

**Imran, Bushra get bails**  
**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad district and sessions court on Tuesday extended the interim bail of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan in six cases and of Bushra Bibi in one case until February 25. Judge Mohammad Afzal Majoka heard the bail petitions of Khan and Bibi. Khan's lawyer, Khalid Yousaf Chaudhry, appeared in court.



**DUBAI:** Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif exchanging views with President of UAE, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

## CJP briefs IMF mission on judicial reforms

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: The visiting International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission called on Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Yahya Afridi here on Tuesday.

According to sources, the meeting lasted one hour in which the CJP briefed the visiting mission of the global lender on the judicial system and ongoing reforms. The meeting also discussed the appointment of judges and the 26th Constitutional Amendment.

The six-member delegation left the Supreme Court (SC) after meeting the CJP. Soon after the meeting, the CJP told media that the letter from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan had been sent to the constitutional committee of judges which would decide whether the matter falls under Article 183, Clause 3. The constitutional bench would review this issue, he told journalists at a meeting.

He said he would brief journalists on the IMF delegation's visit, discuss Khan's letter, and also talk about the National Judicial Policy Making Committee. The CJP added that he informed the IMF delegation that they had taken an oath to uphold the independence of the judiciary under the constitution.

He clarified that it was not their job to provide all the details and explained the agenda of the National Judicial Policy

Making Committee. He further mentioned that he told the delegation that the supervision of subordinate judiciary was done by high courts. The delegation inquired about adherence to agreements and property rights, to which he responded that reforms were under way on those issues.

In a related development, the IMF rejected the request seeking an extension in the declaration of assets by government officials. A technical delegation from the IMF held meetings with officials of Cabinet Division, Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance, and Ministry of Law. Sources said consultations had begun on the draft for asset declarations as the amended draft of the Civil Servants Act would be shared with the global lender in February. They added that legislation related to assets declarations could only take place after February while the IMF has demanded the Ministry of Finance to meet the benchmarks as per the set conditions.

The amendments to the Act will make it mandatory to disclose children's educational institutions, sources of household income, and the assets of spouse. Sources also stated that under the amendment, the government officials will also have to share information related to the power of attorney. Furthermore, relevant officials from the Ministry of Finance have requested the IMF delegation to ease public access to this information.

## President meets President of Portugal

LISBON (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari and President of the Portuguese Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa on Tuesday, emphasized the need to further deepen bilateral cooperation in various fields.

During a meeting with President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa here at the Palácio Nacional de Belém President Asif Ali Zardari stated that Pakistan attached great importance to its ties with Portugal as the two countries enjoy cordial bilateral relations.

The two leaders discussed enhancing bilateral cooperation and promoting cultural and people to people relations. The president invited President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa to visit Pakistan at a mutually convenient time, saying that such a visit would further solidify the bonds of friendship and open new avenues for collaboration.

The year 2025 marks 75 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Portugal, and both the countries have enjoyed cordial bilateral relations.

## Erdogan due today

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: On the invitation of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, will undertake a two-day visit to Pakistan from Wednesday.

According to Foreign Office, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including Ministers and senior officials, as well as corporate leaders. During the visit, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Erdogan will co-chair the 7th Session of the Pakistan-Turkiye High Level Strategic Cooperation Council.

At the conclusion of the Session, a Joint Declaration and a number of important agreements and MoUs are expected to be signed. The two leaders will also address a joint press stake-out. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will also have bilateral meetings with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari.

Together with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, he will address the Pakistan-Turkiye Business and Investment Forum, bringing together leading investors, companies and business people from both sides. The High Level Strategic Cooperation Council is the highest level decision-making forum, providing strategic direction to further strengthening the bilateral relations between the two countries.

There are a number of Joint Standing Committees under the High Level Strategic Cooperation Council, covering sectors including trade, investment, banking, finance, culture, tourism, energy, defence, agriculture, transport, communication, IT, health, science and technology and education. So far, six sessions of the High Level Strategic Cooperation Council have been held.

don't support absolute freedom or violation of rules and regulations but no law should be in contravention of fundamental rights," he argued.

The court summoned the attorney general for Pakistan for assistance. He assured the petitioners that he would sympathetically hear their viewpoints saying "you can file miscellaneous application." The court adjourned hearing of the case till a date to be decided later.

A few days ago, the Anchors Association and the PFUJ had challenged the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) 2025 in the Islamabad High Court (IHC). Senior anchorpersons Hamid Mir, Nasim Zahra, Adnan Haider and Ameer Abbas filed the petition through Advocate Riasat Ali Azad, president of the Islamabad High Court Bar Association. Advocate Imran Shafiq represents the PFUJ. They requested court to repeal the law.

numbered. "The law is full of mistakes... there are two contradictory definitions of applicant. Similarly, the complaint authority under the law is the same that functioned under PEMRA law," he said.

The court responded that there certainly was a problem of fake news. "Whether fake news should be published or not," he asked the lawyer. Advocate Azad argued that the forum for appeal against a tribunal decision was the Supreme Court (implying that there is no proper procedure involved). He said the stakeholders were not consulted before the passage of the controversial bill.

"A journalist will be forced to reveal his source. How can one get information from a source under such circumstances? Only weather situation will be reported," he contended while demanding repeal of the law. PFUJ head Afzal Butt said they were not in favour of fake news. "We

## Parliamentarians secure massive 138% salary hike

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Parliamentarians' remunerations are set to swell by a staggering 138% as the Members of Parliament Salaries and Allowances (Amendment) Bill 2025 sailed through the National Assembly with a majority vote on Tuesday.

The bill proposes raising parliamentarians' salaries from Rs218,000 to Rs519,000, aligning them with federal secretaries' pay. Already approved by the Senate, the bill now awaits the President of Pakistan's signature to take effect.

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) lawmaker Romina Khurshid Alam tabled the bill, with neither opposition nor treasury lawmakers

raising any objection to the whopping increase in their salaries. The bill seeks to amend the Members of Parliament (Salaries and Allowances) Act, 1974 [The Members of Parliament (Salaries and Allowances) (Amendment) Bill 2025].

On January 26, the National Assembly's Finance Committee gave the bill a go-ahead in a meeting chaired by the National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq. Sworn political rivals from all parliamentary parties, including the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), PML-N, and others, were on the same page regarding a massive increase in their salaries.

It is pertinent to know that the Punjab Assembly, in December, had also

unanimously approved a bill to significantly increase lawmakers' salaries, raising them from Rs76,000 to Rs400,000. Apart from the tweaks to the parliamentarians' remuneration, the assembly also hiked the provincial ministers' salaries from Rs100,000 to Rs960,000.

The speaker's salary was increased from Rs125,000 to Rs950,000, whereas that of the deputy speaker was hiked to Rs800,000 from the previous Rs120,000. Furthermore, parliamentary secretaries are to be paid Rs451,000 as opposed to the previous amount of Rs83,000; adviser to the chief minister from Rs100,000 to Rs665,000; special assistant to the chief minister from Rs100,000 to Rs665,000.

## IHC summons AG on pleas challenging PECA 2025

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday summoned the attorney general for Pakistan (AGP) for assistance on the pleas challenging the Prevention of Electronic Crimes (Amendment) Act 2025.

Justice Inam Amin Minhas heard the petition filed by the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) and the Anchors Association. Advocate Imran Shafiq appeared on behalf of the PFUJ and Advocate Riasat Ali Azad represented the Anchors Association. PFUJ President Afzal Butt, senior anchorperson Hamid Mir, Adnan Haider and Islamabad Union of Journalists President Tariq Virq were among those present.

Advocate Shafiq, while advancing the arguments, raised a point that the PECA Bill had been passed in haste and even the sections of the law had been wrongly

# The Frontier Post

## KP CM's bail extended

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: The protective bail request of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur has been approved until March 5. A hearing on the protective bail plea was conducted by a Peshawar High Court bench comprising Justice Sahibzada Asadullah and Justice Salahuddin. The petitioner's lawyer and the Advocate General appeared in court, but the KP CM could not attend.

## PM calls for boosting climate financing

### Premier meets UAE president, Vice

DUBAI (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday called upon the governments to strengthen climate financing and technology sharing, besides urging private investors to explore Pakistan's untapped green energy and infrastructure opportunities.

Addressing the World Governments Summit, the prime minister stressed upon multilateral institutes to support the emerging economies like Pakistan in achieving the sustainable economic growth. He said the global shift to a green economy required a shared responsibility, while Pakistan was fully committed to mobilizing its domestic resources and policy reforms, the international partnership and financial support remained critical to achieving this goal. "Pakistan's energy transition alone demands 100 billion dollars investment," he added.

Despite huge challenges, the prime minister said, placing their economy on sound footing had been the central plank of what they had achieved in Pakistan in the last one year. "Pakistan stands at the defining moment of economic transformation. The headline inflation has dropped to 2.4 percent, in January this year, the lowest in the last nine years with interest rate capped at 12 percent," he added.

As a major stimulus for the private sector credit, he said economic stability remained not an end to their five Es; national economic transformational plan, Uran Pakistan was driving this change, focusing on exports, E-Pakistan environment and climate change, energy and infrastructure, equity and empowerment. At the core of this agenda was the energy security and sustainability not just as economic necessity but as a national priority. Pakistan was committed to producing 60 percent of clean energy mix by 2030 and converting 30 percent of all its vehicles into electric mobility, he added.

The prime minister said that Pakistani nation in the last seven decades had navigated through immense challenges, while remaining

DUBAI (APP): The premier met the UAE President and ruler of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan on the sidelines of the summit being held under the theme 'Shaping Future Governments' in Dubai.

During the meeting, both sides discussed bilateral trade and economic cooperation besides the recent developments in the Middle East. Chief of the Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir was also present in the meeting. Both leaders discussed ways to deepen cooperation between Pakistan and the UAE and explored opportunities to enhance mutual interests.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a meeting with UAE Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum on the Sidelines of WGS - 2025, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. He appreciated Dubai's remarkable progress as a global hub for business and innovation as an evidence of UAE's visionary leadership and termed UAE as Pakistan's trusted ally.

The prime minister . The prime minister highlighted Pakistan's pro-investment policies aimed at facilitating UAE's investors in key sectors such as energy, infrastructure, mining and IT. The prime minister is visiting Dubai to participate in the World Governments Summit 2025 at the invitation of Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid warmly welcomed Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, reaffirming deep-rooted and longstanding ties between Pakistan and the UAE.

steadfast in its commitment, resilience and global cooperation. He said they were rapidly scaling up solar, wind and nuclear energy generation. Pakistan's southern region held 50,000 MW of untapped wind energy potential while the northern hydro projects would add 30,000 MW of clean energy capacity, he informed.

"Solar energy adoption has been accelerated through policy reforms, tax exemption and incentive for investments, net metering and waving of custom duties on solar panels and other equipment," he added. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif further said that Pakistan offered one of the most dynamic investment landscape in Asia with 70 percent of its young and dynamic and tech savvy youth under the age of 30 and the strategic location Pakistan is placed at, bridges south and central Asia and its emerging middle class represents promising economic opportunities.

They were also simplifying business regulations, enhancing legal protection and streamlining approval mechanisms to make Pakistan a lead-

ing destination for global capitals, he added. To drive investment in key sectors of the economy, the prime minister said the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) was established, focusing on renewable energy and resilient infrastructure, technology and digital economy, minerals and industrial development, agriculture and food security. "Pakistan is embracing eco-friendly agriculture innovation under the umbrella of adaptation policy of 2023 to enhance productivity and ensure food security and strengthen our rural economy," he highlighted.

The prime minister said besides, they were also enhancing water efficiency through drip irrigation, modern farming, drought resistance crops and water storage to restore the depleting aqua reserves. He said the government was also incentivizing agri-innovation by deploying solar-powered systems, using solar power energy for farm operations, climate-smart sensors to monitor soil and weather conditions to modernize the farming system, while reducing their environmental footprints.

## Boat tragedy near Libyan coast claims lives of 16 Pakistanis: FO

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: A tragic boat accident off the coast of Libya has resulted in the deaths of at least 16 Pakistani nationals, with several others still missing.

The Embassy of Pakistan in Tripoli has confirmed the recovery of 16 bodies, identified through their Pakistani passports, while efforts continue to locate the remaining missing individuals, a press release issued by the Foreign Office Spokesperson said. According to unconfirmed reports, a total of 63 Pakistani nationals were aboard the boat, the FO Spokesperson said adding that so far, 37 survivors have been accounted for, including one individual receiving medical treatment at a local hospital and 33 currently in police custody.

Reportedly, around 10 Pakistanis are missing in the accident. Three of the survivors are in Tripoli and being looked after by the Embassy. The following Pakistani nationals have been confirmed deceased in the tragedy:

Saqlain Haider s/o Imran Ali- district Kurram, KPK, Siraj Uddin s/o Iqbal Muhammad- district Bajaur, KPK, Shoaib Hussain s/o Noord Ali- district Kurram, Nusrat Hussain s/o Mir Afzal - district Kurram, Shoaib Ali s/o Muhammad Ali - district

Kurram, Sayed Shehzad Hussain s/o Sayed Wajid Ali Shah - district Kurram, Abid Hussain s/o Imran Ali - district Kurram, Asif Ali s/o Israr Hussain - district Kurram, Muhammad Ali Shah s/o Abdullah Shah - district Orakzai, KPK, Musawir Hussain s/o Sher Mehdi - district Kurram, Aswar Hussain s/o Mandar Ali - district Kurram, Abid Hussain s/o Muhammad Hassan - district Kurram, Musaib Hussain s/o Jamil Hussain - district Kurram, Anis Khan s/o Musharaf Khan - district Peshawar, Ashfaq Hussain s/o Hussain Afzal - district Kurram, and Shahid Hussain s/o Kafiat Hussain - district Kurram.

The Embassy of Pakistan in Tripoli has been actively coordinating with local authorities in Zawiya city, where the incident took place. Embassy officials have visited Zawiya hospital and other relevant institutions to gather more information and provide necessary assistance to survivors. The Embassy in Tripoli is in the process of gathering further information and maintaining contact with the local authorities.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan on Tuesday reiterated its firm and unchanged stance on terrorism and foreign occupation, dismissing misinterpretations circulating in certain

media circles.

In a statement issued by the Foreign Office Spokesperson, it was emphasized that Pakistan remained committed to its well-established policy on the matter. The spokesperson expressed regret over what was described as a "quant spin" by some media outlets, which allegedly distorted and misrepresented Pakistan's position.

The statement clarified that this also misinterpreted Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and international consensus on counter-terrorism and foreign occupation. The spokesperson added that during the UN Security Council briefing on "Threats to international peace & security caused by terrorist acts" held on 10 February 2025, the Permanent Representative of Pakistan said "we must address the root causes of terrorism that include poverty, injustice and prolonged unresolved conflicts, foreign occupation and denial of the right to self-determination to peoples under colonial and foreign domination and alien rule, such as in the occupied territories of Palestine and Jammu and Kashmir. Without addressing the root causes, we can hope for little success if our focus remains restricted to the consequences of such policies."

## Why do you want SC to do what parliament should do, asks Justice Afghan

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan on Tuesday questioned during the hearing of civilians trial in military court that why do they want the Supreme Court to do the work that is supposed to be done by the Parliament?

Justice Afghan gave the remarks while appellant's counsel Salman Akram Raja argued that the original decision stressed that courts cannot be established outside Clause 3 of Article 175. The justice remarked that the country has a constitution [of 1973], and all the rules framed under the martial law were reviewed under the 18th Amendment.

You gave the example of India, where the law was changed through the parliament. A constitutional bench of the Supreme Court, headed by Justice Amin-ud-din Khan, and including justices Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Musarat Hilali, Naeem Akhtar Afghan and Shahid Bilal Hassan, resumed hearing of the intra-court appeal after a day's adjournment as Advocate Raja could not reach the court in time.

Raja tendered apology for failure to reach the court due to traffic jam. Justice Mandokhail asked the counsel to complete his arguments today, to which Raja

said he would do that tomorrow. Earlier, Justice Rizvi remarked that arson, siege and vandalism have become order of the day. The footage of the May 9 incidents was aired by TV channels. Corps Commanders' houses were attacked and vandalized. The same thing happened in Bangladesh and Syria; this has become a culture, he observed.

Justice Mandokhail remarked that trespassing the house of a common citizen is a crime. Raja submitted that the clause 3 of Article 175 should also be applied to army officers. Justice Afghan remarked that the court would examine that when any military officer was involved. He reminded the counsel that he should restrict his arguments to the [present] case.

Justice Rizvi questioned has there ever been an attack on corps commander's houses anywhere in the world, to which Raja said he will also give examples. Advocate Raja referred to the decision to declare the Law Reforms Ordinance null and void. Justice Mazhar questioned him whether legislation was done on what was pointed out in the court decisions.

Justice Mandokhail wondered what was going on in the parliament. The points you raised should have been contemplated and acted upon by the parliament. Advocate Raja replied that it was

judicial authority to give punishment. The justice observed that all the decisions you quoted were of the Balochistan High Court.

Advocate Raja submitted that he studied the history of the constitution of Pakistan. The Balochistan High Court always gave decisions to protect ordinary citizens during the martial law. The late Justice Waqar Seth of the Peshawar High Court also gave a decision that set precedence. His decision was also referred to the International Court of Justice. His decision was suspended by the Supreme Court.

Justice Mandokhail asked Advocate Raja why the accused did not challenge transfer of their case to the military courts. Wasn't this negligence on the part of the accused? The counsel said that it was not negligence. "Let me tell you the truth. The accused and their families had to go through difficult circumstances. Ten accused had appointed me as their lawyer. But, before filing petition, their families called him and forbade him to move the high court for fear of other members of their families."

However, one of the accused, Junaid Razaq, refused to withdraw the petition. "I salute him. I will write a book on Junaid; it's a hero's story," he added. Later, the court adjourned the hearing until today.





# CM inaugurates science, technology show

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday visited Government Pilot Higher Secondary School to launch the largest government school science and technology show.

The CM distributed cash prizes among the winners

## Amjad Malik meets additional attorney general

LAHORE (APP): Vice Chairperson of the Overseas Pakistanis Commission (OPC) Punjab Barrister Amjad Malik on Tuesday visited the Attorney General's Office where he was received by Additional Attorney General Javed Awan.

During the meeting, Barrister Amjad Malik and the Additional Attorney General held a detailed discussion on matters of mutual interest. Barrister Amjad Malik briefed the officials on the 41 special courts established in various districts to address legal issues of overseas Pakistanis. He highlighted the government's commitment to ensuring swift justice for expatriates and commended the keen interest and proactive efforts of the prime minister and the chief minister Punjab in expediting the resolution of cases regarding overseas Pakistanis.

He stated that in an effort to provide quick and effective solutions to expatriates' concerns, the "e-Kachehri" initiative had been launched, allowing overseas Pakistanis to directly communicate their issues to the relevant authorities. Additional Attorney General Javed Awan assured Barrister Amjad Malik of his full cooperation and support.

of Jashn-e-STEAM in eight categories. Students and their teachers of Hafizabad, Jhang, DG Khan and Multan received prizes.

CM Maryam Nawaz was welcome by the scouts with enthusiastic applause on her arrival. She got out of the vehicle and expressed affection for the children. She shook hands with the students playing school band. Children dressed in vibrant regional costumes welcomed her by playing the tambourine.

The CM inspected the Jashn-e-STEAM exhibition. She had a detailed look at the stalls of schools of all districts, inspected models made by the students, and congratulated them. Students presented her sketches, paintings and pieces of calligraphy.

The chief minister inspected the exhibition of models of human heart and nervous system, where stu-

dents gave a briefing. They made models of water recycling plant, air purifier, fire, flame detector, home security system, hydraulic jack system, wastewater treatment plant, hydraulic excavator, wind energy, auto lighting, radar detection rigging, smog collector, and DC Refrigerator model. There was an exhibition of hydroelectric generator, sugar refinery, smog collector, hydraulic parking system, smart home model. A Rajanpur student presented a Li-Fi model that is 100 times faster than WiFi.

Animated video, hydraulic bridge, thermal solar energy system, earthquake detector, AI robotic car and robotic model for cleaning were exhibited. Gas detection, space shuttle pendant launching and solar security system were also exhibited. A student presented a model of convert-

ing music sound into electrical energy. Provincial Education Minister Rana Sikander Hayat, Parliamentary Secretary Nosheen Adnan gave a briefing. Students took autographs on caps and coats from Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

Around 300,000 students from 6,000 high schools participated in the celebration of STEAM competitions. The students prepared 5,000 models including science technology. At the end of the ceremony, students gathered around Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif and took pictures. She also paid a surprise visit to Government Pilot Secondary School.

The students were happy with the surprise visit of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif. The CM also inspected the principal's office and auditorium.

## Rapid response cell to be set up for women protection

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Women Protection Authority (PWPA) Chairperson Hina Pervaiz Butt visited the Burn Unit of Mayo Hospital, Lahore, where she met with the victim of a recent acid attack and her mother.

She assured the affected family of complete justice. She announced that a Rapid Response Cell will soon be established in Punjab to ensure the protection of women, providing immediate legal and medical assistance in such cases. This cell will com-

prise legal experts, psychologists, and social workers who will play a key role in the rehabilitation of victims and ensuring strict punishment for the perpetrators.

"This is not just an isolated incident; it is a wake-up call for our society. We need to develop a strong, effective, and immediate response system against such heinous crimes."

That is why we are expanding the scope of the Women Protection Authority to ensure timely justice and complete

security for women," she stated.

The Rapid Response Cell aims not only to prevent such criminal incidents but also to provide psychological, social, and legal support to the victims. The cell will operate through a 24/7 helpline, mobile units, and regional coordination centers.

On this occasion, Hina Pervaiz Butt directed the police and other relevant authorities to promptly arrest all culprits involved in the acid attack case and take strict legal action against them.



KARACHI: A view of bus fell down in nullah Sindhi hotel due to overspeed. —INP Photo

## FIA crackdown: 153 cases registered, 46 arrested so far

LAHORE (APP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Lahore Zone, during a crackdown against human traffickers, registered 153 cases so far during the current year.

According to the FIA spokesperson, 46 accused involved in human trafficking had been arrested so far, including highly wanted fugitives and involved in boat accidents.

The FIA officials said that challans for 58 cases had been submitted to the relevant courts this year while 13 cases had resulted in convictions.

FIA Director Lahore Zone Sarfaraz Khan Virk emphasised that all available resources were being utilised to eliminate human trafficking, and intelligence-based operations were also under way.

He urged the public to opt for legal and safe routes for traveling abroad. He warned, "Illegal immigration is a deadly act; attempting to leave the country through unlawful means can be fatal".

## LDA seals 80 properties

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Development Authority (LDA) on Tuesday sealed 80 properties over illegal commercial activities and non-payment of commercial fees.

In line with the directives of DG LDA, Tahir Farooq, the operation focused on areas including Gulberg, Faisal Town, Sabzazar, Shadman, Shah Jamal, New Muslim Town, Gulshan Ravi, and Shad Bagh. In Gulberg and Faisal Town, the teams sealed 20 properties due to illegal commercial activities and non-payment of commercial fees. Additionally, 31 properties were sealed during a recovery operation in Sabzazar.

Further operations in Shadman, Shah Jamal, New Muslim Town, Gulshan Ravi, and Shad Bagh resulted in the sealing of 29 properties. These included private schools, clinics, hospitals, restaurants, workshops, food points, shops, offices, and other commercial establishments.

Before the operation, multiple notices were issued to the property owners. The operation was carried out under the supervision of Chief Town Planner, Asad-ul-Zaman.

## Lanjar takes notice of setting dumper tankers on fire

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Home Minister Ziaul Hasan Lanjar on Tuesday took notice of setting dumper tankers on fire in different parts of the metropolis. According to a spokesman for the Home Minister, he has directed to take strict notice of the incidents.

Lanjar has also sought a report from the Additional IG Police Karachi. He said that the incidents of burning vehicles should be investigated.

He said that no one will be allowed to take the law into their hands. Lanjar said that the protection of citizens' property is the responsibility of the government.

## 200,000 Solar Home Systems set for completion by July 31

KARACHI (PPI): Minister for Energy, Development and Planning Sindh Syed Nasir Hussain Shah has said that with the support of the World Bank, two hundred thousand solar home systems will be completed by July 31, 2025.

