB: 16/4/2004, Passport: KC8964851), Bilawal Iqbal (CNIC: 37405-7075359-7, DOB: 1/12/1998, Passport: XE1333591), Arsalan (CNIC: 34601-5160483-1, DOB: 5/10/2002, Passport: JX1914831) and Irfan Ahmad (CNIC: 34601-5525085-5, DOB: 13/4/1984, Passport: KJ1150853)



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari welcoming the Chief of General Staff of Iranian Armed Forces, Major General Dr Mohammad Bagheri, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

We will stand by PTI founder: KP CM

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur reaffirmed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) dedication to upholding democracy, the rule of law, and the protection of citizens' fundamental rights.

Speaking in a statement, Gandapur emphasized that PTI founder Imran Khan and his wife, Bushra Bibi, continue to demonstrate unwavering faith in the law, despite what they consider to be unjust treatment.

He stated that their struggle would persist as long as Khan remains committed to the cause, declaring, "We will stand by PTI founder Imran Khan until my last breath." The Chief Minister also highlighted the importance of an independent judiciary and media freedom, underscoring that those who live in fear often compromise their principles. He reaffirmed that PTI's core struggle is

to ensure that democracy flourishes, and the rule of law is maintained in Pakistan. In related developments, the PTI negotiation committee, led by spokesperson Sahibzada Hamid Raza, has communicated that the party will not continue negotiations with the government unless a judicial commission is established to investigate the events of May 9 and November 26. The committee has set a deadline of January 31 for the government to take action, warning that without the formation of a judicial commission, talks will not progress.

Following a meeting with Imran Khan at Adiala Jail, Raza stressed that the ball was now in the government's court. "Imran Khan has made it clear that we are not seeking a judge of our own choosing, but an impartial commission to identify those responsible for the events of May 9 and November 26," Raza

explained. He added that PTI's demands had already been submitted in writing to the government's negotiation committee.

The PTI committee also raised concerns regarding the release of prisoners, another key demand. Raza noted that the negotiations were held in a controlled environment, but emphasized that the next steps rested with the government. "We have shown as much flexibility as we could," Raza said, urging the government to act swiftly if the talks were to reach a successful conclusion. He concluded by stressing that the formation of a judicial commission was crucial for the continuation of negotiations.

The political drama continues to unfold as PTI pushes for the formation of a fair and impartial judicial body to investigate the alleged injustices, while the government faces mounting pressure to address the party's demands.

PHC ad-hoc Judges: JC to initiate process on Feb 1

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: The process of appointing ad-hoc judges at Peshawar High Court (PHC) has begun, and the verification process of newly nominated lawyers has also started. A list of 40 nominees has been compiled and shared with relevant institutions for evaluation.

According to sources, the Peshawar High Court and Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) members received a letter from the Secretary of the Judicial Commission, instructing them to consider 40 nominees for the upcoming meeting scheduled on 1st February. The list includes new names.

Sources further revealed that the Judicial Commission has sent the names to all members, and various institutions have started verifying the nominees' credentials. A report will be compiled after the verification process is complete.

Moreover, the sources stated that PHC had already cleared nine names, including District and Session Judges named Kaleem Arshad, Inam Ullah Khan Wazir, Subia Waqar Khattak and Farah Jamsheed. The lawyers include Qazi Jawad Ihsan Ullah Qureshi, Muhammad Junaid Anwar, Salahuddin, Barrister Muddassir Amir and Sadiq Ali Mohmand.

However, some members of the Judicial Commission proposed new names, which will be reviewed. Due to lack of clearance of the new nominees, various institutions have initiated the verification process. During the verification process, the nominees' decisions, tax returns, and other factors will be reviewed to ensure all records are available during the Judicial Commission meeting.

The sources also revealed that some new names were nominated by political parties represented in the Judicial Commission, totaling 30 nominees. Before the Judicial Commission meeting on February 1, a committee will review all the names to ensure they meet the required criteria.

Currently, the Peshawar High Court has 13 judges, with several serving in different circuit benches. The federal government has increased the number of judges from 20 to 30 through a notification.

Indian rapist murderer of doctor sentenced

NEW DELHI (AFP): The rapist and murderer of an Indian doctor was sentenced to life in prison on Monday for a gruesome crime that sparked nationwide protests and widespread hospital strikes last year.

