

# Independent

dailyindkhi@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

Karachi

Ph: 0300-3898091 Vol: 05. No. 302 Rabi-ul-Sani 19, 1445 AH Saturday November 04, 2023 Pages 04 Price Rs. 12.00

## Baqar directs wildlife dept to promote eco-tourism, scientific & controlled game management, trophy hunting

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (Retd.) Maqbool Baqar has directed the Wildlife Department to protect the community lands that are treasures of wildlife and make conservation arrangements with the community for dry zone game bird hunting areas, wetlands, areas of high water quality or scenic value, areas that contain soils generally not listed for cultivation.

He said that the conservation arrangement should be aimed at promoting eco-tourism, scientific and controlled game management including native biodiversity, eco-tourism, and trophy hunting.

This he said while presiding over a meeting of Forest & Wildlife here at CM House. The meeting was attended by Secretary Forest & Wildlife Najam Shah, Secretary Finance

Kazim Jatoi, Additional Secretary Qazi Abdul Jabbar, Adl Secretary Tech Khalid Mahmood, Conservator Wildlife Javed Maher and other concerned officers.

The CM was told that every year CITES Management Authority, the Ministry of Climate Change, Federal government allocate trophy hunting quotas for the Community Based Trophy Hunting Program in respective Provinces. The quota for trophy hunting season 2023-24 was approved in the meeting of the CITES Management Authority of Pakistan held in July 2023.

The minimum reserved price has also been rescheduled, accordingly, exportable Urial and Sindh Ibx are to be sold to foreigners at \$ 20, 000, and Sindh Ibx at \$6000 respectively, whereas five trophies of Ibx for Pakistani

Hunters at Rs 400,000/-. The CM was told that the data revealed that there were 66 male Ibx out of 1838 with exploitable horn sizes of 35 inches and above and 49 Urial out of 1104 with exploitable horn size of 22 inches and above available for trophy hunting.

To a question the CM was told that in trophy hunting animals sought as trophies have large weapons such as horns, antlers, or tusks. Consequently, trophies so counted were invariably old-age males, and the animals most frequently considered as trophy species were the ungulates.

Trophy hunting is recognized as a management tool wherein an annual survey of target species is carried out and mature and old age males are counted leaving the majority for the natural food chain.



KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar presides over a meeting of the Forest & Wildlife Department at CM House.

## Bilawal optimistic to win next election Alliance with Tehreek-e-Insaf has not been decided: Bilawal

KARACHI (Online): Chairman of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that the decision of alliance with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has not been taken.

All political parties, including PTI, should join the democratic charter. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that you all have a blessed election month, the election will be held on February 8, and the PPP will form the government.

It would have been better if the Supreme Court (SC) did not have to intervene for the election, the People's Party did not get a level playing field in any election, so they do not

have hope. He expressed these views while talking to journalists in Karachi. In response to a question asked about the eviction of immigrants, he said that no political party can support any illegal activity.

Bilawal Bhutto said that we are currently seeing the genocide of Palestinians on social media, the rulers of the world are silent but the people are not. According to spokesperson Bilawal House, Bilawal Bhutto also visited the residence of former President People's Party Central District Sohail Ansari. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari also issued a condolence message for the late

Sohail Ansari's widow Nasira Sohail and said that the late Sohail Ansari endured the hardships of the dictators era.

He said that Sohail Ansari held the flag of Bhuttoism till his last breath, his struggle is exemplary for the PPP workers, his sacrifices for the supremacy of democracy and constitution will not be forgotten. PP Chairman also visited various institutions run under JDC. On this occasion, he said that during the corona virus, Zafar Abbas worked well with us, people were provided facilities during the economic crisis, if the government works together with welfare institutions, it will be more beneficial.

## General elections' decision will be implement in the country: Anwar-ul-Haq

ISLAMABAD (Online): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar has said that he will implement the court decision regarding the holding of general elections in the country.

All political parties will get a level playing field in the elections: PM

He said that the consultation was definitely done, but the date of the elections was given by the Election Commission.