According to a statement by Sindh Information Department, he expressed these views while chairing a meeting held at the Energy Department today to review the progress of the project regarding the distribution of solar home systems, in which Sindh Local Government Minister Saeed Ghani spe-

cially attended. Secretary Energy Department Musaddiq Ahmed Khan, State Stakes Advisor Solar Energy Project Sonia Soomro, Syed Zain Haider, Sikandar Ali and Abdul Ghani of the project were also present on this occasion.

Provincial Ministers Syed Nasir Hussain Shah and Saeed Ghani said on this occasion that the project should be accelerated on the vision of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto and the instructions of the Chief Minister Sindh so that the vision of the Chairman is completed as soon as possible.

Minister directed on

this occasion that the distribution of 1600 solar home systems should be ensured in all districts every month, while 400 solar panels should be distributed in each district every week.

He said that this project should be completed by July 31, 2025 in any case. He said that the distribution of 50,000 solar panels in the warehouse should be completed within 30 days and a report should be submitted to him. Nasir Shah said that ceremonies regarding the distribution of solar panels would be held with the cooperation of the relevant administration.

## Employees Union Protests at Small Industries Estate Peshawar

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Employees Union of the Small Industries Development Board staged a protest at the Small Industries Estate in Peshawar, demanding attention to their long-standing grievances.

The union members gathered at the estate, voicing their concerns and demanding resolution to their issues. The protest aimed to pressurize the authorities to address the union's demands and improve working conditions. The Employees Union has been seeking a response from the relevant authorities, hoping for a swift resolution to their demands.



## Senator Babar highlights cultural resilience against negative media narratives



### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Fourth Dosti Literary festival would make a powerful political and academic statement against elements in media who portrayed Peshawar in a negative manner.

This statement was made at the inaugural session by the chief guest, Senator Farhat Ullah Babar, who applauded the Literary Festival at the University of Peshawar as an achievement and as a celebration of diversity at the Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar on Tuesday evening.

He appreciated four year consecutive efforts by Dosti Welfare Organisation for Literary, research based, and dialogue based discussion in the nook and corner of the khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. He appreciated the inaugural session, and its showcasing of four fiction books has an endeavour to tape and bring rich

tapestry of cultural heritage in its linguistic diversity.

He proudly announced that his bigger identity is still attached to this alma-mater of the University of Peshawar, that is still resonating even after 65 years when he got admission in this University. He called upon students and faculty to fully utilise the potential of the festival as a harbinger of progress in the tough times of despair and insensitivity.

The worthy Vice Chancellor University of Peshawar Prof. Dr. Muhammad Naem Qazi applauded the University of Peshawar retired and present faculty to capitalise on the avenues of Literary progression through synergy with the Dosti Welfare Organisation. He called upon faculty and students to start relishing 12 days of vigorous literary and real-life experience sharing at the festival sessions.

During inaugural session, four fiction books were launched as well as showcased at the session, chiefly presenting the portrait of rich heritage of Peshawar literary vintage point. An alumnus and a civil servant, Faheem Sikander English novel "Amidst the dead" is an ardent quest for pinning Peshawar city not as a location but a character, according to writer.

He narrated his novel to be a city based infatuation on the same lines of Charles Dickens for London, Stephen King for Maine and A. Hameed for Lahore. Shahid Siddiqi Urdu book titled "Asman Dar Asman" is a portrait of personalities, who went through a wave of displacement in Indo-Pak partition saga, but keeping natal attachment to the core of their childhood reminiscent and lifelong experience. He spoke excerpt

from Khaswant Singh, Pirthivi Raj and Dilip Kumar, that fetch huge round of applause.

The third book written in Hindko, "Phool Khayalan dey" presented by Saeed Paris was also featured as a notable work.

The fourth showcasing of the Pashto work by young and enthusiastic writer, Dr. Zafar Ullah Bakshali literary work gathered 303 doctoral dissertations and 445 MPhil theses from seven Pashto Departments and centres from Pakistan and Afghanistan was also showcased at the inaugural session.

Earlier, presenting the literary endeavours by Dosti Welfare Organisation Dr Syed Hanif Rasool stated that the festival is unfolding its literary mission through volunteering team efforts of all participating organisations. He pointed out that this literary Caravan is showcasing Peshawar for marking a signature statement that Peshawar is not far from big cities like Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad in its academic and literary pursuits.

## Fakhar represents Sindh at Int'l Conference




### F.P. Report

KARACHI: Member of Sindh Assembly and Spokesperson for the Government of Sindh, Makhdoom Fakhar Zaman, represented Sindh at the Commonwealth


Parliamentary Association conference held at the Punjab Assembly.

During the conference, Makhdoom Fakhar Zaman spoke on key issues related to health and education.

He shared the stage with Punjab's Minister for Health, Khawaja Salman Rafique, Punjab's Minister for Education, Rana Sikander Hayat, and dignitaries from Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives.



**PROVINCIAL COUNCIL FOR REHABILITATION OF DISABLED PERSON (PCRPD)**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE,**  
**SPECIAL EDUCATION AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**  
**KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA**



## INVITATION FOR BIDS

01. Director, Social Welfare/Secretary Provincial Council for Rehabilitation of Disabled Person (PCRPD) intends to invite sealed bids under National Competitive Bidding from reputed Firms/authorized dealers/manufacturer for "procurement of electric wheelchairs for Person with Disabilities (PWDs) from Disable Person Rehabilitation (DPR) Fund" under KPPRA Rules 2014.
02. Bidding shall be conducted through Single Stage–Two Envelope Bidding Procedure as per KPPRA Rules-2014.
03. Bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the Secretary PCRPD/Director Social Welfare during office hours on payment of PKR Twenty-Five Hundred (PKR 2500/non-refundable). The same can be downloaded from the following official websites [www.swkpk.gov.pk](http://www.swkpk.gov.pk) & [www.kppra.gov.pk](http://www.kppra.gov.pk).
04. The bids shall reach to the office of the Secretary PCRPD/Director Social Welfare, on or before, **25-02-2025 at 11:00 AM**. The bids will be opened on the same day by the Procurement Committee in the presence of bidder / representatives of the bidders at 11:30 AM in the Committee Room of Directorate of Social Welfare Special Education and Women Empowerment Opposite Islamia College Gate Jamrud Peshawar. Bids submitted after due date & time shall not be entertained.
05. The bid must be accompanied with Bid Security equal to @ 2% (PKR) of the quoted amount for purchase of 2000 electric wheelchairs in shape of Call Deposit Receipt (CDR) in the name of Director, Social Welfare/Secretary PCRPD, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
06. Pre-bid meeting will be held on **17-02-2025 at 11:30 AM** in the Committee Room of Directorate of Social Welfare Special Education and Women Empowerment Opposite Islamia College Gate Jamrud Road Peshawar.
07. The procurement committee may reject all/bids or proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of a bid or proposal as per Rule 47 of KP-PPRA Rules 2014.

INF/FP) 509/25

**Director Social Welfare/Secretary**  
 Provincial Council Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons (PCRPD)  
 Jamrud Road Opposite Islamia College Gate Peshawar  
 Phone No. 091-9224219



# EU delegation calls on Speaker to discuss governance challenges

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Speaker of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Babar Saleem Swati, met with a delegation from the European Union (EU), led by the EU Ambassador to Pakistan, Dr. Riina Kionka. The meeting, held in the Speaker's Chamber, focused on Pakistan's ongoing challenges, governance issues, and the EU's continued support for parliamentary development. Special Secretary Syed Waqar Shah, MPA Ikram Ghazi, Provincial Coordinator Mustehkam Parlimaan Hussnain Akhonzada were also present at the meeting and

contributed to discussions on parliamentary affairs and governance challenges in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. During the meeting, Speaker Babar Saleem Swati highlighted the serious challenges facing by Pakistan. He expressed deep concern over the deteriorating law and order situation, which is negatively impacting governance, the economy, and public security. He emphasized that Pakistan's future should be based on civil supremacy. Speaker Babar Saleem Swati commended the European Union's efforts in strengthening democratic institutions in

Pakistan. He made special mention of the EU-funded "IP5 - Mustehkam Parlimaan" project, which focuses on enhancing the capacity of Members of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs) & Officers of Assembly Secretariat, modernizing the legislative process, and introducing digital reforms to improve parliamentary efficiency. He described the initiative as a significant step towards improving governance and democracy in Pakistan. During the one-on-one meeting between Speaker Babar Saleem Swati and EU Ambassador Dr. Riina Kionka, discussions centered on Pakistan's democratic landscape, gover-

nance reforms, and the EU's institutional support. The Speaker stressed the importance of further strengthening cooperation to promote democratic values, enhance parliamentary institutions, and ensure transparent governance. At the conclusion of the meeting, both sides exchanged gifts as a gesture of goodwill. The EU delegation was given a tour of key sections of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, where they were briefed on legislative processes, parliamentary affairs, and digital reforms. The meeting concluded with a group photograph to commemorate the occasion.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Speaker Babar Saleem Swati, talking to a delegation from the European Union (EU), led by the EU Ambassador to Pakistan, Dr. Riina Kionka.

## PEDO, EZMDC review proposals for utilization of affordable electricity

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In order to discuss the proposed framework for transmission lines and to explore various suggestions by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Hydel Development Organization (PEDO) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KP-EZDMC), Small Industries Development Board and Pakhtunkhwa Hydel Development Organization also attended the meeting. During the meeting, KP-EZDMC officials presented their proposals regarding suitable transmission lines to cater the energy needs of economic zones and industrial parks through various transmission corridors linked to local energy projects. They also proposed the establishment of a company's subsidiary transmission line company to meet the energy requirements of these zones and industrial estates.

Rehan Gul Khattak, along with officials from the departments of Industry, Energy & Power, Khyber P a k h t u n k h w a Transmission and Dispatch Company, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KP-EZDMC), Small Industries Development Board and Pakhtunkhwa Hydel Development Organization also attended the meeting. During the meeting, KP-EZDMC officials presented their proposals regarding suitable transmission lines to cater the energy needs of economic zones and industrial parks through various transmission corridors linked to local energy projects. They also proposed the establishment of a company's subsidiary transmission line company to meet the energy requirements of these zones and industrial estates.

Furthermore, they suggested providing land at Katlang site within the economic zone for the establishment of a grid station by PEDO, which will facilitate the transmission of power from the Swat and Dir corridors. PEDO officials also provided an update on the organization own plan for the provision of affordable electricity to industries, highlighting upcoming energy projects under the organization. They gave detailed information about the energy projects near to completion. The participants were directed to collaborate and carry out the necessary homework to agree upon a feasible and practical plan for the way forward. Speaking on the occasion, Abdul Karim Tordher, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Industries, emphasized that ensuring the provision of affordable electricity

from the province's own production to industries would be a significant milestone. He mentioned that using locally produced electricity would alleviate the energy-related challenges faced by the industrial sector and help foster industrial growth in the province. Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Energy and Power Tariq Sadozai on this occasion expressed the need for regular meetings between the relevant departments to ensure consensus on a clear and actionable plan. He proposed signing a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two departments to expedite the process and ensure swift implementation of plans. He further reiterated that providing affordable electricity to industries is a top priority of the government and serious steps are being taken in this regard.

## Steps taken to increase revenue of WWB shops: Minister

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Minister for Labour, Fazal Shakoor Khan, on Tuesday said that revolutionary reforms are ongoing in the Workers Welfare Board (WWB) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He emphasized that all possible steps are being taken to increase revenue from the shops located in the board's colonies, and various other business plans are also under consideration. The provincial minister

expressed these views while presiding over a meeting in his office regarding the ongoing reforms in the WWB. The meeting was attended by Secretary WWB Muhammad Tufail and Director of Finance Saifullah Zafar. The WWB Secretary gave detail presentation on the reforms. In the briefing it is said that a portal has been created to facilitate new scholarship applicants, ensuring the timely and transparent distribution of scholarships among deserving.

ing. Further, it is said that the shops located in labour colonies were recently auctioned and rented out at market rates, which has significantly increased the board's revenue by millions of rupees. The meeting also discussed important business plans, including the establishment of a smart market and other key initiatives to further increase the board revenue. On this occasion, the provincial minister directed

the relevant authorities to take practical steps to introduce modern reforms and address the shortcomings within the board. He stressed that everyone must work seriously to introduce reforms in the public interest. He also warned that those who show lack of interest in their work will face disciplinary action. He further emphasized the need for the timely and transparent distribution of WWB scholarships to the deserving beneficiaries.

## Cabinet Committee on strengthening legislation meets

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A meeting of the committee formed by the provincial cabinet to enhance the effectiveness of legislation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was held at the Civil Secretariat, Peshawar. The meeting was chaired by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Minister for Law, Aftab Alam Advocate. Committee members, including Advisor for Finance and Inter-Provincial Coordination, Muzzammil Aslam, and Advisor for Anti-Corruption,

Brigadier (R) Musaddiq Abbasi, also attended the session. Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Shah Faisal Utmankhel, was also present. The meeting was attended by Secretary Information & Public Relations, Arshad Khan, Secretary Law, Saeed Ahmad Turk, Secretary Board of Revenue, Muhammad Irshad, Secretary Health, Shahidullah Khan, CEO Social Health Protection Initiative, Dr. Riaz Tanoli, along with senior officials

from the Home Department, Law Department, and other relevant departments. During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the proposed amendments to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sentencing Act 2021 and the establishment of the proposed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sentencing Council. Additionally, proposed amendments to the Universal Health Coverage Act 2022 were reviewed to further enhance the delivery of healthcare services. The participants emphasized that effective legisla-

tion ensures a well-organized and transparent governance system, which helps define the provincial government's powers and responsibilities. This, in turn, facilitates the resolution of public issues and the fair distribution of resources. The meeting underscored the need to formulate laws based on thorough research, keeping in view public interest, the protection of fundamental rights, and the effective implementation of development projects.

## Committee to consider draft of National Animal Health, Welfare and Veterinary Public Health Bill 2024

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The meeting of the committee formed by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cabinet to deliberate on the draft of the National Animal Health, Welfare and Veterinary Public Health Bill 2024 was held at Civil Secretariat Peshawar under the chairmanship of Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives Fazal Hakeem Khan Yousafzay. Provincial Agriculture Minister Sajjad Barkwal, Law Minister Aftab Alam Advocate, Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shah Faisal Atman Khel, Secretary Livestock Fakhar Alam, and DG Livestock Extension Department Dr. Asal Khan participated in the meeting. In the meeting, the proposed bill was discussed in detail, in which, in particular, the points of similarity or contradiction between the existing provincial laws and the federal bill were examined. The participants also discussed the impact on provincial autonomy as a result of the application of the federal bill if there is any deficiency in the act at the provincial level. During the meeting, it was informed that after the 18th Amendment, there are already laws at the provincial level which ensure the protection of animal health, welfare and public health. However, it was urged that the services of the Law Department be hired to further scrutinize the proposed bill and strengthen its legitimacy.

## ‘Millions at risk’ as Pakistan feels the pinch of USAID pause

PESHAWAR (AA): On a cold morning in late January, Moosa Tunio was immersed in his routine work at his office in Pakistan's southern Shikarpur district when a sudden notification flashed across his computer screen. It was not an office memo or a routine email but a suspension letter – an abrupt halt to his employment with an organization that had been implementing a US-funded tuberculosis control program in Sindh, Pakistan's southern province. Tunio, who served as a district coordination officer, is among more than 100 employees suspended "until further notice" following US President Donald Trump's unexpected decision to pause all foreign aid and gut organizations such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Launched in November 2023, the tuberculosis control program aimed to support Pakistan's efforts to combat the disease in 15 underdeveloped districts of Sindh by 2029. Tuberculosis remains a significant public health challenge in Pakistan, which ranks sixth among countries with the highest

burden. According to the country's Health Ministry, more than 600,000 people contract tuberculosis annually. "The suspension of the program has put thousands of poor patients at risk, while also leaving hundreds of employees jobless," Tunio lamented. Speaking to Anadolu, he emphasized that the program had been benefiting around 1,500 families every month, directly or indirectly affected by the disease. "Under this initiative, tuberculosis patients from remote areas were brought to city hospitals for check-ups, lab tests, and screenings," he explained. "Not just the patients, but their family members and close contacts were also tested to prevent the disease from spreading." For Tunio, the issue transcends mere employment concerns. "It's not just about my job; it's about thousands of patients who will suffer due to this project's suspension. It must be restored immediately," he said. Widespread impact on health care The American aid freeze has also halted a US-funded HIV/AIDS control program in Sindh, leaving health

authorities scrambling for alternatives, according to Sindh Health Minister Dr. Azra Afzal Pechuho. Thousands of patients across the province were receiving life-saving medications through the now-stalled program. Pakistan, a South Asian nation of over 240 million people, has more than 210,000 individuals living with HIV, according to the HIV/AIDS Data Hub for Asia Pacific. Mohammad Dittal Kalhoro, head of the Sindh Rural Support Organization, one of the US-funded program's implementation partners, warned of the broader implications. "Suspension of such crucial programs puts the lives of millions at risk," he told Anadolu. His organization was forced to shut down all three of its US-sponsored health initiatives in Sindh – two of which were in full swing, while the third had barely begun. "This decision will undoubtedly have a highly negative impact, particularly in a country like Pakistan, where numerous programs across various sectors relied on USAID funding," Kalhoro said. The suspension, he

added, affects not only healthcare but also humanitarian assistance, refugee support, nutrition, education, energy, trade, economic growth, infrastructure, and climate change efforts. "We are just one of dozens of organizations that have already started firing or suspending employees since end-January," he said. 1.7 million pushed further into crisis According to the UN, around 1.7 million people in Pakistan, including 1.2 million Afghan refugees, will be directly affected by Trump's decision and the consequent closure of over 60 US-funded health facilities. In neighboring Afghanistan, the situation is even more alarming, as some 9 million people are expected to lose access to health and protection services due to the US funding crisis, Pao Smith, regional director for Asia and the Pacific at the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), warned in a statement. The UNFPA has suspended services previously funded by US grants – services that provided a lifeline for women and girls in crisis-affected regions. According to Smith, the UNFPA requires over \$308

million in 2025 to sustain essential programs in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. Mohammad Tahseen, executive director of South Asia Partnership Pakistan, a development organization with a focus on rights and justice, echoed concerns over the widespread disruption. Several well-known organizations have already shut down operations due to the pause in US aid, leaving a significant number of people unemployed, he told Anadolu. "This suspension has already created a crisis where millions of vulnerable people around the world are suffering. Urgently needed humanitarian relief is on hold, hospitals face supply shortages, schools are shutting down, and more communities are being deprived of resources," he said. The US Embassy in Islamabad, when contacted for comment, declined to respond. "We have been directed to refer all media queries regarding the President's Executive Orders and their implementation to the White House," an embassy spokesperson told Anadolu via email. Pakistan's Foreign

Ministry, on the other hand, has said that Islamabad hopes for a resumption of the assistance. "Over the years, USAID has worked on a number of beneficial projects in Pakistan in the areas of energy, education, health and narcotics control. We hope that these programs will restart soon, and the two sides remain in contact on that," ministry spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan said at Jan. 30 press conference. A shift in global aid dependence? While the suspension of aid is devastating for humanitarian programs, some analysts argue it may force developing nations like Pakistan to rethink their dependence on foreign assistance. According to Rashid Chaudhry, national coordinator at the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), advocacy groups may not feel the impact as severely as health-focused NGOs. "Advocacy groups like ours operate on a diverse funding model with limited expenses, so we won't face the same hardships as those in health, education, development, women's empowerment, and other sectors," he told Anadolu.

However, Chaudhry warned that the primary victims would be the marginalized communities who rely heavily on US-backed programs. "We may have to squeeze our operations, and of course, employees will be fired. But they have the skills that will ultimately land them jobs in some other sector. The real problem will be faced by the millions of marginalized people," he went on to argue. Veteran Pakistani economist Shahid Hasan Siddiqui believes the crisis could be an opportunity in disguise. "I see this move as a blessing in disguise for developing nations like Pakistan," Siddiqui told Anadolu. "While it will cause immediate hardships, this crisis may incentivize us in many ways as well, mainly to discipline our economies, reshape priorities, and push the state to take back the responsibilities that have long been outsourced to NGOs and relief organizations." Siddiqui argued that US aid, though intended to support sustainable development goals, often functions as a political tool for Washington in the post-Cold War era.

"USAID does not, in fact, add to human resource investments in developing countries. Instead, many governments reduce their own spending or investment in human resources, particularly education, health, and human development," he explained. Siddiqui contended that aid money flowing into such countries ends up benefiting the rich and powerful elite who control the corridors of power. He also argued that while Pakistan has received billions in US aid over the years, it has suffered far greater economic losses due to its involvement in the war on terror. "Pakistan, which has been a partner in the so-called war against terrorism, has already suffered over \$130 billion in economic losses ... The aid and grants we receive from the US are only a fraction of that," he noted. To mitigate the impact of the aid suspension, Siddiqui recommended that Islamabad increase its GDP allocation for essential services, enhance tax collection without overburdening ordinary citizens, and invest more in health, education, and human development.





## In brief

### Mobile workshop service launched F.P. Report

BUNER: District Police Officer (DPO) Buner Saud Khan has launched "Free Mobile Workshop" to ensure immediate provision of mechanical aid to faulty vehicles during travelling for public facilitation, on Tuesday. The mobile workshop equipped with modern facilities and expert craftsmen who will provide immediate assistance in case of emergency, he claimed. According to the spokesperson, initially this service has been started in specific areas of Buner district and if successful it will be extended to the whole of Buner. District Police Officer says that "Buner Police is always ready to serve the public and this initiative is another step towards providing convenience to the citizens." He requested the citizens to avail this service and contact these 0939 510383/02461984906 numbers.

### One alleged drug dealer killed Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: Police arrested alleged drug dealer and killed another in an encounter, during ongoing crackdown against narcotics, on Tuesday. Police raided the hideout of notorious drug dealers Aziz ur Rehman and Zahir Shah, residents of Jahangira. As the police approached, the drug dealers opened fire in a desperate bid to avoid arrest. Police party retaliated in self-defense, resulting in the killing of Aziz ur Rehman on the spot while Zahir Shah was taken into custody. The body of the deceased has been shifted to the hospital for post-mortem, while further investigation is underway.

### Helmets distributed F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: Punjab Highway Patrolling Police distributed helmets among motorcyclists at patrolling check post in Chak No. 284 GB area of Toba Tek Singh district, on Tuesday. Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) patrolling Chaudhry Zahid distributed helmets among motorcyclists. He said that the purpose of distributing helmets is to give people a vire that whenever they travel a motorcycle, use the helmet so that if a road accident happens can avoid severe head injuries. DSP said that nowadays, motorcyclists do not use helmets and that the road accident happens every day, which causes humans to die. I appeal to all motorcyclists to use a helmet whenever you ride a motorcycle so that you can stay safe.

### Three alleged culprits held F.P. Report

SHAH DAD KOT: Almost three 3 alleged culprits held including drug dealers in different areas of district. According to details, police held drug dealer Arshad Gopang in a tip-off and four pocket gutka weighs 920 grams from his possession. Police also recovered a stolen motorcycle in the raid and handed over to the owner. Police station Naseerabad recovered the missing mobile and handed over the owner to the owner.

### Man arrested

GHOTKI (INP): A case has been registered against a man for not administering polio drops to his children in Obaro in Ghotki. According to police, case registered on the order of Assistant Commissioner Obaro.



KAGHAN: Members of district administration removing ice from road after heavy snowfall in valley.

## PTI compromises KP's interest, says Hoti

### F.P. Report

TAKHTBHAI: Awami National Party (ANP) leader and former chief minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Emir Haider Khan Hoti said that the country's main institutions and democratic systems are compromised which are due to political instability. The country has been trapped in the swamp of problems but serious efforts are not visible. He expressed these views while speaking exclusively to media representatives during the lunch ceremony at resident of Union Council Chairman Zakir Khan, Former PK-54 MPA Malik Shaukat Opposition members of the Tehsil Council were also present on the occasion, He added that people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)

are still deprived of electricity, gas and other necessary facilities Eighteen hours of load shedding in the winter has become commonplace, and the situation in the summer.