The family of the 31-year-old medic broke into tears saying they were "shocked" at the sentence and had hoped her murderer would be hanged, for a case that highlighted the chronic issue of violence against women in the world's most populous country. But Judge Anirban Das said the case did not deserve the death penalty as it was not "the rarest of the rare cases", and ordered that Sanjoy Roy must spend his life behind bars.

The discovery of the trainee doctor's bloodied body at a government hospital in the eastern city of Kolkata in August 2024 sparked outrage. The murder led to demands by doctors at government hospitals for additional security, with thousands of citizens in Kolkata and elsewhere in India joining doctors' protests in solidarity.

Gazans begin searching for people under rubble

GAZA/CAIRO (Reuters): Palestinians began searching on Monday for thousands of Gazans believed still buried under rubble, as residents expressed shock at the devastation wrought by 15 months of war on the enclave on the second day of a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas.

The truce in the 15-month-old conflict, which has laid waste to the Gaza Strip and inflamed the Middle East, took effect on Sunday with the release of the first three hostages held by Hamas and 90 Palestinians freed from Israeli jails.

Now attention is starting to shift to the rebuilding of the coastal enclave which the Israeli military has demolished in retaliation for a Hamas attack on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023. That assault killed 1,200 people with around 250 hostages taken into Gaza, according to Israeli tallies. In the subsequent conflict, more than 47,000 Palestinians have been killed, Gaza's health ministry says.

"We are searching for 10,000 martyrs whose bodies remain under the rubble," said Mahmoud Basal, spokesperson of the Palestinian Civil Emergency Services. At least 2,840 bodies were melted and there were no

traces of them, he said.

Displaced Gazan Mohamed Gomaa lost his brother and nephew in the war. "It was a big shock, and the amount (of people) feeling shocked is countless because of what happened to their homes — it's destruction, total destruction. It's not like an earthquake or a flood, no no, what happened is a war of extermination," he said.

With a growing flow of aid into the Palestinian enclave, residents flocked into markets, with some expressing happiness at the lower prices and the presence of new food items like imported chocolates. "The prices have gone down, the war is over and the crossing is open to more goods," said Aya Mohammad-Zaki, a displaced woman from Gaza City, who has been sheltering in Deir Al-Balah in central Gaza Strip.

The deal requires 600 truckloads of aid to be allowed into Gaza every day of the initial six-week ceasefire, including 50 carrying fuel. Half of the aid trucks would be delivered to the north, where experts have warned famine is imminent. Residents and medics in Gaza said that for the most part the ceasefire appeared to be holding, although there were isolated incidents. Medics said eight

people had been hit by Israeli fire since Monday morning in the southern city of Rafah, without giving details of their condition.

The Israeli military said it fired warning shots against suspects who approached troops deployed according to the ceasefire agreement. One of the Israeli women hostages released on Sunday, Emily Damari, posted a message on Instagram on Monday.

"I have returned to life, my loved ones," she wrote, "I am the happiest in the world, to just be," said Damari, a British-Israeli citizen. In the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where most of the freed Palestinian detainees returned, Nidaa Zaghebi was finally able to embrace her three children who she had left behind after her arrest by Israeli forces.

Zaghebi's daughters Sadan and Cilla were in tears as they hugged their mother when she arrived at their home, wearing a crown of flowers and wrapped in a traditional Palestinian scarf. "I used to dream of them every night, and imagine what they were doing. I know the family here were very supportive and took good care of them, but motherhood overcomes all other feelings," she told Reuters.



NEWSHERA: JUI-F chief, Maulana Fazlur Reham talking to media persons at Darul Aloom Haqania.

Women, children freed from Israeli prisons greeted

GAZA: Ninety Palestinians have been freed from Israeli prisons and were greeted by large crowds of jubilant relatives, friends and supporters as they returned home to the occupied West Bank in the first prisoner exchange of the Hamas-Israel ceasefire following the release of three Israeli captives in Gaza.

At about 1am local time on Monday (23:00 GMT), Red Cross buses carrying the 90 Palestinian prisoners arrived in Ramallah in the occupied West Bank, where they were greeted by crowds of thousands despite warnings from Israeli forces that celebrations would not be allowed.

The freed Palestinians included 69 women and 21 teenage boys — some as young as 12 — from the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem. Among them was Khalida Jarrar, 62, a leading member of the left-wing Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, who had been held for six months in solitary confinement under "administrative detention", which allows Israeli authorities to jail suspects indefinitely without charge or court verdict.