Illegal immigrant Afghans can return to their homeland and get a visa, said care taker prime minister.

Talking to private TV, the caretaker prime minister said that no party has been stopped from holding rallies, they have to stay within the law.

To a question, he said illegal immigrants, Afghans

can return to their homeland and bring visas. The goal of deporting illegal residents is to regulate them. The government will not take over the business of a foreigner. The return of immigrants who today are bragging will be praised tomorrow.

Caretaker Prime Minister said that it is a wrong impression that people's cases of May 9 incidents ended after holding a press conference. There are many people who are suffering cases despite condemnation. There is a big difference between detention for investigation and enforced disappearance.

He said you cannot say that security agencies cannot interrogate. Do not call those who are picked up for investigation as missing persons.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting regarding progress of filling up of vacant seats for marginalized areas in civil bureaucracy through special examinations as well as rotation policy.

## Terrorist attack army vehicles, 14 soldier martyrdom: ISPR

RAWALPINDI (Online): Two vehicles of security forces moving from Pasi to Ormara in Gwadar District, were ambushed by the terrorists. 14 x soldiers embraced shahadat in the unfortunate incident.

Sanitization operation is being carried out

in the area and perpetrators of this heinous act will be hunted down & brought to justice.

Security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve.

## President strongly condemns bomb blast in DI Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday strongly condemned the bomb blast that took place in Dera Ismail Khan causing deaths and injuries.

The president expressed deep regret over the loss of precious human lives in the blast. He prayed for the elevation of the ranks of the martyrs in paradise and speedy recovery for the injured.

## Zardari grieved over loss of six precious lives in D.I Khan blast

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former president and co-chairman of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Asif Ali Zardari has expressed deep grief and sorrow over loss of precious lives and injuries to over 20 people in Dera Ismail Khan blast.

Condemning the incident, he offered condolence to the victim families besides praying for speedy recovery of the injured.

Asif Zardari said that elements involved in targeting innocent people should not be spared and both federal, provincial government must ensure ending the menacing of terrorism.

"The terrorists are the enemies of the country and its people."

## Arshad Majeed assumes office as chairman NHA

ISLAMABAD (INP): New chairman National Highway Authority (NHA), Arshad Majeed Mohmand on Friday assumed the charge of his office.

Members and officers of NHA extended warm welcome to their new chairman and hoped that his distinguished leadership will steer the organization towards a brighter future.

Chairman Arshad Majeed Mohmand, visibly moved by the heartfelt reception, reciprocated with gratitude, setting a promising tone for his tenure.

His appointment signifies a new chapter of transformation and progress for the NHA.

## 'Heritage channel for regional literature soon', Lok Mela key source for promoting regional languages': Minister

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah Friday disclosed to launch of a dedicated heritage channel to promote the regional literature of Pakistan soon which will create awareness among the young generation about their regional languages and rich lingual identities.

biggest folk festival, "Lok Mela 2023," will serve as a cultural treat for the people, featuring a variety of activities including provincial pavilions, shopping and food stalls, and musical programs.

He said that is a key source for promoting regional languages and preserving arts, crafts, culture, folk music and traditional



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Jamal Shah along with Palestinian Ambassador in Pakistan, Ahmed Jawad Rabeel inaugurate the opening ceremony of "Annual Ten-Day Folk Festival Lok Mela at Lok Virsa."

Talking to PTV news channel, he said that Heritage channel will showcase and celebrate the Pakistan's rich culture in a way that reflects the views of the Pakistani people and the heritage, civilization and cultural history of the country. We aim to engage the general public in a modern and lively manner through content that reflects the views of the Pakistani people and the heritage, civilization and cultural history of their country, he added.

Replying to a question about the folk mela started in Islamabad, he said the

skills of the country. He said that this unique event has become a symbol of the federation's recognition and patronage of our rich cultural diversity and the active participation of the people. He further said that traditional Mela is a part of government priorities as it aims to encourage initiatives related to public welfare, promotion, and development of Pakistan's culture, and to provide meaningful and wholesome entertainment opportunities to the citizens.