Haider Khan Hoti cited the example of the Punjab government and said that the Chief Minister (CM) Maryam Nawaz Sharif is active for public service and the supply of electricity and gas to the people is being ensured for 24 hours. However, the people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are deprived of these basic facilities, and the energies of the provincial government are wasting political confrontation.

Emir Haider Khan Hoti demanded Chief Minister (CM) Ali Amin Khan Ghandapur to pay attention to public service instead of

protesting politics and take practical steps to solve the problems of the people. He said that the province lacks public service and the government's focus is on political issues, which is further increasing the problems of the people. He said that the first purpose of the government should be public service, not political confrontation.

Meanwhile, Commissioner Mardan Division Nisar Ahmed inaugurated Women Sports Gala at University College for Women Mardan. Teams from different girls' schools and colleges from Mardan and Nowshera are participating in this sports gala organized in collaboration with District Sports Office. College Principal Zahida Parveen welcomed Commissioner Mardan.

## First ever FIR under PECA registered F.P. Report

MARDAN: Police has registered the first ever case against a person under the Prevention Electronic Crime Act (PECA) for his alleged negative propaganda drive as well as using abuse language against Mardan press club and its esteemed members at City police station.

The police officials registered First Information Report on the complaint of president Riaz Mayar and general secretary Pervaz Khan Afridi of Mardan press club against a local resident identified as Zahid son of Zameen Khan belonging to Dagai area of the said district.

In the FIR report, the complainants stated that the accused Zahid had not only been using abuse language but also carried out negative propaganda against the respectful and senior journalists of Mardan Press Club. They complained that the accused was using social media and other digital media tools with the purpose to spread baseless allegations as well as disinformation about the journalistic community of press body of the district.

However, the police told that there raiding different suspected hideouts so that to trace out and arrest the accused as soon as possible. The office-bearers and members of Mardan Press Club have thanked the police officials for their quick action in this connection. They assured the police that they would fully cooperate with them and would also provide all necessary proofs and other related documents whenever, they had needed and required.

## Provision of bus stand facility demanded F.P. Report

WANA: Jirgas have long played a crucial role in resolving collective tribal issues through mutual consultation and traditional decision-making. In line with this tradition, a grand jirga of the Ashraf Khel tribe was held at the Ashraf Khel cemetery, where tribal elders and youth gathered to discuss the longstanding issue of the General Bus Stand and to propose a solution that serves the broader public interest.

A significant number of tribal elders and youth participated in the jirga, including Malik Muhammad Aslam Ashraf Khel, Malik Noor Aslam, Maris Khan, Khan Aziz, and Khwaja Khan Ashraf Khel. During the deliberations, the participants unanimously emphasized the need for a separate bus stand on the property of the Ashraf Khel tribe to better serve passengers traveling to and from South Waziristan.

The jirga members clarified that their demand is not against any existing bus stand, including the one established for the Kaka Khel tribe in Wana Bazaar. Instead, they stressed that their request is based on the pressing need for a dedicated transportation hub that can accommodate the increasing number of passengers from South Waziristan, ensuring accessibility and convenience for all travelers.

# PTI govt only staging rallies for release of Imran: QWP leader

### F.P. Report

CHARSADDA: Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) Chairman Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao on Tuesday said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government was least bothered to work for the uplift of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as they were staging rallies and protests for the release of their jailed founder.

"The PTI has been ruling KP for the third straight term but its MNAs and MPAs are busy staging rallies for Imran Khan's release," he said while addressing a well-attended gathering in Sherpao village in Charsadda district to mark the 50th death anniversary of Shaheed Hayat Mohammad Khan Sherpao.

Paying rich tributes to his elder brother for his services for the welfare of the downtrodden segments of the society, Aftab Sherpao said that Shaheed Hayat Mohammad Khan laid down his life while striving to help the oppressed get their due rights. He said that Hayat Mohammad Khan was a visionary leader, who had challenged the forces of the status quo. "He created political awareness among his followers," the QWP leader recalled.

Criticizing the PTI government for ignoring Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he said that law and order had deteriorated in the entire province while the Kurram issue was also mishandled. Calling for a dialogue to bring political stability, Aftab Sherpao said that the PTI and the federal government were holding the talks for the sake of talks, but they were not sincere to end the stalemate. He said the PTI leaders were receiving instructions from jail regarding the talks with the government.

Before the last general election, the QWP leader said that they were expecting that the polls would help bring political stability but that did not happen. In 2018, the Results Transmission System was shut down while in 2024 the form 47 government was imposed on the country," he said, demanding the resignation of the chief election commissioner for having failed to ensure the holding of the free and fair election.

He said the provincial government was spending public funds on organizing rallies and demanded a probe into the misuse of official resources. He said the provincial government was being run from the jail through a remote controlled device. He was also critical of the federal government for making the 26th Constitutional Amendment which he believed caused unrest in the superior judiciary. He said the amendments to the Prevention of

Electronic Crimes Act were meant to muzzle the press and stifle dissenting voices on the social media.

Sharing the way forward to steer the country out of the prevailing challenges, he said that a welfare state should be established in accordance with the provisions of the 1973 Constitution. "Efforts should be made to establish a state, where all the people irrespective of their social status should be treated equally," he said, adding that it was the right of the people to have access to health and education facilities and other amenities of life.

He maintained that the Constitution should be applied to the people equally. He said all state institutions should work within the ambit of the Constitution. The QWP leader further said that since Pakistan was a federation, therefore, all the federating units should have provincial autonomy and the provinces must have control over their resources.

Turning to the plight of the Pakhtuns, he said that their grievances should be addressed to remove the growing sense of deprivation among them. He also called for coordinated efforts to restore peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where terrorism had again reared its ugly head. "Security conditions remain precarious, with approximately 670 incidents of terrorism reported in the past year—averaging two to three attacks daily—underscoring the gravity of the situation," he remarked. He said that the ongoing political confrontation in the country was taking a heavy toll on the people, underscoring the need for dialogue to steer the country out of the prevailing challenges.

Elaborating on his call for dialogue in the current atmosphere of political tensions and deteriorating law and order, he suggested that an All Parties Conference should be held to find out ways to address the challenges. Despite the worsening conditions in KP, the provincial government under Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had failed to address security concerns, he said.

Addressing Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan, Aftab Sherpao emphasized that the federal government's unnecessary rhetoric was further complicating the situation, showing a lack of strategic understanding. The lack of promised financial resources for the merged tribal districts was causing unrest among the local population he said and added that funds were required to improve conditions. He said that efforts must be made to secure the province's due share from the federal government.



HYDERABAD: A view of dried part of Indus River as water level decrease.

## PML-N govt commits for socio-economic uplift: Saira

### F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Chief Minister's Coordinator on Population Welfare and former federal minister Saira Afzal Tarar said that the Punjab government is taking result-oriented steps to improve living standard of masses across the province including district Hafizabad while fruits of people friendly measures are reaching to the people.

She expressed these views while addressing foundation stone laying ceremony of construction of Lahore-Sargodha carpet road from Sukheki to Pindi Bhattian with the cost of more than Rs.192 million. Provincial Parliamentary Secretary Punjab Mian Shahid Hussain Bhatti, MPA Mian Aoun Intisar Bhatti, Mian Azam Ansar Bhatti, Ex-Chairman District Zakat Committee Hafizabad, Ch. Nasrullah Khan Bhatti, ex-Chairman MC Sukheki Ch. Nasir Qayyum Bhatti, ex-Councilor Malik Maqsood Ahmad also addressed the ceremony.

Referring to privatization of schools, Saira Afzal Tarar said that government of PMLN was provided all basic needs in the schools of district Hafizabad in 2013 but regrettably, education department and other government could not maintain standard of schools as a result of which dropout of students were increased.

She said that education was constitutional right of every child but teachers could not control over dropout ratio of students in government schools that is why, t government had to privatize the schools to ensure enrolment of every child in the schools and overcome dropout ratio of children.

She said that different problems including establishment of railway level crossing would be at Mohallah Haji Pura in Sukheki would be resolved as soon as possible. MPA Mian Aoun Intisar Bhatti said that Dialysis Unit would be restored at Rural Health Centre soon and Boys College would also be established in Sukheki soon.

**Federal Tax Ombudsman an alternative forum for redressal:** Federal Tax Ombudsman Dr. Asif Mehmood Jaah said

that office of the Federal Ombudsman has been working for 25 years and mostly tax payers were ignorant about importance of Federal Tax Ombudsman as a result of which, only five thousand complaints were received during last 20 years but during the year of 2024, 13506 complaints were received and 12614 complaints were addressed.

While addressing a seminar held to create awareness among tax payers regarding working of the Federal Ombudsman at Chamber of Commerce and Industries Hafizabad, on Monday, he said that 277 seminars were arranged across the country for providing awareness to tax payers about working of federal ombudsman forum.

Every tax payer can submit his complaint on simple paper against FBR and application decided within 60 days and our slogan is to give reserct of tax payers, he said. He said that government was established this institute to protect from illegal unnecessary notices of FBR and other inappropriate acts. Senior Vice president Chamber of Commerce and Industries Hafizabad Chaudhary Shafaqat Hussain Tarar was appointed honorary representative of federal ombudsman and Federal Ombudsman was pinned badge of honour at his chest on this occasion as well as office of the federal ombudsman was established at Chamber of Commerce and Industries Hafizabad.

PML-N to transform the society: Local Leader of Muslim League (N) Sheikh Gulzar Ahamd has said that in order to accomplishment of mission of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, 'Suthra' Punjab Programme is full swing under leadership of Chief Minister's Coordinator on Population Welfare Punjab Saira Afzal Tarar in Hafizabad.

While addressing meet the press programme at press club, he said that Muslim League (N) was constituted a committee to monitor performance of Municipal Committee Hafizabad and Municipal Committee Hafizabad was under debt of Rs. 150 million while after supervision of the committee.

## Shangla victims demand compensation

### F.P. Report

SHANGLA: The people of Shangla are demanding justice for the 12 miners who lost their lives in a coal mine explosion in Sanjdi area of Balochistan, on 9th January. Ten of the deceased miners belonged to Shangla.

According to reports from Balochistan, the investigation into the incident has been completed, and the coal mine owner, contractor, manager, and engineer have been held responsible. The people of Shangla, including relatives of the deceased miners and labor leaders, are demanding that the government take concrete actions

against those responsible for the tragedy. They are calling for the implementation of safety measures in coal mines and compensation for the families of the deceased miners.

The coal mine explosion in Sanjdi occurred due to the accumulation of toxic gases, resulting in the deaths of 12 miners. The incident sparked widespread outrage and protests in Shangla, with demands for justice and improved safety measures in coal mines.

The deceased coal miners named Roshan Zeb, Azhar u Din, Muhammad Yamal and Amanullah, residents of Bandha Pirabad, Noman, resident of Myan

Kaly, Muhammad Shafiq, resident of Shaman Khel, Alpuri, Omar Wali, resident of Tangu, Alpuri, Wahid Zaman, Nizamuddin, residents Shaman Khel, Alpuri, Shangla and Akbar Ullah, resident of Zara Dheri, Shangla.

The relatives of the deceased miners and labor leaders are demanding compensation and improved safety measures in coal mines. They are calling for the government to provide financial assistance to the families of the deceased miners and to ensure that coal mine owners and contractors implement safety measures to prevent such incidents in the future.

## Free medical camp for special persons held

### F.P. Report

LODHAN: A rehabilitation camp for persons with disabilities has been organized under the Lodhran Pilot Project (LPP) with the special support of social leader Jahangir Khan Tareen. The camp, set up at 12 MPR Gellaywal is providing free medical check-ups to individuals from Lodhran and across the country for prosthetic limbs.

Following a three-day OPD, eligible individuals will be called back to the camp for the installation of prosthetic legs. According to the LPP spokesperson, this marks the eighth annual rehabilitation camp in Lodhran. Over the course



of these eight camps, more than 1,000 individuals with disabilities have received prosthetic legs, enabling them to walk again. Additionally, nearly 300 wheelchairs have been distributed to those in need.

Jahangir Khan Tareen reaffirmed his commitment to public welfare, stating that his mission of selfless service to the community will continue without any political motivation.

## Clearing Agents Association seek release of their colleagues

### F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Clearing Agent Association, Torkham demanded of the security forces to release their eight colleagues, detained in an allegedly fake currency case at Torkham Border last month.

Addressing a press conference on Tuesday in district press club, Khyber, the association head Mujib Shinwari, flanked by scores of clearing agents and relatives of the detainees, regretted that previous month security persons arrested 12 of their colleagues in the fake currency

case and kept unlawfully behind the bars for the last 40 days without any legal formalities however four were set free last day and the rest were still in their custody.

The speaker asked the Corp Commander and Inspector General Frontier Corp (IGFC) to forthwith initiate a probe into the allegedly currency drama, framed by the forces at Torkham border and punish those found involved in it.

We follow Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) at the currency declaration desk at Torkham custom house, formulated and approved by

the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and if the security forces are dissatisfied with the process it is not our fault, he remarked.

He went on that smuggling and currency cases were supposed to deal with the Federal Investigative Agency (FIA) and Pakistan Customs. They added that for the last one and half month their eight colleagues had been kept illegally in detention. They condemned raids on the residences of the clearing agents and seizing currency and valuable commodities that must be returned.





## Dozens of Palestinian families flee Israeli operation

GAZA (AFP): Dozens of Palestinian families fled from the Nur Shams refugee camp in the north of the occupied West Bank, as Israel pushed on with a sweeping military operation. "We hear explosions and bombings as well as bulldozers. It's a tragedy. They are doing here what they did in Gaza," said Ahmed Ezza, a resident.

Ahmed Abu Zahra, another resident of the camp which is on the outskirts of Tulkarem, said he was forced to leave his home. "The (Israeli) army came and we were forced to leave after they started destroying our homes". Three Palestinians, including two women and a young man, were killed in Nur Shams, the health ministry in the territory said.

Israel said its military police had opened an investigation into the death of one of them, a woman who was eight months pregnant. It said it had launched an operation in Nur Shams, part of a much larger campaign that began in January in Tulkarem and Jenin, which it said had "targeted several terrorists". In the streets of Nur Shams camp, under a light rain, residents were fleeing.

An AFP photographer saw dozens of families hastily leaving the camp, while bulldozers carried out large-scale demolitions amid gunfire and explosions. According to Murad Alyan, from the camp's popular committee, "more than half of the 13,000 inhabitants have fled out of fear for their lives". Since January 21, the Israeli military has been conducting a major operation in the "triangle" of Jenin, Tubas and Tulkarem, where



half a million Palestinians live.

Israel says it is targeting "terrorist infrastructure". Jenin in particular is a bastion of armed Palestinian militant groups. "What we are living through is without precedent," Ahmad al-Assaad, the governor of Tubas, told AFP. The Israeli operations "today did not target fighters, but civilians, women and children, and they blew houses to pressure residents into leaving".

According to the Israeli rights group B'Tselem, Israel was pursuing an "all-out war on the Palestinian people". "Since the ceasefire began in Gaza, the West Bank has been on fire", it said in a post on X, referring to the truce agreement that halted the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza on January 19. "The objective of these operations is not security-related, but political," said Abdallah Kamil, the

governor of Tulkarem. "They destroy everything", he said of the Israeli military. "They are trying to change the demographics of the region."

Israel insists that its operations are targeted at Palestinians suspected of preparing attacks against Israeli citizens. The Palestinian foreign ministry accused Israel of applying "the same policy of destruction" in the West Bank as in Gaza. Violence has exploded in the occupied West Bank since the war in Gaza was sparked by Hamas's October 7, 2023, attack on Israel. At least 887 Palestinians, including militants, have been killed by the Israeli military or settlers, according to the Palestinian health ministry. At least 32 Israelis, including soldiers, have been killed in Palestinian attacks or during Israeli military operations, according to official Israeli figures.

## Hegseth orders US Army to restore name of Fort Bragg

WASHINGTON (Reuters): US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth renamed the Army base Fort Liberty back to its original name of Fort Bragg, according to a Department of Defense statement, undoing a 2023 name change driven by racial justice protests. The base, among the world's largest military installations, had been renamed Fort Liberty as part of an effort to rechristen bases named for Confederate officers.

The move to shed Confederate names for military bases came in the wake of nationwide protests after the 2020 death of George Floyd, a Black man killed by police in Minneapolis, Minnesota. "That's right, Bragg is back," Hegseth said upon signing a memo ordering the name change, according to a video posted on the Department of Defense's website.

President Donald Trump had said during a campaign stop last year in North Carolina that he wanted to change the base's name back to Fort Bragg, according to local media reports. Congress in 2021 passed legislation forbidding the naming of bases after anyone who voluntarily served or held leadership in the Confederate States of America, the breakaway republic of Southern states that fought against the US in the Civil War in the 19th Century. Established in 1918, the North Carolina base was originally named for General Braxton Bragg, who served in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. It houses the Airborne and Special Operations Forces and is home to 57,000 troops, according to its website.

Hegseth sidestepped Congress' provision banning Confederate names by officially renaming Fort Bragg after Private First Class Roland Bragg, who "served with great distinction during World War II," according to the memo ordering the name change. The renaming of Fort Bragg honors all US soldiers who have trained to fight and win US wars, Hegseth wrote in his memo, "and is in keeping with the installation's esteemed and storied history."

## Saudi authorities free doctoral student

DUBAI (AP): A Saudi doctoral student at Leeds University in Britain has been freed after seeing her 34-year sentence in Saudi Arabia for her activity on Twitter drastically reduced, a rights group said.

Salma al-Shehab, a mother of two, had been sentenced to 34 years in prison back in 2022 over her tweets, part of a wider crackdown on dissent in the kingdom as Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has taken over as its de facto ruler. A London-based Saudi rights group, ALQST, announced her release. In January, ALQST and other groups said al-Shehab had seen her sentence reduced to four years in prison, with an additional four years suspended.

"Her full freedom must now be granted, including the right to travel to complete her studies," the group said. Amnesty International also reported al-Shehab's release. "She spent almost 300 days in prolonged solitary confinement, was denied legal representation, and was then repeatedly convicted on terrorism charges and handed a decades-long sentence," said Dana Ahmed, a Mideast researcher at Amnesty.

"All just because she tweeted in support of women's rights and retweeted Saudi women's rights activists." Both the Washington-based Middle East Democracy Center and Freedom House also welcomed her release. "Al-Shehab's unjust and arbitrary punishment is emblematic of a fundamentally broken Saudi justice system, where trials are not fair, defendants have alarmingly few rights, and allegations of torture and abuse by police and prison officials are commonplace," said Brian Tronic at Freedom House.

## UN humanitarian chief says Gaza ceasefire has averted famine

CAIRO (AP): Famine has been mostly averted in Gaza as a surge of aid enters the territory during a fragile ceasefire, the United Nations humanitarian chief said. But he warned the threat could return quickly if the truce collapses.

Tom Fletcher spoke to The Associated Press after a two-day visit to Gaza, where hundreds of trucks carrying humanitarian aid have arrived each day since the ceasefire began on Jan. 19. "The threat of famine, I think, is largely averted," Fletcher said in Cairo. "Those starvation levels are down from where they were before the ceasefire."

He spoke as concerns grow over whether the ceasefire can be extended and talks are meant to begin on its more difficult second phase. The six-week first phase is halfway through. As part of the agreement, Israel said it would allow 600 aid trucks into Gaza each day, a major increase after months of aid officials expressing frustration about delays and insecurity hampering both the entry and distribution of food, medicines and other badly needed items. The UN humanitarian office has said more than 12,600 aid trucks have entered Gaza since the ceasefire took effect.

Fletcher urged both Hamas, which quickly reasserted its control of the territory in the hours after the ceasefire took effect, and Israel to stick to the

deal that has "saved so many lives." "The conditions are still terrible, and people are still hungry," he said. "If the ceasefire falls, if the ceasefire breaks, then very quickly those (famine-like) conditions will come back again." The internationally recognized mortality threshold for famine is two or more deaths a day per 10,000 people. For months before the current ceasefire, food security monitors, UN officials and others had been warning of possible famine in parts of devastated Gaza, especially the north, which had been largely isolated since the earliest weeks of the 16-month war. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians have been able to return to the north under the ceasefire. "We can't... sit by and just allow these people to starve to death," Cindy McCain, the American head of the UN World Food Program, told CBS in December. The Biden administration repeatedly urged Israel to allow more aid deliveries and warned that failing to do so could trigger US restrictions on military support.

Fletcher said more food and medical supplies are crucially needed for the territory of more than 2 million people, most of them displaced, and he expressed concerns about disease outbreaks due to the lack of basic health supplies. He also called for scaling up the delivery of tents and other shelters t

o those who have returned to their home areas, as winter continues. "We must get tens of thousands of tents very rapidly in, so that people who are moving back, particularly moving back into the north, are able to take shelter from those conditions," he said. Fletcher entered the Palestinian territory through the Erez crossing between Israel and northern Gaza, where he said he drove through "bombed-out, flattened and pulverized" areas. "You can't see the difference between a school or a hospital or a home," he said of the north. He said he saw people trying to find where their homes had been and collecting the bodies of loved ones from the rubble. He saw dogs looking for corpses in the rubble, too. "It is a horror movie. It's a horror show," he said. "It breaks your heart again and again and again. You drive for miles and miles and miles, and this is all you see." Fletcher acknowledged that some Palestinians have been angry at the international community over the war and its response. "There was despair and anger. And I can understand the anger at the world that this has happened to them," he said. "But there was also a sense of defiance as well. People were saying, 'We will go back to our homes. We will go back to the places that we have lived for generations, and we will rebuild.'"

## Colombia migrants decry degrading treatment

BOGOTA (Reuters): Colombian migrants deported from the United States in the early days of President Donald Trump's administration say they experienced degrading treatment, but some said they still want to try and return to the United States.

Daniel Vasquez, 40, expected to be swiftly released after he was picked up by US immigration officials after crossing the Mexican border in January. He had paid a group of people smugglers, or "coyotes," \$500 to help him to the crossing, and the leader had said detentions last only hours. But Vasquez was detained for more than a week at immigration centers in San Diego, California, and Laredo, Texas, describing the experience as a "roller coaster of emotions." Conditions in San Diego were cramped, he said, and bright lights kept him awake. He was flown to Laredo, held for four days, then returned to San Diego before being put on a flight to Colombia. Each time he was transported in chains.

"Feeling those handcuffs and experiencing that situation was too strange for me. It was depressing. It was shocking, degrading," he said. US officials have long restrained migrants with chains and handcuffs during transit. But since Trump took office last month, both the Brazilian and Colombian governments have complained of inhumane treatment on deportation flights. Deportees on a flight from Brazil told local media they had been abused and refused bathroom breaks. Vasquez said he had seen women urinate in their seats on his flight.

US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) did not respond to questions about treatment of migrants on flights, or about detainees being denied toilet breaks. Vasquez's deportation flight to Colombia was one of those turned back by Colombian President Gustavo Petro, who cited poor treatment onboard. Petro's action led to a trade stand-off with Trump which ended when Bogota said it would send its own planes to bring migrants home. The Brazilian and Indian governments have pledged to work with the US government to make sure migrants are well-treated on deportation flights.

Guatemala's president has agreed to take deportees of other nationalities, while El Salvador has offered its prison system to the US government. Jose Vicente Suarez, 58, another Colombian, was also on one of the flights blocked by Petro and was later deported on a different flight. Suarez began his journey northward last May, making his way through the Darien Gap - a dangerous stretch of jungle in Panama - up through Central America to reach Mexico, where he said fellow migrants experienced robberies, violence

and sexual assaults. The trip cost him some 25 million Colombian pesos (about \$6,000) and left him in debt, Suarez said. After more than seven months traveling, he was deported within two weeks of crossing the US border in January.

Suarez also complained of poor treatment in San Diego before being restrained and flown to El Paso, Texas. "They mistreat you psychologically," Suarez said, describing being woken up to five times a night and made to sit for up to 90 minutes in a corridor, similar to an experience detailed by Vasquez. ICE did not respond to questions about allegations of mistreatment in migrant detention centers.