In the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah, crowds lifted many of the returned prisoners up onto their shoulders in an emotional show of support, as others shouted and whistled. Some attending the

gathering carried the flags of Fatah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and other armed resistance groups. Seven hours earlier, three Israeli women captives in their mid-20s to early 30s were released in Gaza.

Bushra al-Tawil, a Palestinian journalist jailed in Israel in March 2024, was also among the prisoners released on Monday. Tawil said she began her journey at 3am on Sunday morning (01:00 GMT), when she was taken from another Israeli prison ahead of release. In the second prison, she was grouped with other Palestinians awaiting release.

"The wait was extremely hard. But thank God, we were certain that at any moment we would be released," she said. Tawil said her father, who is also in an Israeli jail, will be released soon, too. "I was worried about him. He is still a prisoner, but I just received good news that he will be released as part of this deal," she added.

Amanda Abu Sharkh, 23, from Ramallah, was among the crowd of hundreds who gathered to greet the freed prisoners.

feel like family to us. They are part of us, even if they're not blood relatives," she told the AFP news agency. Muhammad, 20, said he had come from Ramallah with his friends as soon as he heard the prisoners would be released.

Recently freed from Israel's Ofer Prison himself, he expressed "great joy" at the thought of families being reunited. "I know a lot of people in prison, there are innocent people, children and women," he said.

The prisoner exchange between Hamas and Israel marks the first of its kind since November 2023. The exact number of Palestinians due to be released as part of the ceasefire deal is still unknown, with reported estimates ranging from approximately 1,000 to nearly 2,000.

In the first phase of the deal, Hamas is expected to return a total of 33 Israeli captives over the next 42 days — with the next release due on Saturday. The second phase of ceasefire negotiations is due to begin in two weeks. More than 46,000 Palestinians have been killed since the war began on October 7, and nearly 90 percent of Gaza's population has been forcibly displaced by Israeli evacuation orders and attacks. — Aljazeera

RSM reference: Arguments sought from PM's counsel

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Lahore Anti-Corruption Court on Monday directed defence counsel to substantiate his claim through arguments during next date of hearing seeking acquittal of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his son Hamza Shehbaz in Ramzan Sugar Mills reference matter.

Appearing before the court of Judge Sardar Iqbal Dogar on Monday, pleader Anwar Hussain requested for another date of hearing in the matter saying senior counsel Amjad Pervaz was not available to deliver arguments.

It is pertinent to mention that the case has been transferred to a special court from the National Accountability Bureau. The NAB alleged that Shahbaz Sharif, being chief minister of Punjab, had issued a directive for construction of a drain worth Rs200 million in district Chinot primarily for the use of the sugar mills owned by his sons. Both the accused persons have invoked the special court jurisdiction filling application for acquittal in the case.

During the hearing on Monday, the court accepted an application on behalf of former chief minister Punjab Hamza Shebaz seeking exemption from appearance for one time on medical ground. Later, the court asked the pleader to ensure presence of senior defence counsel to present arguments in favor of acquittal applications and adjourned hearing of the case till January 22.

Pakistan Navy to hold exercise AMAN

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Navy is to hold the 9th Multinational exercise AMAN next month. The exercise which has become a major International Naval event is conducted biennially.

Growing global participation in AMAN over the years underscores the trust and confidence reposed by international community on Pakistan Navy efforts and its contributions towards advancing collaborative maritime security.

Objectives of AMAN exercise include promoting peace and regional cooperation, enhancing interoperability with regional and extra regional navies and displaying united resolve against terrorism and crimes in the maritime domain.

Arif Alvi rushes to SHC for protective bail

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Former president Dr Arif Alvi fearing arrest again, rushed to Sindh High Court (SHC) on Monday to seek protective bail in another case lodged against him.

Arif Alvi has been named in the fourth case at Wah Cantt police station. He had already obtained bail in first three cases. Late last month, the Peshawar High Court (PHC) had granted transit bail to Arif Alvi and directed him to appear before the respective trial courts. The PHC approved 40-day bail for the former president. During the hearing, the defence counsel told the court that many cases have been registered against Arif Alvi and his son Awab Alvi in different police stations of the country, suspecting their arrest.