## Book titled Pakistan-China all-weather strategic partner launched

KARACHI (APP): A book titled "Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Partner" was launched in Karachi on Friday. The chief guest of the ceremony was Sindh Governor Mohammed

relationship between Pakistan and China, covering the historical, political, economic, and strategic dimensions of the partnership.

In his address at the ceremony, Governor

working together on a number of important projects, including the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Tessori also said that Pakistan is facing a num-



Kamran Khan Tessori, and the consul general of China to Karachi, Yang Yundong, was also present.

The author of the book, Dr. Rashid Jamal, said that the book is a comprehensive study of the re-

Tessori said that China is a time-tested friend of Pakistan and has always supported the country. He said that Pakistan has benefited immensely from China's support, and that the two countries are

ber of challenges at present, but that the nation must remain united in order to overcome them. He added that Pakistan must learn from China's success and strive to build a strong economy.

## Indonesian CG for further bolstering bilateral trade, investment

KARACHI (APP): The Consul General of Indonesia Dr. June Kuncoro Hadiningrat stressing on further bolstering trade and investment cooperation between Pakistan and Indonesia on Friday said that both the brotherly countries with their diverse cultures and huge population were altogether a big market with lots of opportunities.

The Indonesian CG while exchanging views at a meeting during his visit to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), pointed out that Pak-Indonesia bilateral

trade was far less than its true potential and for enhancing the trade volume both the countries have to deeply understand the patterns and structure of challenges hindering the bilateral trade, said a statement issued here.

He said that Indonesian government was always keen to support business people and the Indonesian Consulate and its Embassy in Islamabad remain extensively engaged in identifying opportunities and fully facilitating businessmen of both countries.



NAWABSHAH: Peoples Party (PPP) President, Asif Ali Zardari exchanging views with Mumtaz Ali Khan Chang, Former Member of the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab during meeting held at Zardari House in Nawabshah

## Incarcerated PTI chairman allowed to talk to sons on WhatsApp

ISLAMABAD (INP): A special court established under the Official Secrets Act on Friday allowed the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief to talk to his sons on WhatsApp.

Special court judge Abual Hasnaat Zulqarnain heard PTI chairman's plea seeking permission to talk to his sons. Advocate Sheraz Ahmad Ranjha had filed an application on behalf of the former prime minister.

## Three of robbers gang held, ammunition recovered

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Rangers Sindh and Police, in a joint intelligence-based operation in the Mehran Town area of the megalopolis, arrested three members of a robbers gang allegedly involved in robberies and recovered arms and ammunition used in the crimes. According to a spokesman for Sindh Rangers on Friday, the arrested were identified as Suddam, Karam, and Tahir. They were involved in more than 200 robberies in different areas.

## Justice Irfan Saadat Khan takes oath as judge of SC

ISLAMABAD (INP): Justice Irfan Saadat Khan, Acting Chief Justice of the Sindh High Court on Friday took oath as judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Qazi Faiz Isa administered oath to Justice Irfan Saadat Khan during a simple and dignified ceremony held at Supreme Court.

Attorney General for Pakistan, representatives of the

Federal Judicial Academy, Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan, Pakistan Bar Council, Supreme Court Bar Association along with Senior Advocates, Advocates, Advocates on Record and officers and staff of the Supreme Court of Pakistan attended the ceremony.

Registrar Supreme Court of Pakistan, Ms. Jazeela Aslam conducted the proceedings of oath taking ceremony.



KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari along with Zafar Abbas, Secretary General JDC offering Dua after inauguration ceremony of Free Diagnostic Lab set up by JDC Foundation Pakistan, in Karachi.

## Over 162,479 illegal Afghan immigrants left Pakistan, says govt

ISLAMABAD (INP): Over 162,479 Afghan nationals illegally staying in Pakistan, have returned to home so far, said the data released by the caretaker government on Friday.

On October 3, an apex committee of the National Action Plan (NAP) meeting chaired by Caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar gave all foreign nationals living illegally in the country until October 31 to leave voluntarily or face deportation.