Vasquez said he had no way to let his family know where he was and resorted to scratching relatives' phone numbers into cardboard raisin packets and handing them to fellow detainees who were due to be released. He later learned that one released migrant made contact with his sister. Vasquez, who said he had previously entered the US on different visas, is looking to return and working with a lawyer to do so legally, convinced he has better opportunities for work than in Colombia. Suarez, however, who went for work and to reconnect with his children who live in the US, said he has no desire to try his luck again. "I don't advise anyone to go," he said.

## Egypt tells Rubio that Arab states reject Trump's Gaza plan

CAIRO (Reuters): Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty told US Secretary of State Marco Rubio that Arab states rejected US President Donald Trump's widely condemned plan to displace Palestinians in Gaza and take control of the enclave. Egypt's foreign ministry said Abdelatty, in a meeting in Washington, stressed the importance of expediting Gaza's reconstruction while Palestinians remained there.

A statement by the US State Department after the meeting did not explicitly mention Trump's plan but added that Rubio "reiterated the importance of close cooperation to advance post-conflict planning for the governance and security of Gaza and stressed Hamas can never govern Gaza or threaten Israel again." Abdelatty said he was looking forward to working with the new US

administration to achieve "comprehensive and just peace and stability" in the region, according to the Egyptian foreign ministry statement.

He also met with US Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff in a separate meeting, where he echoed similar statements, the foreign ministry said. Any suggestion that Palestinians leave Gaza, which they want as part of an independent state, has been anathema to the Palestinian leadership for generations and neighboring Arab states have rejected it since the Israel-Gaza war began in October 2023. Trump first suggested on January 25 that Egypt and Jordan should take in Palestinians from Gaza. In the days ahead, he proposed a US takeover of Gaza and a potential permanent displacement of Palestinians from the enclave with no right of

return.

Trump's comments echoed long-standing Palestinian fears of being permanently driven from their homes and have been labeled by rights advocates and the United Nations as a proposal of ethnic cleansing. Israel's military assault on Gaza, now paused by a fragile ceasefire, has killed more than 47,000 Palestinians in the last 16 months, the Gaza health ministry says, and provoked accusations of genocide and war crimes that Israel denies. The assault internally displaced nearly all of Gaza's population and caused a hunger crisis. The latest bloodshed in the decades-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict was triggered on October 7, 2023, when Palestinian Hamas militants attacked Israel, killing 1,200 and taking some 250 hostages, Israeli tallies show.

## Russia plays hardball on Ukraine peace discussions

MOSCOW (Reuters): Russia's point man for relations with the United States said that all of President Vladimir Putin's conditions must be met in full before the war in Ukraine can end, suggesting Moscow is playing hardball with US President Donald Trump.

Russia's foreign minister drove the point home, saying that while Moscow was ready for talks with Ukraine, results could be achieved only if the "fundamental reasons" behind the nearly three-year-old conflict were resolved. Trump, who has repeatedly said he wants to end the war in Ukraine swiftly, after hundreds of thousands of deaths, said he thought he was making progress, though he has not set out how he hopes to end the conflict.

Asked whether he had had a conversation with Putin since he became president on January 20 or before, Trump told reporters on Air Force One: "I've had it. Let's just say I've had it." The Kremlin refused to either confirm or deny the contact. Moscow swiftly underscored that its maximalist demands - as set out by Putin last June - remained the opening bid at the outset of the negotiations.

The "political solution as we envisage it cannot be achieved otherwise than

through the full implementation of what was pronounced by President Putin when he spoke to the Russian Foreign Ministry in June," Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told a Moscow news briefing in English. "This is where we are and the sooner US, Britain and others understand it, the better it would be and the closer this desired political solution will be for everyone," said Ryabkov.

In Putin's June 14 speech to the Foreign Ministry, he set out his terms: Ukraine must drop its NATO ambitions and withdraw its troops from the entirety of the territory of four Ukrainian regions claimed and mostly controlled by Russia. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, in an address marking Diplomatic Service Day, restated that Moscow was ready for talks "in which our legal national interests are upheld". "Not the interests of others, but in the context of agreements on an all-encompassing security system in which no one is hurt," Lavrov said.

But any settlement, he said, depended on the "full and irreversible removal of the conflict's fundamental reasons," including Ukraine's drive to join NATO and the "extermination" of all aspects of Russian language and cul-

ture in Ukraine. Kyiv, which wants to join NATO and wrest back control of lost territory if it can, said at the time that such conditions would be tantamount to surrender. The conflict in eastern Ukraine began in 2014 after a Russia-friendly president was toppled in Ukraine's Maidan Revolution and Russia annexed Crimea, with Russian-backed separatist forces fighting Ukraine's armed forces.

In February 2022, Putin triggered full-scale war by sending in thousands of troops. Trump, while campaigning, promised to end the war in a day, and US officials have had discussions with Ukraine and Russia on ending the deadliest conflict in Europe since World War Two. Putin said what he calls a "special military operation" was needed to protect Russian speakers in Ukraine and counter what he said was a grave threat to Russia from potential Ukrainian membership of NATO.

Ryabkov, a career diplomat who also oversees arms control, said Russia did not see a major change in the US approach to Ukraine, and cautioned Moscow would not be spoken to in the language of ultimatums. "Without solving the problems which were the root causes of what is happen-

ing, it will not be possible to reach an agreement," Ryabkov said. "So variations and half-measures are not the path we are prepared to go along." Ukraine and its Western backers, led by the United States, have accused Russia of trying to conduct a colonial-style land grab, and Kyiv's supporters have vowed to defeat Russian forces by supplying hundreds of billions of dollars worth of weapons.

Moscow controls about 20% of Ukraine, including Crimea and four regions in eastern and southern Ukraine. Though Russia claims the entirety of the four regions as wholly part of Russia, its forces on the ground control 70% to 80% of the territory with about 26,000 square km (10,039 square miles) still held by Ukrainian troops, open-source data on the front line shows. Reuters reported in November that Putin is open to discussing a Ukraine peace deal with Trump but rules out making any major territorial concessions and insists Kyiv abandon ambitions to join NATO. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told Reuters that he wanted Ukraine to supply the US with rare earths and other minerals in return for financial support for its war effort.

## Trump funding freeze threatens Ukraine investigations of alleged Russian war crimes

THE HAGUE/KYIV (Reuters): The Trump administration's freeze of foreign funding has begun impacting an international effort to hold Russia responsible for alleged war crimes in Ukraine, according to eight sources and a Ukrainian document seen by Reuters, halting dozens of jobs and tens of millions of dollars in aid.

Ukraine has opened more than 140,000 war crime cases since Moscow's February 2022 invasion, which has killed tens of thousands, ravaged vast swathes of the country and left behind mental and physical scars from occupation. Russia consistently denies war crimes have been committed by its forces in the conflict.

US-funded international initiatives such as the Atrocity Crimes Advisory Group for Ukraine (ACA) have provided expertise and oversight to Ukrainian authorities. Kyiv has been praised by its Western partners for probing alleged crimes while the war is still raging. At stake are six US-funded projects at the Prosecutor General's Office (PGO) valued at \$89 million, according to a Ukrainian document on the US funding and cuts seen by Reuters.

Funding for at least five of those projects has

already been frozen, according to five sources directly involved, who cited interruptions in payments. The affected worked on issues ranging from the preservation of evidence from the battlefield to anti-corruption initiatives and reform of Ukraine's prosecution system. Two of the listed projects were funded by USAID, three by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement and one directly by the Department of State, the document showed.

Of that funding, \$47 million was directly allocated to war crimes accountability, the document showed. The impacts on war crimes programmes described by the sources and the document have not previously been reported. Nearly all of the sources spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the issue. While the programmes do not directly impact Ukraine's frontline efforts to fend off Russia's onslaught, supporters say they represent the best chance of extensively documenting reported battlefield atrocities in Europe's biggest conflict since World War Two, now grinding toward a fourth year.

Reuters could not establish whether the affected

projects were specifically targeted or victims of the broad sweep of the 90-day freeze on foreign aid Trump announced upon taking office on January 20. The White House, the State Department and Ukraine's prosecutor did not respond to requests for comment about the impact and purpose of the cuts. Among the impacts of the spending freeze, nearly 40 experts provided through Georgetown's International Criminal Justice Initiative, ACA's lead implementing entity, have stopped working, according to two of the sources. ACA and Georgetown's press office did not respond to a request for comment. Two members of the programme declined to comment.

On its website, ACA, which is also funded by the EU and Britain, said it has provided more than 150 experts with "decades of experience" to help Ukrainian prosecutors. One source involved in supplying outside legal experts to Ukraine said: "Some partners have no more money to pay their staff." Another source said an advisor in the PGO was put on leave and a project to provide support for the victims of conflict-related sexual violence had also been suspended. Ukrainian non-governmental organisations

have also been impacted. Representatives from two such groups have told Reuters that their work collecting evidence from victims and documenting damages could be impacted, or had already been frozen. "Our organization...will continue to exist, but we will look for alternative sources of independent funding and accordingly will continue working in this field, just in a limited way," said Oleksandr Pavlichenko of the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union, an alliance of Ukrainian human rights groups.

The group has halted the work of its regional offices in Ukraine after the US freeze cut around 75% of its annual budget. The head of another Ukrainian organisation that assists in the collection of war crimes evidence and trains legal professionals said the group also had to partly cease operations. If new funding is not found, jobs will be cut in three months, the source said, requesting anonymity to speak frankly on a sensitive issue that has not yet been resolved. Since the first weeks of Russia's invasion, Ukraine's international partners have made accountability for alleged Russian crimes a key part of their support for the war-torn country.



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## The World Governments Summit has begun at just the right time

AS the World Governments Summit begins today, it is worth reflecting on how often the UAE-hosted event has tackled challenges and assessed opportunities, producing thinking that is ahead of its time. From topics as diverse as artificial intelligence and mental health, as well as food security, climate change and citizens' happiness, for more than 10 years the Dubai forum has proved itself to be a valuable international meeting point, aimed at improved governance.

What makes this annual summit a consistent fixture of the international calendar is how expansive its exchange of ideas is; few other forums can command a list of participants with such breadth of experience. More than 30 heads of state and government will attend, including the Presidents of Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Poland.

They will be joined by more than 80 international organisations and about 6,000 individual experts. Any summit that can bring tech figures such as Google chief executive Sundar Pichai and Elon Musk together with important individuals like Kristalina Georgieva, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, Rafael Grossi, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi has more than proved its relevance.

Those attending this week's summit are meeting at a critical time. The speed and profundity of recent developments – global and regional – require strong leadership, collaboration and innovative thinking. In the Middle East, new governments in Syria and Lebanon are taking shape as a tentative ceasefire holds in Gaza. In Washington, a new and very different America is being created; this promises to have far-reaching political, economic and security implications for the rest of the world.

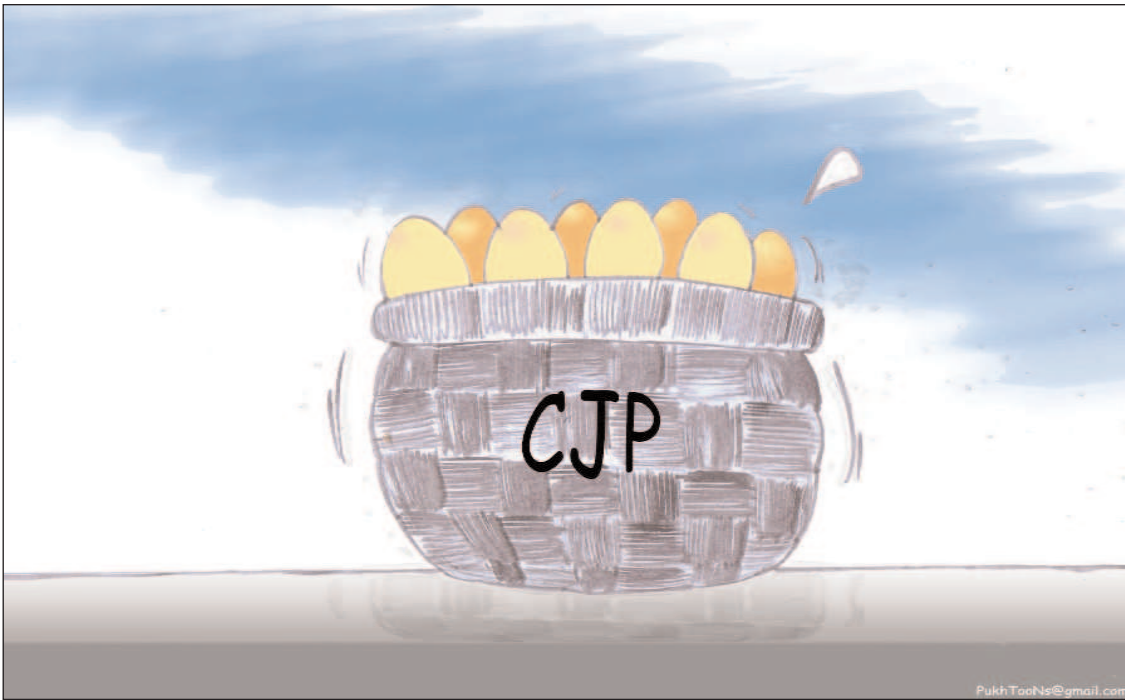
Indeed, many of the world's current talking points – global trade, government efficiency, the future of health care and international security – will be scrutinised and debated over the next three days in Dubai. Consensus is never guaranteed but bringing together people with different competencies and perspectives contributes to better understanding – and in today's fragmented world, this is a commodity that is often in short supply.

This storm of change that is taking place makes it more important than ever to prepare the next generation of policy-makers. Complementing the work of the WGS this week has been the first meeting of the Young Arab Leaders Forum that took place in Dubai on Monday. More than 200 emerging leaders took part, and there are plans to grow the event; Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, has said the initiative aims to attract 50,000 participants in the coming years.

The UAE is an apt place for an ambitious project to develop leadership among the next generation. Consistent Arab Youth Survey results have revealed how many young people across the region see the Emirates' model as one that they aspire to. A forward-looking approach to policy and problem solving will be indispensable in the years to come, owing to the sheer number and scale of the challenges facing 21st-century humanity. This week's World Governments Summit is undoubtedly important for the present but also because it will set the tone for future convenings, with the summits of 2030 or 2035 also being ones to watch.

### Important Notice

The Frontier Post will not be responsible for the comments in the articles and letters. The Frontier Post requests the writers of articles and letters to please make sure that they write their email addresses and mention the names of the cities, towns, districts or tehsil of their residences at the bottom of their articles and letters.



## Afghanistan needs a national awakening

Dr. Ajmal Shams

IT has been almost three and a half years since the fall of the republic in Afghanistan. A lot has changed since then both in the country and in the global political landscape. What remains unchanged, though, is the plight of women and girls in Afghanistan. The doors of schools, colleges, universities and other educational institutions are permanently closed for them, as if they are being punished for some heinous crime. The same goes for places of work for women.

When questioned, Taliban officials argue that the development of relevant procedures, revised curricula and a framework for Afghan girls and women's education is underway. These efforts are supposedly to align the education system with Islamic Sharia. It is a dilemma that the Taliban are arbitrarily recreating Islamic principles and redefining the foundations of Afghan values for which they have neither the political legitimacy nor the religious credibility. While on the face of it they might be justifying this based on their own narrow and ultra-conservative interpretation of Islam, in reality it is aimed at serving their political interests.

Hundreds of thousands of Afghans have left the country for neighboring Pakistan, Iran and the countries of Central Asia. Thousands more have emigrated to the West, mainly the US, Canada and Western Europe, and the trend continues, albeit at a much slower pace. Leaving Afghanistan and settling abroad has been nothing less than an ordeal. Thousands of Afghans who worked alongside the US and other NATO countries

during their operations in Afghanistan remain stranded in the country while their resettlement applications are processed. The Trump administration's recent executive orders have come as a great shock for these Afghans, whose fate has now been put in limbo.

Ever since the Taliban took control of Afghanistan, the de facto rulers have been striving hard to get international recognition. Yet, no government has formally recognized their regime, although they have been able to send their diplomatic missions to several countries, where they are being represented on a de facto basis.

It is also noteworthy that most of the Afghan embassies and diplomatic missions from the previous government have remained intact. It is a kind of diplomatic conundrum. Embassies in foreign countries are, in principle, not independent entities. They represent their respective governments overseas. With the collapse of the Afghan republic back in August 2021, one has to seek a good rationale for these diplomatic missions to keep operating. It is irresponsible for some of the Afghan ambassadors and other senior diplomats from the former government to formally engage in matters of politics and economics with others. It might potentially create liabilities with serious consequences for a future legitimate Afghan government.

The main concern is that these diplomats from the former government are not accountable to any authority. This situation can lead to potential unchecked corrupt practices by Afghan diplo-

matic missions abroad. The only justification for these foreign Afghan missions could be the continuation of consular services for Afghans and foreign citizens, as well as helping to facilitate humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan.

With the collapse of the Afghan government in 2021, the country's aid-dependent economy suffered serious setbacks, as foreign aid dwindled from several billion dollars to just a few hundred million dollars channeled to the UN and some nongovernmental organizations. Most private businesses and enterprises have ceased to exist due to the uncertain political and economic circumstances.

Although measures by the interim Taliban administration have maintained the value of the Afghan currency and prices of commodities have remained in reasonable ranges, the overall economic outlook has been dismal, since the purchasing power of the majority of the population has significantly declined. A consistent lack of trust in the incumbent regime could derail the fragile so-called positive economic indicators at any time. To make matters worse, Afghanistan is already experiencing the economic repercussions of the Trump administration's decision to dismantle the US Agency for International Development and its global aid programs. The US government has been the primary donor to Afghan relief efforts since the government collapsed.

Internal divisions and a power struggle within the Taliban were noticeable from Day 1, as multiple groups tried to assert greater control over the

government machinery. These differences are now increasingly evident, as rivalry intensifies between the Kandahar-based extremely radical group and the Kabul-based Taliban leaders who seem to be keen to open up and engage, including their more favorable views on women's rights to education and work.

The Taliban's deputy foreign minister, Abbas Stanekzai, who was instrumental in negotiating the Doha peace agreement with the US, has been critical of the Taliban's hard-line policies. There are reports that Stanekzai might have been forced to leave the country in view of a possible order of arrest by the Taliban's radical supreme leader. There is a need for such voices to synergize and be leveraged for a positive change.

Afghanistan, once again, stands at a crossroads. Regional and global political dynamics could turn the country into a battleground, with ordinary Afghans the main victims. Also, the country could become a hotbed of global terrorism, threatening the region and beyond if things spiral out of control. It is the national duty of every Afghan, especially those with a sense of love and commitment to the country, to join forces and build a peaceful movement for change: a bottom-up, people-oriented change based on the use of soft power, dialogue and political discourse. It is time the Afghans came forward to begin a national movement for change without foreign influence and coercion, although the positive role of the international community to facilitate and arbitrate should always be welcome.

## role of AI in modern education: Transforming learning and teaching

Zarar Haroon

AS artificial intelligence (AI) continues to evolve, its impact is being felt across a wide range of industries, with education emerging as one of the most transformative sectors. The integration of AI into modern education is reshaping the way students learn and how teachers approach instruction, promising a future where personalized learning and enhanced teaching methods become the norm rather than the exception.

At the heart of AI's influence on education is its ability to personalize the learning experience for each student. Traditional teaching methods often struggle to address the diverse needs of students within a single classroom, leading to disparities in understanding and engagement. AI, however, can analyze a student's performance in real-time, identifying strengths and weaknesses and adapting the curriculum accordingly.

For instance, AI-driven platforms like intelligent tutoring systems (ITS) offer customized feedback and exercises based on a student's individual learning pace and comprehension. This approach not only helps students grasp difficult concepts more effectively but also keeps them engaged by challenging them appropriately, neither overwhelming nor under-stimulating them. Studies have shown that personalized learning can

improve academic performance by up to 30%, highlighting the significant potential of AI in this area.

Beyond personalized learning, AI is also making strides in automating administrative tasks, allowing teachers to focus more on instruction and less on paperwork. Tasks such as grading assignments, scheduling, and even attendance tracking can be automated using AI-powered tools. This not only reduces the administrative burden on teachers but also ensures more consistent and objective evaluation of student performance.

AI-driven grading systems can assess essays and open-ended responses, providing immediate feedback to students and detailed analytics for teachers. In the United States, some schools have adopted AI-based grading tools that can evaluate standardized tests in a fraction of the time it would take a human, with accuracy rates exceeding 90%. These tools are becoming increasingly sophisticated, capable of assessing not just correct answers but also the reasoning and problem-solving skills demonstrated by students.

AI is also enhancing student engagement through interactive learning experiences. Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies, powered by AI, are creating immersive learning environments that bring subjects to life. For example, history lessons can be transformed into interactive experiences where students virtually explore ancient civilizations, or biology classes can involve virtual dissections that provide a hands-on learning experience without ethical concerns.

Chatbots and AI-driven virtual assistants are becoming commonplace in educational settings, providing students with on-demand support and tutoring outside of classroom hours. These tools can answer questions, provide resources, and even offer tutoring, ensuring that learning is not confined to the traditional classroom schedule. In the UK, some schools have reported a 40% increase in student engagement through the use of AI-driven chatbots, demonstrating the potential of these tools to support and enhance learning.

While the benefits of AI in education are evident, there are also challenges and ethical considerations to address. Privacy concerns are paramount, as AI systems often require access to large amounts of student data to function effectively. Ensuring that this data is handled securely and that students' privacy rights are respected is critical.

Moreover, there is a risk of over-reliance on AI, which could lead to the marginalization of human educators. The role of teachers as mentors, role models, and facilitators of social learning is irreplaceable, and it is essential that AI is used to complement rather than replace human interaction. Balancing the use of AI with the personal touch of educators will be key to realizing the full potential of technology in education.

Looking ahead, the integration of AI into education is poised to grow, with global spending on AI in education expected to reach \$6 billion by 2025. The potential applications are vast, from intelligent course design and adaptive learning environments to AI-driven research tools that support academic inquiry.

Governments and educational institutions are increasingly investing in AI-driven solutions, recognizing the potential to improve learning outcomes and reduce educational inequalities. However, it is crucial that this technological advancement is accompanied by policies and frameworks that address ethical concerns, ensure equitable access, and provide support for educators and students in adapting to new technologies.

As AI continues to advance, its role in education will likely expand, offering new opportunities to enhance the way we teach and learn. The challenge lies in harnessing this potential responsibly, ensuring that the benefits of AI in education are realized for all students, regardless of their background or location.

Writer is a student of Aitchison College Lahore

## Cholistan Desert Jeep Rally A thrilling fusion of adventure and Bahawalpur's rich culture

Muhammad Tariq Ismail

Nestled in the heart of Pakistan's Punjab province, the historic city of Bahawalpur serves as a gateway to the mesmerizing Cholistan Desert, a land of golden sands, ancient forts, and a vibrant cultural heritage. Every year, the Cholistan Desert Jeep Rally transforms this serene landscape into a hub of adrenaline-pumping action, drawing motorsport enthusiasts, tourists, and cultural aficionados from across the globe. This iconic event is not just a celebration of speed and skill but also a tribute to the rich cultural tapestry of Bahawalpur and its surrounding regions.

**The Cholistan Desert Jeep Rally: A Spectacle of Speed and Skill**

The Cholistan Desert Jeep Rally, often referred to as the "Cholistan Rally," is one of Pakistan's most anticipated motorsport events. Organized by the Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab (TDCP), the rally attracts professional drivers, amateur racers, and spectators who gather to witness the thrilling competition. The challenging terrain of the Cholistan Desert, with its undulating dunes and rugged tracks, tests the mettle of even the most experienced drivers. The rally features various categories.

**Bahawalpur's Cultural Heritage: A Backdrop to the Rally**

While the rally itself is a major draw, the event is deeply intertwined with the cultural heritage of Bahawalpur and the Cholistan region. Bahawalpur, once a princely state, is renowned for its majestic architecture, rich history, and warm hospitality. The city's landmarks, such as

festivities. Folk performances featuring the soulful melodies of the Cholistani and Saraiki traditions captivate audiences, offering a glimpse into the region's cultural soul. The rhythmic beats of the dhol and the haunting tunes of the alghoza (a traditional wind instrument) create an electrifying atmosphere, blending seamlessly with the excitement of the rally.

**Culinary Delights: A Taste of Bahawalpur**

No cultural celebration is complete without indulging in the local cuisine, and the Cholistan Desert Jeep Rally is no exception. Bahawalpur's culinary offerings are a treat for the senses, with dishes that reflect the region's agricultural abundance and culinary expertise. Visitors can savor traditional delicacies such as Sohan Halwa, a rich, sweet confectionary, and Cholistani bread, baked in clay ovens and served with savory curries. The rally's food stalls also offer a variety of street food, from spicy chaat to succulent kebabs, ensuring that every palate is satisfied.

**Promoting Tourism and Community Development**

The Cholistan Desert Jeep Rally plays a pivotal role in promoting tourism and fostering economic development in Bahawalpur and the surrounding areas. The event attracts thousands of visitors each year, providing a boost to local businesses, including hotels, restaurants, and transport services. Additionally, the rally highlights the potential of the Cholistan Desert as a tourist destination, encouraging further investment in infrastructure and conservation.

While the rally itself is a major draw, the event is deeply intertwined with the cultural heritage of Bahawalpur and the Cholistan region. Bahawalpur, once a princely state, is renowned for its majestic architecture, rich history, and warm hospitality. The city's landmarks, such as the Noor Mahal, Derawar Fort, and Lal Suhanra National Park, provide a stunning backdrop to the rally, offering visitors a glimpse into the region's glorious past. The Noor Mahal, a 19th-century palace built in the Italianate style, stands as a testament to the grandeur of the Nawabs of Bahawalpur. Its intricate design and lush gardens make it a must-visit destination for rally participants and spectators alike. Similarly, the Derawar Fort, located in the heart of the Cholistan Desert, is a symbol of the region's historical significance. Its massive walls and towering bastions evoke a sense of awe and wonder, transporting visitors back in time. The Cholistan Desert Jeep Rally is more than just a motorsport event; it is a celebration of local culture and traditions. The rally provides a platform for showcasing the vibrant arts, crafts, and music of Bahawalpur and the Cholistan region. Visitors can explore stalls selling traditional handicrafts, such as embroidered textiles, pottery, and camel leather products, which are emblematic of the area's rich artisanal heritage. Music and dance also play a central role in the festivities. Folk performances featuring the soulful melodies of the Cholistani and Saraiki traditions captivate audiences, offering a glimpse into the region's cultural soul.

Moreover, the rally serves as a platform for empowering local communities. By showcasing their culture, crafts, and traditions, the event helps preserve and promote the unique identity of the Cholistan region.

It also creates opportunities for local artisans, performers, and entrepreneurs to showcase their talents and generate income.

**A Unique Blend of Adventure and Culture**

The Cholistan Desert Jeep Rally is a testament to the enduring spirit of adventure and the rich cultural heritage of Bahawalpur.

It is an event that seamlessly blends the thrill of motorsport with the beauty of the desert landscape and the vibrancy of local traditions. For those seeking an unforgettable experience, the rally offers a unique opportunity to explore the wonders of Bahawalpur, immerse oneself in its culture, and witness the exhilarating spectacle of jeeps racing across the golden sands of Cholistan. As the engines roar and the desert comes alive, the rally stands as a celebration of Pakistan's diverse heritage and its boundless potential for adventure.

**A Celebration of Local Culture**

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Writer is Director Public Relations Bahawalpur.



# Power, wealth and governance in the modern world

**IN contemporary society, the phrase “follow the money” serves as an illuminating principle for unraveling the intricate connections among various societal issues, particularly those intertwined with governance. This concept emphasizes the critical need to investigate the motivations that fuel decisions made at the highest echelons of power. By analyzing the actions and policies of influential leaders through the lens of financial interests and control, one can uncover a profoundly tangled web that links power, wealth and governance.**

The recent political discourse surrounding US President Donald Trump and members of his administration has prompted substantial debate over their approach to leadership. Critics argue that Trump’s methods reflect a troubling trend that diminishes the lines between nationalism and detrimental practices. Rather than upholding the foundational values of conservatism, some view these actions as a form of vandalism—an indiscriminate assault on long-standing institutions, alliances and cultural norms.

One notable point of contention is Trump’s aggressive trade policies, which some claim are less about fostering coherent economic strategy and more about asserting dominance. The imposition of tariffs and confrontational negotiations with countries like Canada and Mexico suggest an intent to showcase authority, even at the expense of destabilizing smaller, more vulnerable economies. This quest for control propagates an atmosphere of fear and compliance, affecting relationships with both allies and adversaries.

The ongoing situation in Gaza exemplifies the potential for authoritarianism, as Trump’s controversial statements regarding the future of the Strip have drawn widespread condemnation. His suggestion that Gaza could transform

into the “Riviera of the Middle East” has been met with an intense backlash from Arab nations, which consider proposals displacing Palestinians tantamount to ethnic cleansing. In response, Saudi Arabia has reaffirmed its steadfast support for a Palestinian state, asserting that normalization with Israel is contingent upon the recognition of Palestinian rights.

As Trump amplified his influence and unpredictability, he built alliances with some of America’s wealthiest individuals; his administration includes 14 billionaires, reflecting his strategy of consolidating power through ties to the financial elite. This intricate dance between political power and wealth raises concerns about the integrity of governance, as the intertwining of financial ambition with political decision-making enhances the risk of the interests of a privileged few being prioritized at the expense of democratic values.

While it may seem that Trump’s actions primarily serve his personal interests and those of his close allies, the consequences for American society are profound. The ongoing trade war, rather than uplifting working-class Americans, often appears to further elevate Trump’s financial stakes, presenting an ironic contrast to the mounting struggles faced by many citizens attempting to meet their basic needs.

As the challenges facing the global landscape intensify, the urgency of the need to reassess how wealth is distributed has never been clearer. The historical predilection for wealth accumulation benefiting a select few cannot sustain itself indefinitely. Echoing the sentiments of Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci, we find ourselves in a moment of crisis, a transitional state where outdated systems disintegrate yet new frameworks remain undeveloped. This era is defined by distressing signs demanding immedi-

**Dr. Turki Faisal Al-Rasheed**

ate and collaborative intervention.

Acknowledging this reality necessitates a collective awakening and robust political resolve. Society must prioritize human needs by creating an environment that is not merely prosperous, but also equitable and just. By adopting this principle, we can enhance living standards for all and collaboratively address the multifaceted challenges that lie ahead, forging a path toward a brighter and more sustainable future.

The pivotal question persists: Can the American legal framework effectively curtail distractions from Trump and his administration, which ostensibly benefits only a wealthy few? As Trump forges deeper connections with elite individuals, including billionaires like Elon Musk, the implications necessitate scrutiny. The convergence of wealth and political power culminates in pressing ethical concerns that must be confronted to preserve democratic integrity.

Trump’s approach to Gaza can be viewed through the lens of distraction, arguably influenced by former adviser Steve Bannon’s tactic of shooting at a rapid rate to inundate the media. This methodology often serves to shift focus from crucial developments happening within US governance, particularly the dismantling of key federal institutions. While it may indeed facilitate the administration’s ability to move forward with radical policies with minimal oversight, such tactics have the potential to trigger both public backlash and discontent.

As Trump strengthens his alignment with America’s wealthiest, the impact on broader society escalates. The reliance on a concentrated elite to address national issues could alienate significant portions of the populace, particularly those who feel marginalized and disenfranchised by exclusive affiliations.

Ultimately, it is imperative to comprehend the intersectionality of wealth and political power to truly grasp the nuances of contemporary governance. By adhering to the principle of following the money, we can illuminate the motivations influencing societal issues and demystify the political mechanisms driving them. To counter these imbalances, we must expose individuals benefiting from such arrangements and demand accountability.

For the Arab world, particularly Saudi Arabia, sustainable development is crucial for a future where financial and moral returns benefit all stakeholders. A sustainable path cannot materialize without addressing the plight of the Palestinian people. Temporary fixes to the decades-long occupation will fall short of their intended purpose, underlining the necessity of an enduring, just resolution. The Israeli actions against Palestinians must be critically examined. Amnesty International has characterized this oppression as a system of apartheid, demanding accountability for the Israeli authorities for their systematic domination over Palestinian rights.

Addressing this critical issue is essential to fostering lasting peace. The notion that an independent Palestinian state is paramount cannot be overstated; it is a fundamental prerequisite for stability in the region, allowing for legitimate dialogue and collaboration among Israel, Palestine and Jordan. The proposal for a Palestinian-Israeli-Jordanian confederation, coupled with the right of return for Palestinian refugees, aligns with international law and can serve as a constructive framework for coexistence.

As we navigate this complex landscape of power, wealth and governance, a commitment to sustainable development emerges as a pivotal pathway for progress in the Arab world. It entails not

just economic rebuilding but also ensuring that the moral underpinnings of governance emphasize justice and equity. The reckless strategies of the past have continually failed to yield desired outcomes, emphasizing the need for a paradigm shift in how the US engages with the Middle East.

History serves as a reminder that continual reliance on the failed methods of military intervention and support for oppressive regimes will only breed more instability and suffering. Instead, fostering an environment where all individuals can realize their potential, particularly through the recognition of Palestinian rights, may hold the key to long-term peace and prosperity.

The omnipresent intertwining of power and wealth urges us to cultivate a vigilant citizenry that remains informed, engaged and proactive. As residents of a global society, it falls upon us to champion justice, equity and accountability, ensuring these principles remain at the forefront of our collective consciousness. Ultimately, navigating the nexus of power, wealth and governance requires a diligent critique of current systems, advocacy for ethical leadership and a fundamental commitment to uplifting human dignity across all societies.

In conclusion, the complex interplay of power, wealth and governance underscores myriad challenges existing within contemporary society. By thoughtfully navigating these issues, insisting upon accountability and prioritizing the well-being of all individuals, we can work toward a more equitable future, not just for the US but for the world at large.

A renewed focus on sustainable development, coupled with a concerted effort to resolve the Palestinian issue, emerges as both a moral obligation and a practical necessity in building a future grounded in cooperation and mutual respect.

—Arab News

## Trump’s following his campaign promises, but they’re threatening the rule of law

**EVERY day, Donald Trump shatters previous understandings of the presidency and America’s role in the world.**

But in his rush to wield vast power and fulfill campaign promises, the new commander in chief is straining the rule of law and gambling with global stability.

Before his second term began, it was assumed that a president wouldn’t simply refuse to spend billions of dollars already authorized by Congress and deploy a private citizen, like Elon Musk, to obliterate huge government agencies enshrined in US law.

The idea that the White House would simply ignore a court order was more a theoretical question for a law school seminar than a potential reality.

Firing government aid workers living in world hotspots would have been unthinkable. As would disrupting a program credited with saving the lives of millions of HIV/AIDS patients.

No other president hatched a plan to force Palestinians from Gaza into Egypt and Jordan—a step that could threaten the Camp David accord, fracture the Hashemite Kingdom and effectively amount to ethnic cleansing.

Nor would any conventional commander in chief suggest making support for a fellow democracy like Ukraine, which was invaded by totalitarian Russia, conditional on Kyiv handing over rare earth minerals as payment.

No modern president ever threatened to annex America’s friend, Canada.

Trump has done all this and more, as he sits at the Resolute Desk in the Oval Office, dispensing power with his Sharpie, making up foreign policy off the cuff — at the risk of igniting constitutional crises at home and turmoil abroad. The president’s ability to follow through on these policies, and more, will define his second presidency. His success also has the capacity to transform the office he now holds and reshape a global order that has prevailed since the end of World War II. Trump, the virtuoso of disruption, is unapologetic as he argues he’s simply doing what the country wants. “I have high approval ratings because I’m using common sense,” Trump told reporters Monday. He’s presenting his extraordinary claims of vast presidential power as him just exercising a mandate to take a sledgehammer to government and turn the tables on a planet he says ripped off the United States for generations. “A lot of people have said that this has been the greatest opening, almost three weeks, in the history of the presidency,” the president told Fox News in a Super Bowl interview, one stop on his all-Trump-all-the-time second-term debut tour. The White House claims huge wins in forcing Western Hemisphere countries to take back undocumented migrants, in getting a better deal for US ships in the Panama Canal, in forcing Canada and Mexico to strengthen border security and getting Hamas hostages free in Gaza. Some of these victories are real, in part; exaggerated; or illusory. But Trump say’s it’s the start of his new “Golden Age.”

And a nation that became the most powerful in history by building a global system in its democratic, capitalist image was hardly likely to assault the free trade system with tariffs or loosen curbs on bribery in foreign business dealings.

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And the president is basking in some of the best approval ratings of his career. A CBS News poll

**Stephen Collinson**

this weekend showed him at 53%. If the final months of Joe Biden’s presidency degenerated into stasis, Trump’s frenzy of activity seems to be forging an image of a man of action doing the country’s business.

Trump won a plurality of votes in 2024 promising change, a reinforced border, an attack on Washington institutions and the dismantling of a world trading system that many Americans blame for destroying their manufacturing jobs while global elites enjoy the spoils.

No one can say he’s not been as good as his word.

But Trump’s fast start—growing out of his need to always project strength and his sense he was spared from a would-be assassin’s bullet to save America—comes with huge risks for the US political system.

Domestically, Trump is posing threats to the rule of law on multiple fronts. And only three weeks into his term, many legal analysts believe that the country is heading to an unprecedented constitutional crisis.

These fears were sent into overdrive by Vice President JD Vance’s X post on Sunday that appeared to raise the possibility that the White House would refuse to accept court rulings on its most controversial programs.

“Judges aren’t allowed to control the executive’s legitimate power,” Vance said. The former Ohio senator’s comments reflected this young White House’s tendency to simply decree the legality of presidential action and disregard other

branches of government. Vance’s post was alarming for two reasons. Firstly, because the administration has already created so many tests of the rule of law — starting with Trump’s attempt to override the constitutional principle of birthright citizenship — that multiple judges have stepped in to freeze his plans. And secondly, because Trump is not a rookie president flexing his political muscles in his first few weeks in office. He’s proven his contempt for democracy with his refusal to accept the result of the 2020 election and by pardoning hundreds of rioters who tried to keep him in power on January 6, 2021. And Trump’s two first-term impeachments, which were followed by Senate acquittals, show that his fellow Republicans are likely to do little to hold him to account. Still, some Republicans insist that America’s traditional constraints on presidents will hold firm. “I mean, the courts, obviously are the sort of the branch of our government that calls balls and strikes, and referees, and I think that they’ve got an important role to play,” Senate Majority Leader John Thune told CNN’s Manu Raju. During his first weeks in power, Trump has sparked particular concern by trying to simply close down agencies like the US Agency for International Development and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Each of these institutions was created by an act of Congress and is therefore rooted in the law. No matter, the president told reporters, about his plan is to eliminate the CFPB. “Because we’re trying to get rid of waste, fraud and abuse,” he said Monday.

By simply working down his list of government agencies to be wiped out, Trump is ignoring the will of Congress, which has already been expressed with the appropriation of federal funds. The Constitution doesn’t give presidents a choice of whether they enact spending allocated by lawmakers. They are required to do

it. The White House is arguing that Trump has a mandate from voters to cut spending and waste. He’s not the only recent president to seek to bypass the will of Congress with executive power — former President Barack Obama’s “pen and phone strategy,” for instance, sometimes seemed to sail close to the law. But if every new president ignored previous laws passed by Congress, America would no longer have a constitutional republic.

Fears that Trump plans to ignore the authority of another branch of government — the judiciary — were fueled on Monday when a federal judge for the second time told the administration to restore grant and loan payments. Rhode Island Chief Judge John McConnell said the administration had violated his earlier instructions to unfreeze billions of dollars in federal aid. In another case in Washington, DC, federal employees told a judge the administration had failed to reinstate USAID workers who were put on leave.

A constitutional crisis appears to be looming — even if the administration is yet to fully defy the courts.

“I think it’s important to stress that we are not there yet, despite the best efforts of the vice president,” Steve Vladeck, a professor at Georgetown University Law Center told CNN’s Erica Hill on Monday. “And I think, at least for the moment, you know, the courts are ... doing their job.” But Vladeck also added: “The question of whether the executive branch’s actions are, in fact,

legitimate is not one, historically, that we leave up to the executive branch.” Still, growing fears of a lawless administration are fueled by multiple signs that Trump sees the rule of law as an inconvenience. He, for instance, fired dozens of prosecutors who took part in January 6 cases soon after he returned to the White House. And the prominent role of Musk, the tech pioneer who heads Trump’s Department of Government Efficiency, in shredding vast sectors of the federal government is also alarming ethics experts given the huge government contracts enjoyed by his firms, including SpaceX. Trump compounded these fears Monday with the firing of the head of the Office of Government Ethics, who was only confirmed in his post late last year.

This came as the president granted a full pardon to former Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich, who was convicted of multiple charges, including of trying to sell a US Senate seat that was once held by Obama. Trump’s Justice Department, meanwhile, instructed prosecutors to drop the federal corruption case against New York City Mayor Eric Adams. The department argued the allegations were distracting the Democratic mayor from aiding Trump’s immigration enforcement effort, thus reinforcing worries that he plans to use the DOJ to barter for political favors.

The president tried to splash executive power abroad, too — reiterating that he’s serious about his Gaza relocation plan and forcing Canada to become the 51st state. Nothing seems too small for his attention: He also reversed a Biden administration environmental initiative to move away from paper straws in the catering industry. “(They) break, they explode. If something’s hot, they don’t last very long, like a matter of minutes, sometimes a matter of seconds, it’s a ridiculous situation,” Trump said.

“So, we’re going back to plastic straws.”

— CNN

## Grassroots peacebuilding the bedrock of a lasting peace

**FOR now, the prospect of reaching a peaceful settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a remote possibility. However, while many feel sheer despair, the present moment is also an opportunity to revisit what has gone badly wrong over more than 30 years of attempts to reach a lasting peace between the two sides.**

There is little doubt in my mind that, while the architects of the 1993 Oslo Accords on both sides were committed to the necessary compromises required to reach a final status agreement, they failed to achieve this because they believed in an “elite peace.” In their focus on pushing forward the peace process, they neglected the need to build a critical mass of support for this long and hazardous journey through closely collaborating with a civil society that could spread the message of peace far and wide.

It was Henry Kissinger, the former US secretary of state, very much associated with the realist school of thought, who once remarked that “no foreign policy — no matter how ingenious — has any chance of success if it is born in the minds of a few and carried in the hearts of none.”

This warning was not heeded by those who were negotiating peace between the Israelis and Palestinians, partly due to the sheer energy, time and mental strain consumed by their intense endeavors in the process. But it was also due to underestimating the fact that it was the people, with their support, who could have carried the negotiators — and this complex gamechanger in the relationship between the two peoples — to the finishing line. Instead, it was the detractors of peace, coexistence and reconciliation who mobilized enough support to

drive a wedge between the governments on both sides and the people who wanted peace, instilling in them a fear of the consequences of peace for themselves and their security and safety.

This is not to say that there was no thriving civil society in support of the Oslo Accords. And following the signing, there emerged people-to-people peacebuilding organizations and initiatives mushroomed.

**The longer wars persist and inflict mutual pain and suffering, the more both sides dehumanize and demonize the character of the entire group that they face and, at least rhetorically, set an objective of causing maximum damage and suffering to each other. Hence, any peacemaking must restore empathy between all involved in the conflict, as well as the ability to actively listen to each other’s narrative and grievances and internalize these on the path to building trust. Governments are just not geared to that, while grassroots organizations are designed to do exactly that. They also have the passion to create the safe spaces that foster these important traits of empathy, compassion, mutual respect and a sense of justice in order to see the human and humane side of those who we have regarded as our enemies and to learn to trust them.**

Nevertheless, it was the lack of understanding by governments of how the work of such organizations was crucial in breaking down the barriers between individuals and groups by rehumanizing the other and building trust that was a missing piece in the peacemaking jigsaw puzzle.

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**Yossi Mekelberg**

foster these important traits of empathy, compassion, mutual respect and a sense of justice in order to see the human and humane side of those who we have regarded as our enemies and to learn to trust them.

Ironically, it was before the peace process started and prior to the escalation of hostilities between Israelis and Palestinians during the

as a vehicle to achieving a more inclusive and sustainable peace, peacemaking is still very much preserved as the domain of politicians and diplomats, often including the active involvement of generals. Such groups might be crucial to dealing with issues such as security and the demarcation of borders, but they are typically less competent in handling the psychological-emotional side of a conflict, which is

equally or even more important. There is sometimes an unsubstantiated belief that those who are active in people-to-people peacebuilding are naive — some would even argue simplistic — and fail to understand the complexities of a conflict. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is actually in the difficult, albeit honest, conversations that take place when people are ready to face each other, instead of avoiding one another or shielding themselves behind biases and prejudices to justify the building of physical and mental walls, that the complexities of a conflict are revealed and constructively resolved.

It is these safe spaces that enable those eureka moments, those epiphanies when we realize that what brings us together as human beings is greater, more important and stronger than what divides us as members of national, ethnic or religious groups and enables us instead to stand together

Most frustrating is that, while grassroots participation in peace processes is internationally recognized





# PSX stays bullish, gains 1,632 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 1,632.41 points, a positive change of 1.47 percent, closing at 113,010.38 points as compared to 111,377.97 points on the last trading day.

A total of 486,935,003 shares were traded during the day as compared to 415,160,931 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs30.381 billion against Rs23.947 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 447 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 264 of them recorded gains and 117 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 66 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Bank of Punjab with 59,148,179

shares at Rs10.83 per share, WorldCall Telecom with 30,022,192 shares at Rs1.56 per share and Citi Pharma Limited with 21,953,013 shares at Rs106.56 per share.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs183.14 per share closing at Rs23,415.42 whereas runner-up was Sapphire Textile Mills Limited with Rs34.32 rise in its share price to close at Rs1,200.00.

Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs124.95 per share price, closing at Rs9,365.05, whereas the runner-up was Philip Morris (Pakistan) Limited with Rs20.87 decline in its per share price to Rs661.61.

**Rupee gains 05 paise against dollar**

Pakistani rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 05 paise against the US dollar

in the interbank trading and closed at Rs279.16 against the previous day's closing of Rs279.21.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs279.75 and Rs281.25, respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 31 paise to close at Rs287.66 against the last day's closing of Rs287.97, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs1.83, whereas a decrease of Rs1.91 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs344.50 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs346.41.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased

by 02 paise and 01 paise to close at Rs76.00 and Rs74.44 respectively.

**Gold prices up by Rs100 per tola**

The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs100 and was sold at Rs303,100 on Tuesday against its sale at Rs303,000 on previous trading day. All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs86 to Rs259,859 from Rs259,773 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat went up to Rs238,212 from Rs238,133.

The prices of per tola silver decreased by Rs61 to Rs3,312 whereas that of ten gram went down by Rs52 to Rs2,839.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$1 to \$2,904 from \$2,903, the Association reported.

## Rana Tanveer chairs meeting of Pakistan Sugar Mills Association

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Tuesday chaired a meeting of the Pakistan Sugar Mills Association (PSMA) focused on important decisions related to the pricing and distribution of sugar across the country.

The minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensure sugar is available at affordable prices for the public, said a news release.

He announced that a micro-plan for sugar distribution would be introduced this week in every district.

Rana Tanveer announced that special measures would be taken to provide sugar at discounted rates during Ramadan.

"Sugar stalls would be set up in every district starting three days before Ramazan and continuing until the 27th of Ramazan. These stalls will offer sugar in ample quantities to ensure no shortage for the public," he said.

Tanveer revealed that the price of sugar at discounted rates will be announced later this week to ensure that especially the lower-income groups have access to affordable sugar during Ramadan.

He emphasized that with the cooperation of provincial governments, sugar stalls will be established across the country to ensure easy availability of sugar in all regions.

Ramazan is a month of worship, and the govern-

ment's goal is to provide essential commodities, particularly for the less privileged, at reasonable prices.

He assured the public that strict monitoring of sugar prices would be carried out to avoid any difficulties during the holy month.

**Minister highlights importance of research, in education for national growth**

Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Tuesday highlighted the role of research in the education sector for driving national development.

Addressing a seminar titled "Industry 4.0 & Process Automation", he stressed that industry needs the best researchers to pro-

duce high-quality goods, said a news release.