After the expiry of the deadline, the caretaker government has swung into action against illegal immigrants. According to details, repatriation of the illegal Afghans through the Chaman and Torkham borders is underway. On November 2, 19,344 Afghans

returned to Kabul. The FC and the Afghan government have agreed to keep the Torkham border till 11 at night to ensure the smooth repatriation of the illegal immigrants. Separately, the Afghan Charge d'Affairs called on Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti.

Afghan diplomat Sardar Ahmad Shakeeb discussed issues related to the repatriation of Afghan nationals from Pakistan to Afghanistan and other matters of mutual interest.

The interior minister said that the immigrants illegally staying in Pakistan returning to their countries. "We have issued instructions for respectable treatment with the people returning back to home," Bugti said.

## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Finally, a date

A meeting held between the Election Commission of Pakistan and President Arif Alvi has yielded a specific date for the next general elections: Feb 8, 2024. Earlier in the day, the ECP had informed the court that it had scheduled the date for Feb 11, but was told to consult the president.

The agreement has come as a relief to those who believed that polls would not be held anytime soon. No doubt, it is very welcome news, even if it means that the ECP will once again be breaking its word as the date represents a slight delay from the "end of January" timeline, which the electoral body gave in late September and affirmed last week.

It also represents a 95-day violation of the deadline to hold elections according to the Constitution. The court, while hearing the matter, had rubbished the assertion of the law ministry and ECP that the president had no authority to give election dates.

It seems this matter has now attained finality. While dictating the court's order, Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa said that whatever date is decided by the ECP and the president will have to be implemented. "The final date for polls will be announced from the Supreme Court," he said.

This should be the cue for the ECP and all political parties to begin election preparations in earnest. The former has three months to ensure a "free, fair, impartial and inclusive election".

It seems like a tall order, given the prevailing political climate and parties' repeated complaints about being denied a level playing field. The political parties, too, need to regroup, vet their candidates, organise campaigns and start mobilising voters for the big day. Because so little has been done in preparation for the exercise up till now, they have a long and bumpy road ahead of them. The Supreme Court has given them a head start, and they should take advantage of it.

Now that the fog has lifted, the ECP will be under constant scrutiny. It wilfully violated the Constitution on multiple occasions this year, justifying each violation with the excuse that it was necessary in order to hold elections that could pass a high standard of fairness.

If, after all these violations, the participating parties are still denied an equal opportunity to present their case to the public, then all of it will have been for nothing. It must, at the very least, demonstrate that it was acting in good faith.

There is also talk about giving the delay in elections legal cover under Article 254. However, this should not mean that those who conspired to violate the Constitution are let off without penalty. The consequences must be severe and exemplary for all involved.

## Growing millions



Zubeida Mustafa

One of the major factors contributing to the environment crisis in Pakistan is the unbridled population growth rate. Environmentalists generally focus more on issues such as climate change and global warming caused by carbon emissions, which are the result of industrialisation, deforestation and water mismanagement. It must, however, be noted that rapid population increase is at the root of all these evils. Moreover, it also has a negative impact on human development, both individually and collectively.

More shocking than the country's astounding fertility rate is the government's indifference vis-à-vis the demographic problem. We are way behind many developing states that have a phenomenal record in curbing their population growth rate. We are the fifth most populous state in the world today. I believe this is the major cause of our underdevelopment as it is not possible to meet the basic needs of the whopping numbers who constitute Pakistan today, plus the six million or so who join their ranks every year.

The census in 2023 recorded our population at 241m, an increase of 33m in just six years since the previous head count of 2017. The growth rate was 2.55 per cent. Unless drastic measures are taken the numbers will grow. As Thomas Malthus has reminded us again and again, population grows geometrically while food production increases arithmetically. If this pattern continues for

too long then famine, conflict and epidemics intervene to restore the balance.