He said institutions should equip students with practical skills along with quality education.

He praised the Engineering Development Board's (EDB) efforts in facilitating industrial growth adding industrial sector plays an important role in promoting national exports.

The minister also expressed confidence that the Uraan Pakistan program would be a milestone in the country's economic progress. He said that the country is moving towards economic growth due to effective economic policies. The development of the country is linked to the development of industry, he remarked.

## Ahsan reiterates resolve to achieve 90% literacy rate

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday reiterated the government's strong commitment to achieving a 90 percent literacy rate, calling it essential for sustainable national development.

Speaking at the launch ceremony of Pakistan's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) mid-term review report, he expressed serious concerns about the current state of primary education in the country, mentioning that nearly 2.5 million children remained out of school.

He was of the view that cognitive development was one of the most important factors for children's growth, yet it was lacking in the current education system.

The minister pointed out the disparity in higher education rates between Pakistan and its neighbors:

while Pakistan's rate stands at just 13 percent, India's is 30 percent, Bangladesh's is 35 percent, and China has reached 70 percent. "Education is indispensable for development, and it must be accompanied by increased resources and improved governance," he said.

Ahsan Iqbal also regretted that, under the tenure of the previous PTI government, the education budget was slashed to just 1.5 percent of GDP.

However, he noted that the PML-N government has been gradually increasing the education budget since 2022. "Both the federation and the provinces must allocate adequate resources for education," he stressed.

While acknowledging that indicators in the District Education Report had improved, he urged that the serious flaws identified within the system should be addressed as a top priority.

Under the URAAN Pakistan initiative, the minister highlighted that education had been prioritized within the national agenda.

He also reminded the audience that Pakistan would celebrate its 100th year of independence in 2047, urging the nation to unite in its efforts to achieve national development goals. "Development is impossible without peace, stability, continuity in policies and reforms. In the past, Vision-2010 and Vision-2025 were squandered, but now continuity in policies is crucial," he added.

The minister cautioned that Pakistan was among the top countries globally in terms of hepatitis and diabetes prevalence and was one of the three most polio-affected nations.

Ahsan Iqbal expressed optimism about the country's future, declaring that the government aimed to

pay off the debt accumulated over the past seven years within the next 22 years. "And every child will be in school within the next five years, and 100 percent enrollment will be ensured at the primary level," he vowed.

He outlined the education reform plan, which followed the Single National Curriculum approach. This includes curriculum reforms, teacher training, and improvements in the examination system as part of the URAAN Pakistan program.

"South Asia's best teacher training institute will be established in Islamabad, and all education boards will implement a standardized examination system in collaboration with the provinces," he said, declaring educational reforms and the achievement of development goals "inevitable" for Pakistan's progress.

## Exhibitions essential to open new avenues for businesses: President

LAHORE (APP): Exhibitions are essential for driving trade, innovation and economic development by offering businesses, entrepreneurs and industries a platform to showcase their products, services and latest advancements.

Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) President Mian Abuzar Shad stated this while speaking at a "Made in Uzbekistan" exhibition organized by the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Pakistan. Uzbekistan's Ambassador to Pakistan, Alisher Tukhtaev was the chief guest while prominent business leaders, trade representatives and government officials attended the event, according to the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) spokesman here Tuesday.

Mian Abuzar Shad said that the exhibitions create opportunities for networking, international collaborations and open up new

avenues for business expansion. These events also provide valuable market insights, help companies stay informed about industry trends, and facilitate strategic partnerships.

The LCCI President said that for emerging economies, exhibitions attract foreign investment, boost exports, and support industrial growth. Additionally, they serve as a crucial link between policymakers, investors and business leaders, enabling discussions on trade policies, economic reforms, and future opportunities.

He underscored the strong historical, cultural and economic ties between Pakistan and Uzbekistan. He stressed the need for enhanced trade relations and deeper economic cooperation, urging businesses to explore the vast opportunities available in both markets.

"Uzbekistan's rapidly growing industrial sector and Pakistan's dynamic business landscape create

possibilities for trade and investment. Events like the 'Made in Uzbekistan' Exhibition provide a crucial gateway to forge new partnerships and boost economic collaboration, he added.

He said that high-quality cotton, fabrics, garments and textile machinery, reinforcing Uzbekistan's role as a key player in the global textile market. A wide range of organic produce, processed foods, dairy products and dry fruits, demonstrating Uzbekistan's strengths in modern farming and agribusiness. Cutting-edge pharmaceutical products, medical devices, and healthcare innovations, highlighting the country's growing expertise in the sector.

Mian Abuzar Shad said that advanced automotive technologies, spare parts, and heavy machinery, reflecting Uzbekistan's evolving industrial landscape. Innovative building materials, smart city solu-

tions, and real estate projects, showcasing Uzbekistan's urban development initiatives.

Uzbekistan's Ambassador to Pakistan Alisher Tukhtaev welcomed the participation of Pakistani business leaders. He said single country exhibitions and exchange of trade delegations play a key role in promoting trade and investment between the two countries.

The LCCI President said that as a leading voice for Pakistan's business community, the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) is committed to play its due role for the promotion of trade and industry.

Mian Abuzar Shad assured full support for businesses seeking to expand operations in Uzbekistan and encouraged Pakistani entrepreneurs to tap into Uzbekistan's strategic market advantages, business-friendly policies and growing economy.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor displaying vegetables to attract customers in Weekly Bazaar H-9.

## ICCI-Egypt Charge d'Affaires hold meeting — discuss strategies to boost bilateral trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Samah Ahmed E-Ghamrawi, Charge' d'Affaires of Egypt, Tuesday pledged to boost bilateral trade between Egypt and Pakistan by facilitating business exchanges and promoting private sector collaboration.

During his visit to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), accompanied by Embassy officers, Amr Abdallah and Ahmed Zowil, he emphasized the need for increased business delegation exchanges and the establishment of closer ties between the ICCI and Cairo Chamber of Commerce and Industry, along with other relevant government departments, said a press release issued here.

The Charge' d'Affaires highlighted Egypt's attractive investment opportunities, including tax exemp-

tions, joint ventures, and value-added prospects that would benefit both countries.

ICCI President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi welcomed the Egyptian delegation and stressed the importance of promoting balanced trade, specifically by showcasing Pakistan's export potential in sectors such as pharmaceuticals, marble, gemstones, and pink salt.

He further emphasized the ICCI's determination to not only enhance local business but also strengthen international trade.

Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Siddiqui reaffirmed the Chamber's commitment to deepening cooperation between the two nations.

Executive Member Fatima Azeem called for increased exchanges of

women entrepreneurs to empower women in both countries.

Vice President Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry underscored the similarities between Egypt and Pakistan, while Sanaullah Khan highlighted the role of Al-Azhar University in religious education.

Naeem Siddiqui, Special Advisor to the ICCI President, stressed the need for direct connectivity between the two countries to facilitate business growth.

Secretary General Ghulam Murtaza termed the visit a significant step towards fostering greater business collaboration between Egypt and Pakistan.

The meeting also saw the participation of Executive Member Chaudhry Mohammad Irfan and ICCI member Shahid Zafar.

## PIEDMC board approves development projects

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Industrial Estates Development and Management Company (PIEDMC) Board of Directors, in its 168th meeting here Tuesday, approved development and maintenance projects in various industrial estates in the province.

PIEDMC Chairman Javed Iqbal presided over the meeting, while Secretary Industries and Commerce Umar Masud and Special Secretary Sahibzadi Waseema Umer participated via video link.

The Board meeting approved the maintenance of various roads in Quaid-i-Azam Industrial Estate Kot Lakhpat at a cost of Rs. 40 million and the laying of a new pipeline for drainage of sewerage water in

Multan Industrial Estate at a cost of Rs. 240 million.

The Board also approved the construction of a drainage system for rainwater disposal in Bhalwal Industrial Estate at a cost of Rs. 60 million, besides giving the nod for the design of the entrance gates of Quaid-i-Azam Business Park and a contract for the supply of related equipment for electricity connections in the park.

The board approved the revised Solar Energy and Net Metering Policy for Sunder Industrial Estate and permitted to increase the height of the building up to 120 meters in Rahim Yar Khan, Bhalwal, and Vehari Industrial Estate.

The meeting also approved the minutes of the

167th BOD meeting.

On this occasion, Chairman Javed Iqbal said that available resources are being fully utilized to provide the best facilities to the industrialists and to create ease of doing business for them. Special attention is being given to the colonization of the industrial zones so that an effective role could be played in the industrial and economic development of the province, he added.

Board Members Shahzad Azam Khan, Sajid Saleem Minhas, Dr. Shahid Raza, Mian Noman Kabir, CEO PIEDMC Capt (R) Shoaib Ali, COO Ali Muazzam Syed and other relevant officers of the Finance, P&D, and TEVTA attended the meeting.

## Markets mixed as tariff uncertainty looms large

HONG KONG (AFP/APP): Asian markets struggled Tuesday as traders keep a nervous eye on Donald Trump's next moves after he signed off on tariffs for steel and aluminium imports and warned of more measures to come.

The president has lived up to his campaign pledges to resume his hardball trade diplomacy to extract concessions on a range of issues, including commerce, immigration and drug trafficking.

While the moves have jolted sentiment, equities have held up since Trump took office -- London and Frankfurt even hit record highs Monday -- with analysts saying measures have so far been less severe than feared. Still, caution looms over trading floors as dealers brace for the next announcement out of the White House, with Maurice Obstfeld, senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, saying "the degree of uncertainty about trade policy has basically exploded".

"Today, I'm simplifying our tariffs on steel and aluminum," Trump said in the Oval Office on Monday as he signed the latest duties, which take effect on March 12. "It's 25 percent without

exceptions or exemptions." He also signalled he would look at additional tariffs on automobiles, pharmaceuticals and computer chips.

Charu Chanana, chief investment strategist at Saxo Markets, said: "These expanding trade actions beyond previous threats to Canada, Mexico and China are leading to potential new import restrictions and retaliation, signalling more bouts of volatility for investors."

"Tariffs are being used not just to tax imports but also as tools for national security, economic leverage and revenue generation, indicating a shift towards long-term economic policy rather than short-term trade disputes." All three main indexes started the week on the front foot thanks to a rally in tech firms.

But Asia struggled to maintain its momentum from Monday, with Hong Kong, Shanghai, Singapore, Mumbai, Jakarta and Manila falling.

Seoul, Wellington, Bangkok and Taipei rose, while Sydney was flat.

The uncertainty fuelled by Trump's moves has pushed safe-haven gold ever higher. On Monday, it broke above \$2,900 for the

first time. It extended gains Tuesday to hit a new peak above \$2,942.

Fears that Trump's tariffs, along with tax cuts and deregulation, will reignite inflation and force the Federal Reserve to keep interest rates elevated have sent the dollar up against most of its peers.

Readings on consumer and producer price indexes this week will provide a fresh snapshot of inflation, while Fed boss Jerome Powell is also due to give depositions to US lawmakers. Both will be pored over for an idea about the bank's plans for rates, with forecasts for two cuts at most this year.

**Türkiye's retail sales growth slows in December:** Türkiye's retail sales growth decelerated in December compared to the previous month, according to data released by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) on Tuesday.

The volume of retail trade rose by 0.4% month-on-month in December, slowing from a 1.9% increase in November, the data showed.

During this period, sales of food, beverages, and tobacco climbed 1.1%, while sales of non-food items inched up 0.2%.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was report at the port where two ships, Eleni-T and Iskenderun-Mscheduled

to load/offload Container and Rice, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal and Multi-Purpose Terminal respectively on Monday.

Meanwhile five more ships, Karlskrona, Asia Liberty, Spike, Kathrine Kosan and Kourous Queen carrying Container, Palm oil, Soya-Bean Seed, Chemicals and Coal also arrived at outer anchorage during last 24 hours.

A total of six ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, Eleni-T, Maria and Chinooki are expected to sail.

Cargo volume of 104,800 tonnes, comprising 87,676 tonnes imports cargo and 17,124 tonnes export cargo carried in 2,250 Containers (1,620 TEUs Imports 630 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

### Lost Documents

I have lost my DHA Plot No. 293, Sector F, File No. OLOE/RES/2575, area 5 Marlas documents. If found Please return to me.

Noor Arif, daughter of Arif Firdous, wife of Hamadullah, resident of Nodiha Bala, Peshawar.

### Lost & Found

I lost my B.A Part-II D.M.C of University of Peshawar under Roll # 9739 Registration # 2007-GP-3857 some where. If anyone finds please return it to. ADIL AMIN S/O MOHAMMAD AMIN

### Court Notice

In the Court of Javeria Sartaj Khan Additional District Judge II /Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at Daggar Appeal No.9/CR Institution 22/5/2024. Date of hearing: 12/3/2025 Naseb Gul etc VS Wazer Zada etc.Notice to No. 24/2. Khalid Khan son. 24/4.Mst Shazia Bibi d/o Mst Luqman Zari. 27.Irsar Ali. 28.Qalandar Khan sons. 30.Msts Rasheeda. 31. Kishwara. 32.Mehrun Nisa. 34.Zenab Kulsum daughters of Sher Mehmod. 36.Umer Zada. 39.Imran. 40.Rahim Zada sons. 41.Mst Ghwara d/o Sahib Zada resident of Sura tehsel Mandann district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 12/3/2025 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

### Court Notice

In the court of Sana Gul civil judge IV/ Illaga Qazi Swat. Case # 195/1, year. 2022, Next Hearing date 27/02/2025. Muhammad yaqoob etc.VS Hussain etc. Notice to defendant 1/11) Fatma widow Muhammad yaqoob second wife. 1/12) Hameed Ullah. 1/13) Amjid. 1/14) Habib ullah. sons. 1/15) Rabia. 1/16) Mst. Shameema. 1/17) Saeeda daughters Muhammad yaqoob (late). 1/5) shah Wali s/o Muhammad Yaqoob (late) r/o Masqat Barhami Rahwar Govt of Uman. Whereas the above named cannot be served in ordinary manner it is therefore proclaimed or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court on 27/02/2025, at 8.30 am. Ex-parte proceeding will be initiated against you. seal of the court.





In brief

Shohaly banned for five years

ISLAMABAD (APP): The International Cricket Council (ICC) has banned Bangladesh player Shohaly Akhter from all cricket for five years after she admitted breaching five provisions of the ICC Anti-Corruption Code. Shohaly admitted to being in breach of the following provisions of the Code including articles 2.1.1, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.4.4 and 2.4.7, said a press release. Having admitted the charges, Shohaly accepted a sanction of a five-year period of ineligibility starting February 10, 2025. The charges relate to corrupt approaches made in relation to matches in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2023 held in South Africa.

Turk urge focus on grassroots

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senior Vice President of Pakistan Powerlifting Federation, Muhammad Arshad Khan Turk has underscored the importance of investing in grassroots sports development to unlock country's full potential and promote sporting excellence. He was of the view that there was immense talent was seen in the 2nd National Students Olympic Games which concluded here at the Pakistan Sports Complex last week. The event saw enthusiastic participation from students across the country, competing in 16 sports, including athletics, archery, badminton, basketball, catch ball, cycling, chess, futsal, football, gymnastics, rope skipping, skating, table tennis, throw ball, tug of war and volleyball. Turk also stressed that focusing on grassroots sports activities will enable talented athletes to emerge and represent Pakistan internationally, bringing pride to the nation. He believes that Pakistan has immense talent, which needs to be nurtured and polished through encouragement and training at the grassroots level.

FIFA extends Pakistan Federation's Mandate

ISLAMABAD (APP): FIFA on Tuesday extended the mandate of the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) Normalisation Committee until July 31, 2025 with Saud Azim Hashimi appointed as the new chairman. According to a press release, Saud Azim Hashimi, currently a member of the FIFA-appointed committee will assume leadership on February 16, 2025, succeeding Haroon Malik whose tenure concludes on February 15. The other two committee members, Muhammad Shahid Niaz Khokhar and Haris Azmat will continue serving in their existing roles. The extension indicates ongoing efforts to stabilize and restructure football administration in Pakistan with FIFA maintaining close oversight of the national football federation. The Normalisation Committee, first established to address governance issues, will continue its work of reforming and re-organizing the PFF's internal structures and preparing for future elections. PPF aims to popularize sport nationwide: The President of Pakistan Padel Federation (PPF) Muhammad Mateen, has reiterated his commitment to utilizing all resources to promote the sport of padel across the country. According to Mateen the students from educational institutions are actively participating in padel at the grassroots level, demonstrating the sport's growing popularity towards the game. To further boost the sport's profile, the Pakistan Padel Federation will organize the National Padel C'ship in Karachi from April 11 to 13.

# Renovated National Stadium Karachi inaugurated in star-studded ceremony



KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): After undergoing a significant renovation for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, which is set to take place from February 19 to March 9, the famous National Stadium Karachi has been inaugurated on Tuesday. Sindh Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori, Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah and Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB)

Chairman graced the venue's inaugural event. Pakistan's team for the current tri-nation ODI series and the forthcoming ICC Champions is also present at the star-studded event. The squad also unveiled official jersey, they will be wearing in the eight-team mega event, just as they did in Lahore on February 7. Several major upgrades have been completed at the

National Stadium Karachi to enhance both the playing and viewing experience. These include the installation of 350 LED lights to improve broadcast quality, the fixing of two digital replay screens and the addition of over 5,000 new chairs to enhance spectator comfort. The newly-constructed pavilion features world-class dressing rooms for players and match offi-

cials, complemented by high-quality hospitality rooms. Developed in a record time of around four months, the facility underscores the dedication and efficiency behind the stadium's rapid transformation. Earlier in the day, Mohsin Naqvi also hosted a reception for the workers to honor their commitment. "This upgrade is a testament to our vision of elevating Pakistan's cricketing venues to international standards. The National Stadium, which last saw a major overhaul during the 1996 World Cup, now stands as a modern, world-class facility that will not only host domestic and international matches but also provide players and fans with a top-tier experience," Mohsin Naqvi said. He added, "The incredible workforce behind this transformation deserves immense appreciation. Their hard work has made it possible for us to proudly present the National Stadium as a world-class venue, ready to welcome top cricketing action."

# Akif Javed replaces Haris Rauf for tri-nation series



KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Left-arm fast bowler Akif Javed has been called up as a replacement for Haris Rauf in the tri-nation ODI series, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) confirmed on Tuesday. Haris Rauf has been advised to rest after sustaining a muscular sprain in the lower chest wall during Saturday's match against New Zealand. "The replacement is only for the tri-nation ODI series, as Haris Rauf is expected to be fully fit and available for selection for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025," a PCB

spokesperson said. The Pakistan Cricket Board's selection committee held a meeting to discuss possible replacements, with Mohammad Wasim Jr., Akif Javed, and Mohammad Ali among the names considered. Earlier, the PCB shared an update on pacer Haris Rauf's injury he sustained in the PAK vs NZ game of the tri-nation series. Concerns were raised over the right-arm quick's availability for the upcoming Champions Trophy 2025 after he left the field following a side strain in the February 8 game at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore.

"Following MRI and X-ray scans, it has been confirmed that Pakistan fast bowler Haris Rauf sustained a muscular sprain in the lower chest wall region during Saturday's match against New Zealand. The injury is not serious and he is expected to be fully recovered for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, which commences in Karachi on 19 February," the PCB stated in a statement. The PCB medical board has decided to rest the Pakistan pacer for the February 12 game against South Africa as a precautionary measure and part of his ongoing rehabilitation. It is pertinent to note here that New Zealand beat Pakistan in the first game of the tri-nation series on the back of Glenn Phillips's unbeaten ton after Kane Williamson and Daryl Mitchell's fifties. Pakistan will face South Africa in Karachi on 12 February in a virtual semi-final of the series as the Kiwis have already secured their place in the grand finale with two out of two wins.

# Gauff dumped out of Qatar Open by Kostyuk

DOHA (AFP): Coco Gauff suffered a surprise early exit from the Qatar Open on Tuesday with a straight-sets defeat by Ukraine's Marta Kostyuk, while Elena Rybakina eased into the last 16. Former US Open champion Gauff blew a healthy advantage in the second set as Kostyuk sealed a 6-2, 7-5 victory and a third-round meeting with the winner of an all-Polish tie between Magda Linette and Magdalena Frech. Gauff, playing for the first time since January 21's quarter-final loss to Paula Badosa at the Australian Open, served seven double-faults in an erratic display. The American made a terrible start, slipping 4-1 behind after dropping her serve twice. Gauff was broken again in the eighth game as Kostyuk secured the first set in just half an hour. The world number three hit back with a break en route to a 4-2 lead in the second set as she started to find her rhythm. But Kostyuk battled back, taking advantage of an error-strewn Gauff performance which ended when she



served two double-faults to be broken for the fifth time. "The double-faults made it easier for me... I'm very happy that it ended in two sets," Kostyuk told BeIN Sports. Rybakina, who lost to eventual winner Belinda Bencic in the Abu Dhabi semi-finals last week, saw off Payton Stearns in her opening match. The fifth seed cruised to a 6-2, 6-4 win despite a late wobble to set up a third-round tie against either Russian teenager Mirra Andreeva or Slovakia's Rebecca Sramkova. Rybakina led 5-0 in the second set but missed three

match points to take it 6-0 and then briefly fell apart as Stearns dragged the set back on serve. The former Wimbledon champion belatedly got over the line on her fifth match point. Jasmine Paolini, last year's French Open and Wimbledon runner-up, also made a winning start to her campaign with a 6-3, 6-4 victory against Caroline Garcia in the second round. Czech youngster Linda Noskova earned a last-16 tie against three-time defending champion Iga Swiatek with a 6-2, 6-3 win over Kazakhstan's Yulia Putintseva.

# Babar calls for greater fan support at Karachi

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan cricket icon Babar Azam has called on Karachi cricket fans to turn up in large numbers at the newly revamped Karachi stadium for the upcoming fixtures, including the highly anticipated Champions Trophy 2025. Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the newly renovated National Stadium, which was attended by political figures and celebrities, Azam expressed his concerns regarding the lack of spectator turnout in the stadium. "I have a complaint from the people of Karachi for not turning up at the stadium to watch cricket," he remarked. The former skipper encouraged fans to show the same enthusiasm as they did during the grand inauguration, stressing the crucial role their support plays in uplifting the team's morale. "We will look to perform well in tomorrow's fixture and the Champions Trophy 2025," he vowed, highlighting the team's commitment to delivering strong performances.

# Bumrah ruled out of Champions Trophy 2025

NEW DELHI (Agencies): In a major blow, India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has been ruled out of the squad for the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 due to a lower back injury he sustained during the final Test against Australia in Sydney last month. According to a statement issued by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), the selection committee has named pacer Harshit Rana as Bumrah's replacement. This is the second ICC tournament Bumrah will miss due to injury, having previously been sidelined from the 2022 T20 World Cup in Australia due to a back injury that ended up with the pacer needing a surgery. Additionally, India included spinner Varun Chakaravarthy in the squad, replacing Yashasvi Jaiswal, who was originally part of the provisional team. Rana, who was named as Bumrah's backup for the England ODIs, has been impressive for the Indian side, scalping four wickets in his first two outings in the 50-over format. India's squad: Rohit Sharma (Captain), Shubman Gill (Vice-captain), Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul (WK), Rishabh Pant (WK), Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Harshit Rana, Mohammad Shami, Arshdeep Singh, Ravindra Jadeja, Varun Chakaravarthy. Non Travelling substitutes: Yashasvi Jaiswal, Mohammed Siraj and Shivam Dube.

# Shiffrin pairs with Johnson for 15th Worlds medal



SAALBACH (Agencies): American skier Mikaela Shiffrin clinched a record-equalling 15th World Championship medal as she and Breezy Johnson won gold in the inaugural team combined event in Saalbach. The event, which will make its Olympic debut next year in Italy, sees one skier compete in a downhill, followed by their team-mate in a slalom. Johnson, 29, who won the downhill on Saturday just weeks after returning from a 14-month ban for three anti-doping whereabouts failures, was fourth quickest in the opening run in Austria. Shiffrin, also 29, the winner of 99 World Cup golds over her career, was

then third fastest in the slalom to leave the US pair on top of the leaderboard with a combined time of two minutes 40.89 seconds. "So many things had to happen since how long it has been since we were 11," Shiffrin said of her long relationship as a competitor and friend to Johnson. "We needed a new event entirely. It's amazing for me. Bree did so well this morning, like she has been recently executing day in day out." It is an eighth World Championship gold for Shiffrin who emulates German skier Christl Cranz with her medals haul. Cranz won 15 individual medals between 1934 and 1939 when the championships were held annually, but Shiffrin has set the stan-

dard in the modern era. Switzerland took silver with Lara Gut-Behrami and Wendy Holdener, who clocked the fastest slalom, finishing 0.39 seconds behind Shiffrin and Johnson in 2:41.28 while Austria's Stephanie Venier and Katharina Truppe were third in 2:41.42. Shiffrin had been a doubt for the Worlds after she sustained an abdominal puncture wound in a crash in Killington in November which kept her out for two months. She only returned at the night slalom in Courcheval last month and said she would not defend her giant slalom title later this week because of post-traumatic stress disorder. Shiffrin also initially said she would not race in the combined event after Lindsey Vonn, who recently came out of retirement after 82 World Cup wins, pitched the idea of the pair racing together. But the US federation took the decision to base the team match-ups on current rankings, meaning Shiffrin was paired with Johnson while Vonn raced with AJ Hurt, with the pair finishing 16th.

# Moyes aims to bridge gap to mighty Liverpool

LONDON (AFP): David Moyes admits the gap between Everton and Liverpool is "as big as it's been for a long time" as he prepares for the final Merseyside derby at Goodison Park on Wednesday. Arne Slot's Reds are seeking to go nine points clear at the top of the table while their hosts will kick off a whopping 30 points behind their rivals. Everton have not finished above their neighbours since the 2012/13 season, which was Moyes' last in charge at Goodison before he left to join Manchester United. In recent years the Toffees have battled relegation on a number of occasions and have been dogged by financial issues, while Liverpool have not finished lower than fifth in the past eight seasons. Moyes, 61, who finished above Liverpool three times in his first spell at Everton, from 2002 until 2013, said the gulf between the two clubs had widened. "I think the gap between the two teams at the moment is probably as big as it's been for a long time," the Scot said Tuesday. "It's something I have to try and bridge and start bringing the two clubs closer together. I certainly need to bring my club closer to their club if I can."

Moyes, who replaced Sean Dyche as Everton manager last month, said derbies had been more competitive in his first spell in charge but it was always a challenge to compete against Liverpool. "I think it was only in the last couple of years where we did finish above them in the Premier League (as well as 2005) so it's something we have to try and aim to do again," he said. He added: "We've always been chasing Liverpool and probably no more so than now... we've got a few years to go before we're going to be ready to compete against Liverpool again." The original fixture was postponed in December due to Storm Darragh, meaning Moyes gets the chance to be in charge for Goodison's final derby. Everton will be leaving their historic home at the end of this season to play in their new 52,888-capacity Bramley-Moore Dock stadium on Liverpool's waterfront. Liverpool, despite their success, have struggled to win at the home of their neighbours in recent years, with nine of the past 12 games there ending in draws. And Everton will go into the match full of confidence after winning their past three league games to ease relegation fears. "Goodison is always a

# Serena Tennis Masters Cup inaugurated

FAISALABAD (APP): Three-day Serena Tennis Masters Cup was inaugurated here on Tuesday. Deputy Commissioner Cap (Retd) Nadeem Nasir was chief guest on the occasion. On the occasion, President Pakistan Tennis Federation Aisam-ul-Haq, federation officials, players and other relevant officials and personalities were also present. An exhibition match was played on Tuesday while formal matches will start from Wednesday. Top players in the men's and women's categories of Pakistan will participate in the event. Defending champion Aqeel Khan, national champions Shoaib Khan and Ushna Sohail will also participate in the event. The male players participating in the event include Aqeel Khan, Muhammad Shoaib, Muzammil Murtaza, Muhammad Abid, Yousuf Khalil, Barkatullah, Abdullah Adnan, and Shahzad Khan, while the female players include Ushna Sohail, Soha Ali, Mahrukh Sajid, Mehak Khokhar, Noor Malik, Zunisha Noor, and Lala Rukh Sajid. really difficult, intimidating atmosphere, difficult place to play," said Moyes. "I've had some great nights here as a manager. I hope I've got some more still to come before we finish here at Goodison."





## In brief

### Police arrests proclaimed offender

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Bani Police on Tuesday claimed to have arrested a proclaimed offender wanted in the case of recovery of dengue larvae. According to a Rawalpindi Police spokesman, the Bani Police had registered the case regarding the recovery of dengue larvae last year, and the accused Umair involved in the case had been on the run. A Bani Police team on a tip-off about the presence of the accused, conducted a raid and managed to nab him.

### 4 accused held for selling fireworks

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Ganjmandi Police, in an operation ahead of the Shab-e-Barat, held four accused for selling fireworks. A Rawalpindi Police spokesman, in a statement, identified the arrested accused as Noman, Sujawal, Muhammad Taha and Imran. The fireworks recovered from the accused were 131 fire-crackers, 100 string shells, 22 stick fire-crackers, 18 pomegranate firecrackers, 11 fire boxes and six other items, he said.

### Another big drug supplier arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police on Tuesday arrested another big drug supplier from the Pirwadhai area of the city. The drug supplier Bilal Khan was carrying more than 5.5 kilograms of charas when he was nabbed by a team of the Pirwadhai Police Station. The police during patrol stopped his vehicle on suspicion and recovered the contraband item from the accused. The police also seized the vehicle. It may be mentioned that the Rawalpindi Police have been continuing operations against drug suppliers / dealers on the instructions of City Police Officer Syed Khalid Hamdani. The Race Course Police on Monday held a big drug peddler, Aurangzeb alias Hassan Commando, with 10 kg charas, which was to be disbursed in different areas of the city including educational institutions.

### ICT admin cracks down on illegal wall chalking

ISLAMABAD (APP): The district administration of Islamabad on Tuesday launched a campaign against illegal wall chalking and unauthorized advertisements to maintain the capital's visual appeal. Despite existing regulations, violators are facing strict legal action, including case registrations and arrests. According to a spokesman for the ICT administration, the district administration is intensifying its efforts to keep Islamabad clean and visually appealing. A city-wide campaign is underway to curb the practice of wall chalking, which has been a persistent issue. In this regard, all Assistant Commissioners have been directed to conduct crackdowns in their respective areas to ensure compliance with the ban. Meanwhile, the administration has registered cases against painters and advertisers who continue to engage in wall chalking despite the prohibition. Furthermore, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, has appealed to citizens to support the administration's efforts to maintain the city's beauty. He emphasized the importance of adhering to the ban and urged painters to avoid any involvement in wall-chalking activities. The DC's call for cooperation highlights the collective responsibility of both the administration and citizens in preserving the city's aesthetic. The ongoing actions aim to send a clear message that violations will not be tolerated, and those who flout the rules will face legal consequences.

# Riaz Pirzada warns against irresponsible statements on water issue in Parliament

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Housing and Works Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada has emphasized that water is a sensitive issue and should not be trivialized through irresponsible statements in Parliament.

Speaking on the Point of Order in the Parliament House, he highlighted that the Council of Common Interests (CCI), which includes the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers is responsible for addressing water disputes.

"When I was in the Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC), discussions took place regarding water-sharing issues between Sindh and Punjab, as well as Balochistan. However, nowadays, misleading statements are made on television, creating the

impression that people's rights are being usurped. Rights are not taken away in this manner; Bahawalpur also lost when river water was blocked," he stated.

He further explained that Bahawalpur's water share is also stored in the Diamer-Bhasha Dam, and if Punjab receives its share, Bahawalpur should also be given its due portion. "We demand that the portion of Punjab's water allocated in the river be shared with Bahawalpur as well."

Pirzada criticized the misinformation being spread, arguing that no new rivers have been created nor has any infrastructure been developed to support such claims. He called for responsibility and truthfulness from both the Government's Leaders and the Opposition, stating that

reckless statements damage the credibility of the Parliament and the country's image.

He also pointed out that senior politicians from Sindh, including Khurshid Shah and Naveed Qamar, have extensively discussed the water crisis in CCI meetings, acknowledging it as a serious issue that even sparks international disputes. However, he firmly opposed any exploitation of Bahawalpur's water rights in the name of distributing resources to the desert areas.

"As representatives of Bahawalpur, we are present in the Assembly and fully capable of protecting our region's interests. No one else needs to speak on our behalf. We will continue to raise our voices to ensure fair water distribution for our people," he asserted.

## Balochistan's development a top priority: Syeddaal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Acting Senate Chairman Syeddaal Khan on Tuesday reiterated the government's commitment to Balochistan's development, and said that it remains a top priority.

During a meeting with Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir in Quetta, he discussed the province's development, law and order situation, and ongoing projects.

He said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is

personally overseeing development initiatives in the province and is dedicated to addressing Balochistan's challenges on a priority basis.

He said that funds are being released promptly for development projects, with the Prime Minister stressing their timely completion.

He also highlighted the government's focus on creating more job opportunities for Balochistan's youth and equipping them

with modern skill development programs.

Syeddaal Khan underscored the need for institutional coordination to ensure the socio-economic integration of Balochistan's people into the national mainstream.

He asserted that overcoming the province's backwardness requires collective efforts and reaffirmed the government's commitment to improving the quality of life for the people of Balochistan.

## PTA, FIA, conduct raids against foreign SIM sellers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and Federal Investigation Agency (FAI) (Cyber Crime Wing) jointly conducted a series of coordinated nationwide raids against sellers involved in the unlawful sale of active international SIM cards.

These actions were part of an ongoing effort to combat fraudulent telecommunications activities and ensure national security, said a news release.

The raids carried out across multiple locations, including Abbottabad, Skardu, Peshawar, Lahore, and Sialkot, targeted individuals and entities

engaged in the unauthorized distribution and sale of international SIM cards being used for illicit activities, including fraud and unverified communications. Several suspects have been apprehended, and a significant number of illegally activated SIM cards have been seized.

PTA and FIA were closely monitoring the illicit trade of active SIM cards, which poses a substantial risk to public safety by enabling anonymous and untraceable communications. Using these SIMs for illegal purposes, such as cybercrime, financial fraud, abduction, and other

unlawful activities, has raised concerns among security agencies.

Authorities had urged the public to remain vigilant and report any suspicious SIM card sales. Strict regulatory measures are being reinforced to prevent unauthorized SIM distribution, and violators will face severe legal consequences.

The government and telecom regulation continue to work closely with law enforcement agencies to ensure that mobile network services comply with legal frameworks and do not fall into the hands of criminal elements.

## OGRA takes action against LPG exploiters

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has taken serious notice of illegal gas decanting, gas theft, and the mixing of carbon dioxide with liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), along with other safety standard violations.

In response, OGRA has deployed inspection teams to visit the identified areas and take appropriate action in accordance with the rules and regulations.

CO2 mixing with LPG has been traced in various locations of Sindh province, especially at Khairpur Mirus, Ghotki, Pano Aqil & Ranipur, said a news release.

And manufacturing of substandard cylinders has been traced in the different locations of Gujranwala. The teams were also routed to visit Multan and Dera Ghazi Khan premises where fire erupted in LPG

plants causing huge losses to the exchequer and public lives. OGRA LPG & Enforcement teams in coordination with local administrators have raided four sites in Sindh Province discovered illegal mixing of CO2 with LPG sealed all the sites immediately, and lodged FIRs against the concerned individuals.

The teams have also prepared reports on the negligence of local handlers causing blasts in Multan & Dera Ghazi Khan and have sealed three illegal manufacturing sites of sub-standard LPG cylinders in Gujranwala.

OGRA's LPG & Enforcement team visited the LPG sites at; Thehri Pass, Khairpur, Shah Hussain Bypass, Khairpur, Nand ational Highway, Ranipur, and spotted an illegal site at Ghotki where theft of gas, illegal decanting and mixing of CO2 was

being done. The sites have been sealed and FIRs have been registered. The illegal manufacturing sites at Gujranwala were also apprehended and FIRs have been registered against the culprits.

OGRA has decided to exhaust all legal options to eliminate these illegal activities and has written letters to Chief Secretaries, the Commissioner of Sukkur and the Custom Collectorate, urging them to ensure safety at the local level by curtailing the illegal sale of LPG in the area.

It is pertinent to mention here that LPG is highly flammable, and the mixing of CO2 poses fatal risks, including adverse environmental impacts. CO2 has higher pressure than LPG, which can cause serious safety concerns as equipment calibrated for LPG may not function properly.

## ANF recovers over 55 kg drugs in three operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in three operations recovered over 55 kg drugs and arrested six accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Tuesday. He informed that 55,200 kg drugs worth over 5.8 million were recovered in three operations conducted in Panjgur, Gujranwala and Islamabad. 36 kg hashish was recovered from a vehicle intercepted in Panjgur, Balochistan and accused was arrested during the operation. 13.2 kg hashish and 3.6 kg opium hidden in a secret cavity of a vehicle checked near M-1 Motorway, Islamabad and an accused was arrested. In third operation, 550 grams opium, 1.5 kg ice and 440 intoxicating tablets were recovered from 4 suspects near Sialkot Bypass, Gujranwala. Cases have been registered against the arrested suspects under the Narcotics Control Act and further investigations are under process.

## Government tried to negotiate, opposition refused: Aqeel

ISLAMABAD (APP): Advisor to the Prime Minister on Law and Justice, Barrister Aqeel Malik, on Tuesday said that the government made serious efforts to hold talks with the opposition, but they refused to negotiate.

Talking to a private news channel, he said the government held three meetings and even offered a 10-month

plan, but the fourth meeting could not happen because the opposition refused to join.

Replying to a query regarding the protest of lawyers, he said major legal bodies, including the Supreme Court Bar Association and Pakistan Bar Council, supported the process, he claimed, while adding that only a small group, linked to a political

party, was protesting.

He rejected comparisons to the 2007-09 lawyers' movement by saying that the movement was against a dictator, while today, Parliament has the right to make legal changes.

He added that protests based on political motives would not change anything. "The judges have been appointed, and the

system is moving forward," he said.

Barrister Aqeel also dismissed concerns over international monitoring. He said visits by organizations like the IMF were routine and followed legal procedures.

"There is nothing unusual about this. Everything is happening under the constitution," he said.



ISLAMABAD: A view of snatchers show by police during SSP Operations Muhammad Shoaib Khan press conference at 15 headquarters. —INP Photo

## IHC reserves verdict on plea seeking to stop upcoming CSS exams

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday reserved its verdict on a petition seeking to restrain the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) from conducting fresh examinations before releasing the CSS 2024 results.

Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani reserved the verdict after hearing the arguments in a petition filed by several candidates of CSS exams. The FPSC's Chairman Lt. Gen. (reted) Akhtar Nawaz Sattai and Additional Attorney General Munawar Dogal appeared before the court.

At the outset of hearing, the court inquired that the FPSC chairman that the matter was sent to you so that you could look at it from your angle. There are 3761 candidates who participated in the 2024 exams and are now participating in the 2025 exams.

The FPSC Chairman said that we rejected the petitioners' application because the petitioners will not run out of chances even after the 2025 exams. One petitioner has already availed all chances and is not affected.

Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani asked whether commission has ever announced any results after the next

CSS exams. The Chairman FPSC replied that no, it has never been done. The 3761 candidates waiting for the results of the 2024 exams who are also going to take the current exams are mostly repeaters, he said. He said that 88 halls have been booked across the country and all the relevant papers have also been sent.

Additional Attorney General Munawar Iqbal Dogal said that if these exams are postponed, it will also create problems for the secrecy, adding that the law gives the commission authority to do this.

Justice Kayani remarked that in this way, then you will not give the results in 2025 or 2026. Additional Attorney General said that no, it is not like that. The court remarked that if you had announced the results even a week ago, these petitioners would not be before us today. Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani asked what is the cost of a CSS exam? The Chairman FPSC replied that I do not have any specific figures in this regard.

Additional Attorney General Munawar Iqbal Dogal said that the exams are going to start from February 15, the law allows the FPSC

to conduct the next exam if the previous result is not released.

Justice Kayani remarked that if the results had been announced 15 days ago, these students would not have been standing here. The students should have also seen in which subject they are weak, so they should change it.

The court said that the students were also deprived of the right to choose the subject. When I summoned the chairman, it seemed that he would say that we are announcing the results tomorrow. If you had said today that we are announcing the results, we would have disposed of the application.

The FPSC chairman said that FPSC is conducting 9 exams in a year, including CSS. Ten to fifteen percent of the exams in FPSC are CSS and the remaining 85 percent are other exams. I am afraid that in the coming days some people will come to us and say that they have become overage, he said.

Chairman FPSC said that we will announce the results of the 2024 CSS exams in the last week of April. After hearing arguments, the court reserved the verdict on the petition.

### Police arrest four kite sellers

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi District Police while conducting raids in different areas managed to arrest four accused and recovered 500 kites and five kite flying string rolls, said a Police spokesman here on Tuesday.

He informed that police on the directives of City Police Officer, Rawalpindi are making efforts to arrest kite sellers and flyers. He said that Bani police arrested Numan and seized 230 kites and string rolls while Pirwadhai police rounded up Nadeem Ahmed for having 210 kites and three string rolls. Saddar Wah police netted an accused namely Qadir with 100 kites and Saddar Baroni police arrested Nadeem for possessing 15 kites and a string roll.

The spokesman informed that Rawalpindi district police on the directives of CTP Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani are also organizing awareness walks in different areas against kite flying and aerial firing. The aim of the walks was to provide awareness to the citizens about the harms of the kite flying and its prevention. Special awareness pamphlets were distributed during the walks and awareness banners were also displayed at different points.

The kite flying is a dangerous game and it's a crime. After the amendment in the law, kite flying is a non-bailable crime, which could be punished with imprisonment from 03 to 07 years and a fine of Rs 500,000 to 5 million. Rawalpindi District Police on the directives of the CPO are utilizing all available resources to prevent kite flying, he said adding, the civil society, citizens especially parents should discourage kite flying.

## NHA calls for bids to revamp Hazara Motorway

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Highway Authority (NHA) North Zone has announced an invitation for bids to address critical road settlements and depressions on the Hazara Motorway (E-35).

According to an NHA spokesman, with an estimated budget of over Rs. 334 million, the project aims to ensure smoother and safer travel for commuters. Contractors registered with the Pakistan Engineering Council and the Federal Board of Revenue are encouraged to participate in this high-stakes initiative.

NHA has officially opened the bidding process for the periodic maintenance and structural over-

lay works on the Hazara Motorway (E-35). The project, divided into two key contracts, targets the remediation of road settlements and depressions at critical chainages, specifically at KM 54+200 and KM 54+400-56+650.

With an estimated cost of Rs.155,823,436 for the first contract (PS-M1-22-3004) and Rs. 178,672,670 for the second (PS-M1-22-3005), the initiative underscores NHA's commitment to maintaining Pakistan's vital road networks. Bidders are required to submit a bid security of Rs. 3,117,000 and Rs. 3,574,000 respectively, ensuring only serious and qualified contenders participate.

He further said, eligibility criteria mandate that contractors must be registered with the Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) under categories C-4 or above, with specializations in CE-01 and CE-10. Additionally, bidders must be active taxpayers listed with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for the year 2025.

This project is expected to not only improve the structural integrity of the Hazara Motorway but also boost regional connectivity and economic activity, he added. The NHA has emphasized transparency and efficiency in the bidding process, urging qualified firms to submit their proposals promptly.



ISLAMABAD: A motorcyclists passes through Srinagar Highway during the rain in capital city. —INP Photo



UNICEF provides packages

PANJSHIR (BNA): UNICEF has donated hundreds of educational packages to the Panjshir Department of Education. Alhaj Mawlawi Mahmood Talib Saqib, the head of the department, confirmed to the Bakhtar News Agency that the donation comprises 597 types of educational materials valued at \$65,456. During the handover ceremony, Saqib expressed heartfelt gratitude to UNICEF for its ongoing support and commitment to education in Afghanistan.

Karzai condemns suicide

KABUL (Amu TV): Former President Hamid Karzai condemned the suicide bombing near a Kabul Bank branch in Kunduz, calling it an act "against human and Islamic principles." In a statement posted on X on Tuesday, Karzai denounced the attack, which killed and wounded dozens of people. According to local sources, at least 25 people, including Taliban members, were killed, and 30 others were injured in the blast.

Kandahar marble mining:

Afghanistan and Turkey sign deal



KABUL (BNA): Afghanistan's Ministry of Mines and Petroleum has signed a \$6.2 million agreement with Turkish firm Ami Oghlu for the exploration, extraction, and processing of marble at the Dara-e-Noor site in Kandahar.

The ten-year contract was formalized in Kabul between the Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum, Mullah Hedayatullah Badri, and Ami Oghlu Vice Chairman, Musa Ami Oglu. The agreement is part of Afghanistan's efforts to attract foreign investment and expand its mining sector.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Minister Badri emphasized the government's commitment to developing Afghanistan's mineral resources. "Since the establishment of the Islamic Emirate, the ministry has signed multiple contracts for marble mining. These projects are progressing with full transparency and efficiency," he said.

He described the deal as a significant step in leveraging Afghanistan's natural wealth, stating that Ami Oglu would ensure operations meet international standards.

The Turkish company brings five decades of experience in marble, oil, and gas extraction, according to its Vice Chairman. He pledged that Afghan marble would be introduced to global markets, attracting specialized buyers.

The project is expected to create hundreds of jobs and deliver social services to local communities. It marks a step forward in Afghanistan's push to revitalize its mining sector and stimulate economic growth through foreign partnerships.

IEA: ISIS suppressed in Afghanistan

KABUL (TOLOnews): Zabihullah Mujahid, the spokesperson for the Islamic Emirate, has once again stated that ISIS has been suppressed in Afghanistan and emphasized that the group has no power in the country.

Speaking to TOLOnews, the spokesperson further said that ISIS activities in the region have no connection to Afghanistan.

Mujahid added: "ISIS is not a threat in Afghanistan and has no strength. It has been significantly crushed and is no longer considered a danger from Afghanistan. How its effects extend in the region is not our concern, but we are confident that ISIS is not a threat in Afghanistan."

Meanwhile, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) held a special session today (Monday) to discuss the threats posed by terrorist groups, particularly ISIS.

It has been reported that in this session, the UN Secretary-General's six-month report on ISIS threats, especially in Afghanistan, was reviewed.

According to the UNSC report, at Algeria's request, discussions on extending the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) will also be held behind closed doors.

"In our region, ISIS centers pose a threat to Afghanistan and the region, and Afghanistan needs support from different countries to counter this threat," said Fazl Rahman Oria, a political analyst.

"The extension of UNAMA's operations in Afghanistan is certain because, in recent years—especially in the past three years—UNAMA has played a crucial role in assisting Afghanistan," said Salim Paigir, another political analyst.

The UNAMA mission is part of today's UNSC meeting as its one-year mandate is set to expire in March 2025.

Taliban flog man

PAKTIKA (Amu TV): The Taliban publicly flogged a man in Janikhel district of Paktika province after convicting him of murder, the Taliban's Supreme Court said in a statement.

According to judiciary, the man received 25 lashes and was sentenced to one year in prison. The court said the punishment was carried out in public after approval from the Taliban's Supreme Court.

According to data compiled by Amu TV, Taliban have flogged at least 50 people, including six women, across multiple provinces in less than three weeks.

In the same period, the Taliban's morality police, known as Amr bil Maruf, have arrested 18 people on various charges.

Some Afghans and human rights organizations have condemned the Taliban's use of public corporal punishment, calling it inhumane. Despite global condemnation and warnings from human rights advocates, the Taliban continue to enforce public floggings and other physical punishments.

As world celebrates 'Women & Girls in Science', Afghanistan's education ban persists

KABUL (Amu TV): As the world marks the International Day of Women and Girls in Science on February 11, women and girls in Afghanistan remain barred from schools and universities, unable to pursue education in any field, including science and technology.

The United Nations General Assembly established this day in 2015 to highlight the importance of women's participation in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and to promote gender equality in scientific fields. This year's theme, "Science Without Borders: Empowering Women for a Global Future," underscores the need for greater inclusion of women in scientific research and innovation.