To give one an idea of how this is reflected in the people's lives take a look at this data. Today, the Total Fertility Rate (the average number of children that married women of reproductive age have) stands at 3.6. It should be 1.9 if we want our population size to be stationary. The contraceptive prevalence rate is 34pc, which includes the 10pc who claim to use conventional methods that are not reliable. Worse still is the high unmet need of 17pc, denoting couples who do not want to have more children but do not have access to contraceptives. The government has failed in all respects due to a lack of political will, corruption and ineptitude. Also at work is the planners' inability to understand the relationship between family planning and the empowerment of women. The fact is that underpinning our population programme is the low status of women in Pakistan. That creates pressure on mothers of girls to continue bearing children until two sons are born. Sons are regarded as status symbol for a family.

Interestingly, some NGO members in the family planning sector tell me that the latest trend among women who have had some education and are working is to opt for a small family, even if it means forgoing sons. The problem is that even these women generally have no control over decision-making in their homes and are as powerless in the latter as they are in society. Hence their wish with regard to family size does not prevail. It seems so unfair that women have to submit to their menfolk's diktat even though the burden of pregnancy and child-rearing falls on the

mother.

Yet our population planners are blind to this new trend. Small wonder the focus is heavily on women who are at the receiving end of all counselling on the use of contraceptives and the importance of planned families. Why are men not mobilised and made aware of how our rapidly growing population is creating problems for them as well as for the country?

There is growing evidence that mindsets can be changed by talking to people and giving them the space to talk about their views regarding their problems and how they can be resolved. This dialogue is important if solutions to people's problems are to be found and awareness created. True, these are issues of a very personal nature but they have a direct bearing on people's lives.

Hence the need of the hour is to make the subject of family planning a priority and part of the national discourse. Its implications must be discussed freely in all private and public forums. The focus should be on the 6m babies born each year. They have basic rights which neither the state nor the parents can fulfil. That makes their lives brutish. The newborns add to the backlog of poverty, illiteracy and disease, and also make development an impossible task. Ironically, this is happening in a country that is already child-unfriendly and where children are maltreated and abused.

Were the caretaker government to launch a national discourse on the population issue on various public platforms and get population departments to pull up their socks, a useful beginning could be made. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Sectarian harmony



Jan-e-Alam Khaki

Gilgit-Baltistan was recently in the news because of a sectarian standoff. Luckily, the ulema in GB agreed to put their sectarian differences aside and help the regional government maintain law and order. The move reflected the wisdom of the religious leaders of two communities, who in the spirit of true Muslim brotherhood, decided to resolve mutual differences through dialogue and discussion.

But putting aside sectarian strife means that it has only been suppressed temporarily. How can communities in GB (and maybe elsewhere) resolve thorny faith-related issues on a long-term basis?

As an editorial in this paper rightly points out: "Communal differences may only be a trigger for the protests, as there are several underlying factors in GB fueling disaffection in the region." Among these underlying factors is the sociocultural landscape.

GB comprises several breathtaking valleys. The region may appear like a monolith, but in fact, it is not one. Its population comprises various, distinct cultures in terms of language, outlook and faith traditions. Its religious landscape comprises four major Muslim communities — Sunnis, Shias, Ismailis and Noor Bukhshis, often found in clearly defined areas. However, many villages and towns host mixed populations. There are many intercommunal marriages, but the atmosphere is generally very peaceful. For example, in my village in Hunza, there were a few members of the Sunni community and

around a dozen Shia families some decades ago, but incidents of violence were unheard of.

They were well integrated in the same village as was the case in other villages of GB. Issues would randomly crop up in the relatively urban city of Gilgit where many communities live and earn, vying for a few jobs. The area is now a hotbed of political activity often influenced by the political orientations of southern Pakistan. This external factor often makes GB, metaphorically speaking, a 'seismically active' zone. The rise and fall of rival political parties have a direct bearing on GB politics.

Added to this factor is the contentious issue of GB's political position. Afzal Shigri, who belongs to the area, rightly calls it "a constitutional black hole", which is neither fully integrated with, nor fully independent of, Pakistan, but often referred to as a 'disputed area', leading to a confused political status. It has no representation in the federal constitutional bodies, such as the National Assembly or Senate, or access to Supreme Court, due largely to disputed relations. For as long as the area was undereducated, there was little turmoil. But gradually political consciousness rose and as of now, there are more educated and enlightened youth. As they become intellectually astute, they also acquire political sensitivity and are, therefore, in ever-louder voices, demanding a constitutional status for GB.