Despite global progress, women remain underrepresented in many scientific fields. According to UNESCO, less than 30 percent of researchers worldwide are women. In emerging fields such as artificial intelligence, only one in five specialists is female. Women also make up just 28 percent of engineering graduates and 40 percent of graduates in computer science and information technology.

In Afghanistan, however, the Taliban's ban on women's education continues to prevent an entire generation of girls from accessing higher education, further widening the gender gap in science and other academic disciplines.

No interference in UN aid operations: Islamic Emirate

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Ministry of Economy of the Islamic Emirate has rejected the recent remarks of Donald Trump's national security advisor, stating that the Islamic Emirate is not involved in UN aid and contracts.

Abdul Latif Nazari, the Deputy Minister for Technical Affairs at the Ministry of Economy, emphasized that not only does the Islamic Emirate not interfere, but it also facilitates international organizations in delivering aid.

"The Ministry of Economy of the Islamic Emirate strongly and firmly rejects the recent remarks of the US national security advisor. We have had no involvement in the aid distribution process or UN contracts. The Ministry of Economy has always provided greater facilitation

for international aid," Nazari told TOLOnews.

Previously, Mike Waltz, Donald Trump's national security advisor, had claimed that the Islamic Emirate plays a role in decision-making regarding contracting companies, particularly those working with the United Nations, and stated that there is evidence to support this.

Waltz also spoke about the support of the chairman of the US House Foreign Affairs Committee for reviewing US foreign aid to Afghanistan. He added that the American people do not support the transfer of more than \$3 billion to the Islamic Emirate through UN contractors.

"I don't think the American people support 3 billion plus dollars going over to the Taliban through a series of UN contractors

that only allow the Taliban to then play winners and losers with who supports them and who gets punished with them on the ground. And we have documented evidence after documented evidence that that's the case. And yet we want just kind of, we don't want studies and commissions. The president wants action, and that's what he's getting," stated Mike Waltz.

"Given the current situation, our country is unfortunately experiencing an economic crisis. If foreign aid is reduced or cut off, it will directly worsen the crisis," Economic analyst Abdul Zahoor Madbar said.

Additionally, some Afghan citizens argue that considering the high levels of poverty and unemployment, humanitarian aid is a dire necessity for Afghanistan.

"People are poor and helpless. If this aid stops, you can see for yourself in some parts of Kabul that people have turned to begging," said Mohammad Mosa, a resident of Kabul.

"International organizations should not cut aid to Afghanistan under the current circumstances because every Afghan, every Muslim, is facing some kind of challenge," stated Taza Gul, another resident of Kabul.

Following Donald Trump's entry into the White House, he signed an order suspending US foreign aid for 90 days.

However, his Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, later announced that critical aid to Afghanistan would be exempt from this suspension, though US assistance would continue based on national interest.

Stomach, esophagus and breast cancer most common types

KABUL (TOLOnews): Abdul Wali Haqqani, the Administrative Deputy Minister of Public Health, stated that the most common types of cancer in Afghanistan are stomach and esophageal cancer among men and breast cancer among women.

Additionally, Haqqani announced the activation of a 200-bed hospital dedicated to cancer treatment in the country, emphasizing that this center has started providing services to cancer patients.

During a ceremony marking World Cancer Day, which was held late by the ministry, Haqqani said, "A 200-bed hospital, previously belonging to the Administrative and Civil Service Reform Commission, has been allocated by the Ministry of Public Health for cancer treatment. This center is now officially providing services to cancer patients."

Mohammad Tahir Haleem, head of the Ministry of Public Health office, called on the international community to assist Afghanistan in improving healthcare services, particularly in cancer diagnosis and treatment.

"Do not leave us alone in



terms of healthcare. Humanitarian and medical aid to Afghanistan must continue to help control cancer," he said.

Khalid Ahmad Khalid, head of the Oncology Hospital, referred to development programs and stated, "In my opinion, in the next three years, our fellow citizens will no longer need to travel abroad for cancer treatment, as the necessary facilities will be available within the country."

The representative of the World Health Organization

(WHO) in Afghanistan also announced that until September 2027, with financial support from the European Union and other international organizations, WHO will support the Kabul Cancer Hospital and local treatment centers in Mazar and Herat.

Delara Manuel, WHO's representative, said, "This year and until September 2027, with donor funding support from the European Union, WHO Afghanistan is proud to announce the support to improve the can-

cer care services at the National Cancer Hospital of MOPH here in Kabul, including the current cancer satellite clinics that are located in Masar and Herat."

February 4 is observed as World Cancer Day. This day, proposed in 2008, aims to raise awareness, promote prevention, encourage early diagnosis, and support cancer treatment.

However, this year, Afghanistan's Ministry of Public Health observed the day with a delay.

Afghanistan's cotton production rises by 30 per cent, says NSIA

KABUL (TOLOnews): The National Statistics and Information Authority (NSIA) states that cotton production has increased by 30% this year compared to last year, reaching nearly 160,000 tons.

Mohammad Halim Rafi, the NSIA spokesman for the authority, said that Helmand province accounts for the highest cotton production.

Cotton, which holds significant economic value globally, is primarily cultivated in the southern, northern, and northeastern regions of Afghanistan.

Mohammad Halim Rafi said: "Our figures indicate

that 159,000 tons of cotton have been produced in 15 provinces, with the highest amount, 80,000 tons, belonging to Helmand. Our analysis shows that cotton production has increased by 30% compared to last year."

According to the published statistics, Helmand, with 80,000 metric tons, Balkh with over 34,000 metric tons, Kandahar with over 11,000 metric tons, Jawzjan with nearly 11,000 metric tons, and Nangarhar with over 5,000 metric tons, are the provinces with the highest cotton production.

Additionally, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock has announced efforts to establish domestic and international markets for selling

this product.

Misbahuddin Mustaeen, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock, stated: "Cotton, which has both oil and industrial value, needs to be marketed both domestically and internationally. We need to work in this area and create opportunities for its export, although little work has been done so far."

Some economic experts believe that expanding exports alongside increasing domestic production can play a crucial role in reducing dependence on imports, preventing additional costs, and promoting Afghanistan's economic growth.

"The more we export,

the more we can generate revenue and create employment opportunities. However, the key point is that we must take advantage of this opportunity.

Despite the government's efforts to increase exports and support domestic production, it is now essential that producers also work harder to ensure that domestic goods meet global standards and requirements," said Abdul Nasser Rashtia Economic expert.

Cotton is one of Afghanistan's key export commodities. According to data from the National Statistics and Information Authority, last year, Afghanistan exported cotton worth \$273 million.

Afghan Minister meets Kazakhstan's envoy



KABUL (BNA): Nooruddin Azizi, Acting Minister of Industry and Commerce, met with Gaziz Akbassov, the Ambassador of Kazakhstan in Kabul.

According to the press release from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce,

during the meeting, the two sides discussed establishing a trade center in Almaty for Afghan traders, implementing the commitments made between traders of both countries in their contracts, investment by Kazakhstan in Afghanistan, pro-

viding necessary facilities for issuing visas to Afghan traders through the Kazakh Embassy in Kabul.

Additionally, they discussed ways to resolve issues faced by traders and settle commercial disputes between them.

250 Afghan migrants rescued from snow and deported

KABUL (Khaama Press): Hojat Sedighi, the public prosecutor of Taybad in Khorasan Razavi province, Iran, has announced that 250 undocumented Afghan migrants, who had been trapped in heavy snow and storms in the border regions, have been rescued and deported. He stated that these Afghan migrants had attempted to enter Iran illegally.

The Iranian official emphasized that these migrants had suffered from frostbite, and after receiving medical treatment and undergoing legal procedures, they were sent back to Afghanistan.

According to the public prosecutor of Taybad, Khorasan Razavi province, around 1,400 Afghan migrants have been detained and deported by security forces since the beginning of the year while attempting to enter Iran illegally through the Dogharoun border.

Meanwhile, in recent months, the process of expelling and detaining Afghan migrants from Iran and Pakistan has intensified, with hundreds of individuals entering these countries daily.

At the same time, the police commander of Zabul

city in Sistan and Baluchestan province, Iran, reported the detention of 172 migrants "without legal documents" in last week.

According to official statistics, over 300,000 Afghan migrants have been detained and expelled from Tehran alone since the beginning of this year.

The ongoing crackdown on illegal migration highlights the increasing pressure on both Iran and Afghanistan as they manage the flow of migrants, many of whom are seeking better opportunities or fleeing difficult conditions in their home country.





KARACHI: Commander US NAVCENT Vice Admiral George Wikoff called on Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf during Aman Dialogue 2025.

# Trump says Hamas should free all hostages by Saturday

WASHINGTON (Reuters): US President Donald Trump said that Hamas should release all hostages held by the militant group in Gaza by midday Saturday or he would propose canceling the Israel-Hamas ceasefire and “let hell break out.”

Trump cautioned that Israel might want to override him on the issue and said he might speak to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. But in a wide-ranging session with reporters in the Oval Office, Trump expressed frustration with the condition of the last group of hostages freed by Hamas and by the announcement by the militant group that it would halt further releases.

“As far as I’m concerned, if all of the hostages aren’t returned by Saturday at 12 o’clock, I think it’s an appropriate time. I would say, cancel it and all bets are off and let hell break out. I’d say they ought to be returned by 12 o’clock on Saturday,” Trump said. He said he wanted the hostages released en masse, instead of a few at a time. “We want ‘em all back.”

Trump also said he might withhold aid to Jordan and Egypt if they don’t take Palestinian refugees being relocated from Gaza. He is to meet Jordan’s King Abdullah on Tuesday. The comments came on a day of some confusion over Trump’s proposal for a US takeover of Gaza once the fighting stops.

He said Palestinians would not have the right of return to the Gaza Strip under his proposal to redevelop the enclave, contradicting his own officials who had suggested Gazans would only be relocated temporarily.

In an excerpt of an interview with Fox News channel’s Bret Baier broadcast on Monday, Trump added that he thought he could make a deal with Jordan and Egypt to take the displaced Palestinians, saying the US gives the two countries “billions and billions of dollars a year.”

Asked if Palestinians would have the right to return to Gaza, Trump said: “No, they wouldn’t because they’re going to have much better housing.” “I’m talking about building a permanent place for them,” he said, adding it would take years for Gaza to be habitable again. In a shock announcement on Feb. 4 after meeting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington, Trump proposed resettling Gaza’s 2.2 million Palestinians and the US taking control of the seaside enclave, redeveloping it into the “Riviera of the Middle East.”

Trump’s suggestion of Palestinian displacement has been repeatedly rejected by Gaza residents and Arab states, and labeled by rights advocates and the United Nations as a proposal of ethnic cleansing. Senior Hamas official Sami Abu Zuhri said Trump’s statement that Palestinians would not be able to return to Gaza was “irresponsible.”

“We affirm that such plans are capable of igniting the region,” he told Reuters on Monday. Netanyahu, who praised the proposal, suggested Palestinians would be allowed to return. “They can leave, they can then come back, they can relocate and come back. But you have to rebuild Gaza,” he said the day after Trump’s announcement.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who will depart later this week for his first visit to the Middle East in the office, said on Thursday that Palestinians would have to “live somewhere else in the interim,” during reconstruction, although he declined to explicitly rule out their permanent displacement. The State Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the disparity between Rubio and Trump’s most recent remarks on the plan.

Trump’s comments come as a fragile ceasefire reached last month between Israel and Hamas is at risk of collapse after Hamas announced on Monday it would stop releasing Israeli hostages over alleged Israeli violations of the agreement. Israel’s Arab neighbors, including Egypt and Jordan, have said any plan to transfer Palestinians from their land would destabilize the region.

Rubio met Egypt’s Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty in Washington on Monday. Egypt’s foreign ministry said Abdelatty told Rubio that Arab countries support Palestinians in rejecting Trump’s plan. Cairo fears Palestinians could be forced across Egypt’s border with Gaza. Trump said in the Fox News interview that between two and six communities could be built for the Palestinians “a little bit away from where they are, where all of this danger is.” “I would own this. Think of it as a real estate development for the future. It would be a beautiful piece of land. No big money spent,” he said.

## PHC extends protective bails of 7 PTI leaders

**Humayun Khan**

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) has extended the protective bail of seven Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders, including Shibli Faraz, Faisal Javed, Falak Naz, Provincial President and Member National Assembly Junaid Akbar, Speaker Provincial Assembly Babar Salim Swati, and Member National Assembly Atif Khan, on Tuesday.

The court has also sought reports from the federal government and relevant institutions regarding the cases against them. The court has disposed of the petitions of other PTI leaders, including Member National Assembly Sher Ali Arbab, Arbab Aamir Ayub, Fazal Muhammad Khan, Yousaf Khan, and women leaders Falak Naz

and Hamida Shah, after receiving details of the cases against them. However, the court has directed them to approach the relevant courts for further proceedings and extended their protective bail until March 5.

The petitions were heard by a two-member bench comprising Justice Sabzada Asadullah and Justice Salahuddin. During the hearing, all the petitioners appeared before the court. Their lawyers, Alam Khan Adenazi, Ahad Ali Shah Advocate, and others, informed the court that cases had been registered against their clients in Islamabad. They assured the court that if details of the cases were provided, their clients would approach the relevant courts.

The Assistant Attorney

General requested the court to grant time to submit reports regarding the cases against Shibli Faraz, Falak Naz, Faisal Javed, Mahboob Shah, and Atif Khan. He stated that reports had not been received in these cases. However, he informed the court that details of the cases against Junaid Akbar, Fazal Khan, and other petitioners had been received.

After receiving the details, the court disposed of the petitions of Junaid Akbar and other members of the National Assembly. However, the court extended the protective bail of Shibli Faraz, Faisal Javed, Falak Naz, Babar Salim Swati, Atif Khan, and Mahboob Shah until March 5 and sought reports from the federal government and relevant institutions regarding the cases against them.

## Saif: Recent appointment of SC judges unconstitutional

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Barrister Dr. Saif, Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations, has condemned the recent appointment of judges in the Supreme Court, terming it as unconstitutional.

He said that the appointment of judges without the presence of the two senior-most judges and senior opposition members was a clear violation of the constitution. Dr. Saif stated that the appointment of judges was a unilateral decision, which is unacceptable. He vowed to challenge this unconstitutional move through all available legal and constitutional means.

He also criticized the fake federal government for undermining the independence of the judiciary through the 26th Constitutional Amendment. Dr. Saif appealed to the lawyers’ community to unite against this unconstitutional move, which was aimed at damaging the reputation of the higher judiciary.

“Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) will strongly oppose this unconstitutional decision adding that the fake federal government is weakening state institutions, which will have long-term consequences for the country” he added. Dr. Saif said that PTI would resist all unconstitutional and illegal actions of the fake government, which were causing irreparable damage to the country.

## Junaid warns against grouping in PTI

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa President of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Junaid Akbar, has issued a stern warning against those who fail to put in the effort for the party, emphasizing that there is no place for grouping within PTI.

Speaking to the media in Peshawar, Akbar expressed his commitment to ensuring that individuals who do not work diligently for the party will not be allowed to advance within its ranks. He declared, “If you want to stay in the party, you have to work hard. I will go to any extent to stop those who do not work hard.”

Akbar also commented on the success of the Swabi rally, which he stated had exceeded expectations in terms of attendance. Reports from the rally were requested, and Akbar assured that any unsatisfactory performances would not be tolerated. “The Swabi rally was a success. More people showed up than expected. I will not let those who perform unsatisfactorily move ahead,” he said.

Addressing a journalist’s query about assembly members not being provided funds for the rally, Akbar responded firmly, “If anyone says they weren’t given funds, they should leave politics and open a shop. Politics should not be done with money, as such people will stain the party’s name.” However, he made it clear that he still supported Shakeel Khan, describing him as an honest person and stating, “I stand with Shakeel Khan, whether someone likes it or not. I will speak for his right.” In his media talk, Akbar also highlighted that neither he nor Ali Amin Gandapur holds significant importance within the party, stressing that the real importance lies with Imran Khan and the voters. He revealed that the two main goals of the Swabi rally were to test the party’s financial capabilities and to dispel the misconception that people would not turn out after the November 26 incident.

## CJP sends Imran’s letter to committee of judges

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Yahya Afridi said on Tuesday the letter from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan had been sent to the constitutional committee of judges which would decide whether the matter falls under Article 183, Clause 3.

The constitutional bench would review this issue, he told reporters at a meeting. After meeting with a spe-

cial delegation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) at the Supreme Court, Chief Justice Yahya Afridi spoke to the media.

He said he briefed journalists on the IMF delegation’s visit, discuss Khan’s letter, and also talk about the National Judicial Policy Making Committee. The CJP added that he informed the IMF delegation that they had taken an oath to uphold the independence of the judiciary under the constitution.

He clarified that it was not their job to provide all the details and explained the agenda of the National Judicial Policy Making Committee.

He further mentioned that he told the delegation that the supervision of subordinate judiciary was done by high courts. The delegation inquired about adherence to agreements and property rights, to which he responded that reforms were under way on those issues.

## Pakistan Navy’s Aman dialogue 2025 concluded

**F.P. Report**

KARACHI: The two-day AMAN Dialogue 2025 concluded at Pakistan Naval Academy, Karachi. According to a statement by Pakistan Navy, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reform, Ahsan Iqbal, graced the closing session of AMAN Dialogue 2025 as the Chief Guest.

During his address, the Federal Minister thanked the participants for their keen interest in the AMAN Dialogue and their insightful discussions on various topics that will significantly contribute to ensuring a secure maritime future for all. He emphasized that AMAN 25 has successfully brought together maritime stakeholders from diverse regions, fostering international collaboration in an

increasingly interconnected world. He also highlighted the need for strengthening cooperative security efforts to effectively address emerging challenges in the maritime domain.

Earlier, in his note of thanks, Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, expressed his gratitude to dignitaries and participants from across the world for their valuable contributions in making AMAN Dialogue 2025 a success. He underscored that AMAN has transformed into a truly global initiative, reinforcing its role as a platform for meaningful dialogue and collective action in maritime security. The Admiral said that deliberations during AMAN Dialogue have yielded concrete pathways for strengthening information sharing, developing

coordinated responses to maritime threats and fostering technological cooperation while evaluating challenges and benefits of artificial intelligence in Naval Operations.

He further stressed the need to implement the strategies and solutions emerging from the AMAN Dialogue to address persistent maritime security challenges. During the inaugural AMAN Dialogue, participants deliberated on contemporary challenges in the maritime sector, engaging in meaningful debates and discussions to formulate actionable strategies to counter emerging threats at sea. The dialogue served as a bridge between East and West, bringing together global maritime leaders, scholars, and security experts to shape the future of maritime cooperation and security.

## Six more bunkers demolished in Kurram

**F.P. Report**

KURRAM: The demolition of bunkers continues in Kurram district, with authorities confirming on Tuesday that six more bunkers have been demolished in Lower Upper Kurram.

According to district administration, a 600-foot-deep trench in the Balish Khel and Khar Kali areas of Parachinar has been filled using heavy machinery while further operations in this regard are ongoing. It is worth noting that heavy weaponry was previously used in clashes between rival groups in Parachinar, leading to the closure of all

major roads in the area.

Meanwhile, the conflicting parties have reached an agreement to reopen the Tal-Parachinar Road and devising a mechanism for the surrender of weapons. The district of Kurram has been experiencing unrest for over three months, leading to the closure of the crucial Tal-Parachinar Road.

However, both sides have now agreed to reopen the road and surrender their weapons under a mutually decided process. According to the district administration on Tuesday, both parties have decided that the surrendered weapons will be stored at a designated

location in the village. The ammunition depot will have two keys—one held by the administration and the other by a tribal elder.

Furthermore, if any party attempts to forcibly use weapons, the committee will support government actions to maintain order. The parties involved have submitted their proposed procedure for surrendering weapons and are committed to implementing the terms of the peace agreement. With this development, the authorities are expected to restore their control, ensuring the reopening of vital roads and a lasting resolution to the Kurram conflict.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Yahya Afridi presenting souvenir to head of IMF delegation, Joel Turkewitz.

## Bilawal to become PM soon, says KP Governor

**F.P. Report**

MIANWALI: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Tuesday expressed confidence that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, the Chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), will soon become the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Speaking at a workers’ gathering at the PPP Secretariat in Mianwali, Kundi said that the time is near when Bilawal Bhutto Zardari would lead the country as Prime Minister. He also expressed gratitude for the trust placed in him by President Asif Ali Zardari and Chairman Bilawal, referring to his position as a responsibility to serve the workers.

Highlighting the contributions of the PPP to Mianwali, Kundi reminded the audience that the late Benazir Bhutto had provided gas to the district, and the M.M. Road had been approved by the PPP. He said that the party’s relationship with Mianwali is positive and enduring.

The gathering also featured speeches by Mohsin Malhi, President of PPP Youth Organization, Central Punjab, and vari-

ous other local leaders including Nawab Mir Muhammad Khan of Kala Bagh and Zubair Hamza Khan, the District President. Before the speeches, workers warmly welcomed Kundi, presenting him with a traditional Mianwali turban.

The Governor assured the crowd that the PPP will never disappoint its workers and voters, and that it is only a matter of time before PPP candidates from Mianwali would emerge victorious. Kundi also spoke out against the PTI government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, condemning their handling of the provincial workforce.

He vowed to fight the decision to remove around 20,000 employees appointed during caretaker government, saying that the PPP will support the affected workers and take their case to court. Furthermore, he rejected the oppressive agricultural tax imposed in the province and condemned the growing insecurity, with increasing violence and civilian casualties, while provincial leaders continue to misuse public funds.

Meanwhile, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor

Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday underlined the need for taking immediate steps to remove sense of deprivation among people of tribal region.

Talking to a delegation of tribesmen who called on him here at Kundi Modal Farm, the governor said following the merger of region, the federal government provided funding to the province for addressing the grievances of the tribes, but the provincial government misused these funds, focusing on its own benefits rather than solving tribal issues. As a result, he said, the voices were now being raised against the merger of those districts. The Governor further informed that he had apprised the Prime Minister about the unrest among the tribes and was continuing his efforts to resolve this issue.

He emphasized that his goal was to find solutions to the problems of the tribes so they can align with both the federal and provincial governments. On this occasion, the governor also issued directives to the relevant authorities for the immediate resolution of various issues raised by the tribal.

## Sharjeel rejects MQM allegations

**F.P. Report**

KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon has categorically rejected the MQM’s allegations, stating that MQM members are engaging in the politics of accusations to divert the public’s attention from their internal contradictions. The politics of hatred has divided the Muttahida Qaumi Movement, yet the MQM leaders continue to persist.

In a statement, Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the leaders of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement are constantly instigating the politics of hatred, prejudice, division, and deception. The people of Karachi have come to know the truth about the MQM and are no longer going to be deceived.

He stated that Karachi is the city of all Pakistanis and that the Muttahida Qaumi Movement should refrain from positioning itself as the sole representative of Karachi. The children of Karachi are also our children. The people know who provided guns instead of books to the children of Karachi. Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the MQM ruled Karachi for decades and now talks about rights, but the party has exploited the emotions of the people of Karachi in every era for political gain.

## Man killed over plaza dispute

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: A man was killed on Tuesday in a dispute over a commercial plaza in Dabgari Garden, within the jurisdiction of Shah Qabool police station.

According to details, a long-standing conflict between two parties, Haji Yaqoot Khan and Arbab Khalid, escalated into violence, leading to the tragic death of Haji Yaqoot Khan.

Gunfire was exchanged, fatally injuring Haji Yaqoot Khan. Upon receiving information about the incident, DSP City Circle Imtiaz Alam, along with local police, swiftly arrived at the scene and shifted the body for a post-mortem examination.

Police arrested the suspected killers, Nauman and Khalid. A case is being registered based on the complaint of Shahzaib Khan, son of the deceased Haji Yaqoot Khan, while further investigation is underway.

## BD to hold polls in Dec

DHAKA: Bangladesh is preparing to hold elections in December, the first general vote since the ouster of Sheikh Hasina, the former longtime prime minister. Election Commissioner Abul Fazal Mohammad Sanaullah said on Tuesday. The country’s interim government, has been implementing a series of reforms