Sectarian differences also erupt on the pretext of some provocative issue or the other, or because of adverse statements from popular religious leaders, and can add to existing tensions. Historically, differences over the interpretations of faith have existed for a long time. Though in many regions these dif-

ferences have subsided, and there is some semblance of communal harmony, contentions still exist. However, people have learnt to manage their disagreements to live peacefully.

Together, these matters exacerbate sectarian strains in some places, and have even made religion an ultra-sensitive subject though it does not affect any community's interests directly as state policies are based on non-sectarian strategies. Religion, which should, first and foremost, try and achieve the objective of bringing humanity together, has now become for many, including in GB, a factor in discord.

In my opinion, the first step towards peace would be for the ulema of all schools of thought to refrain from stirring up emotions with rhetorical and hyperbolic speeches that can lead to ill feelings for each other. We should resist the temptation to scratch old wounds, which can kindle new conflicts. The good news is that many seasoned ulema are now taking a more positive approach towards other communities, and hopefully, this trend will persist into the future.

GB, in sum, is on the highway of development — this is a strong motivation for higher education, women empowerment, greater upward mobility of its educated class, the cost-effective use of agricultural products. So, staying on this path of development is in the best interest of all communities. Therefore, communities should be proud of helping, rather than, hurting each other in the 21st century's global village. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News

### SBP, AMF ink MoU to facilitate cross-border remittances

#### Independent Report

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) on Friday inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to facilitate cross-border remittances between the Arab region and Pakistan through formal channels.

The MoU was signed by Director General Chairman of the Board of AMF Dr Abdulrahman Bin Abdullah Al Hamidy and SBP Governor Jameel Ahmad in a ceremony hosted by the Arab Monetary Fund in Abu Dhabi, an SBP press

release here said.

The AMF and the SBP, under the MoU, would establish a framework of cooperation between Buna, the cross-border payment system operated by the AMF owned Arab Regional Payments Clearing and Settlement Organization (ARPCSO) and Pakistan's Instant Payment System Raast.

"The initiative will benefit individuals as well as businesses not only through instant, safe and cost-effective cross border payments, but also by strengthening economic,

financial, and investment ties between the Arab countries and Pakistan," the press release said.

Dr. Abdulrahman Hamidy, commenting on the MoU, said that the strategic collaboration with Raast underscored Buna's commitment to continue connecting different regions together and reinforcing economic, financial, and investment ties between the Arab region and its main global partners. "This resonates with the shared vision of innovating cross-border payment solutions to offer safe and efficient cross-

border instant payments access for individuals and corporates," he added.

Vowing to increase cross-border remittances by reducing costs and processing times, Dr Hamidy said that the initiative confirmed the global character of Buna which adhered to the highest compliance standards to connect the Arab region with its main global partners in line with the vision of its founders.

The SBP governor, speaking at the occasion, termed the MoU a significant strategic achievement.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Privatisation, Fawad Hasan Fawad chairing a meeting with FA on FWBL.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary of the Board of Investment at the Prime Minister's Office, Muhammad Sohail Rajput, engaged in a productive meeting with the esteemed delegation led by Chief Representative, Yasumitsu Kinoshita from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

### NDRMF, OGDCL sign MoU

ISLAMABAD (APP): To promote socially responsible and environmentally friendly practices in the field of oil and gas exploration and production in line with the sustainable development goals, the National Disaster Risk Management Fund Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) agreed to work on joint projects. An MoU signing ceremony in this regard here, in which Bilal Anwer CEO NDRMF and Ahmed Hayat Lak Managing Director/CEO of OGDCL signed the

agreement. Under this partnership, NDRMF intends to establish its linkages with OGDCL for larger cooperation and capacity development activities for socially responsible and environmentally friendly adaptations in the field. Collaborating for knowledge exchange and capacity building in the areas of climate change, and disaster risk reduction, through the holding of seminars, workshops and events on areas of mutual interest will play a vital role in achieving the objectives.

### HESCO recovers 151 million rupees in recent actions

HYDERABAD (APP): Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) recovered more than 151 million rupees during the ongoing operation against defaulters and electricity thieves in the region, on 02 November, out of which 150.1 million rupees were collected from defaulters and more than one million rupees were received as fines. According to the HESCO spokesperson, in recent actions, the power supply was disconnected from four transformers.

### MoNFSR says: Enough wheat stole of 6.9mmt in country for local consumption

ISLAMABAD (INP): Ministry of National Food Security and Research has said that there was enough wheat stock of 6.934 million metric tons in the country to tackle local dietary needs, besides keeping the strategic stocks as well as maintaining supply and demand smooth in local markets to provide the commodity at reasonable

prices. In a statement issued on Friday, the MoNFSR said, "Out of the total stocks, Punjab's wheat reserves comprised over 4.021 million tons, whereas Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has 0.227 million tons of grains that were enough to meet local consumption of flour and other byproducts during the season."

### BOI Secretary hails JICA's role for Pakistan economic development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Secretary of the Board of Investment, Muhammad Sohail Rajput on Friday appreciated the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for its cooperation in different sectors for economic development of Pakistan. He was talking to the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) delegation, led by Chief Representative, Yasumitsu Kinoshita which called on him, said a

press release issued here. The BOI secretary said that JICA's mission was to play a pivotal role in bolstering Pakistan's economic infrastructure, enhancing the investment landscape, and fostering regional connectivity for a brighter future.

The meeting marks the beginning of a promising journey to fortify partnership and explore new avenues of collaboration between BOI and JICA.

### Rupee sheds 89 paise against Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Friday witnessed 89-paise depreciation against US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs284.31 against the previous day's closing of Rs283.42. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs282.35 and Rs285.1 respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by Rs1.65 to close at Rs302.08 against the last day's closing of Rs300.43, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

### PSX gains 466 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) gained 466.28 points, a positive change of 0.89 per cent on Friday, closing at 53,123.04 points against 52,656.76 points the previous day.

A total of 509,113,372 shares valuing Rs.15,586 billion were traded during the day as compared to 475,085,837 shares valuing Rs. 14,578 billion the previous day.

### PTCL accords grand reception to newly elected office bearers of CBA

#### Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's largest telecommunications and ICT services provider, PTCL held a grand reception in honor of the office bearers of PTCL Workers Itehad Federation, the Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA), who recently won it through a nationwide referendum. The ceremony

democratic tradition of protecting employee rights, and integrating their voices in crucial policy-making to ensure their well-being. At the ceremony, PTCL management warmly welcomed the newly elected CBA, who expressed their happiness and hoped for the continuation of cooperation between the



was graced by the presence of the guest of honor, Syed Sagheer Bukhari, Senior Programme Officer at the International Labour Organization (ILO), Country Office Pakistan, along with senior PTCL officials and newly elected office bearers and labor leaders from across the country. The recent referendum is a continuation of PTCL's

union and PTCL for their shared growth and prosperity. Senior Programme Officer, International Labour Organization (ILO), Country Office Pakistan, Syed Sagheer Bukhari cited ILO conventions on workers' rights and quoted examples of how unions and administrations worldwide ensure mutual growth and prosperity through effective cooperation.

## Naqvi expresses concern over massive increase of burning crops stubble in Indian Punjab

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi has expressed his deep concern over up to 740 percent increase over burning of crops stubble in the Indian Punjab.

In a statement on Friday, he said that according to an authentic report of American institution NASA, an alarming increase has occurred with regard to burning of crops stubble in the Indian Punjab. According to the pictures

released by NASA, a 740 percent increase in the burning of crops stubble incidents in only a single day is highly alarming. The reports of NASA and pictures give ample proof of Indian apathy.

The CM stated that smog has risen to an alarming level owing to burning of crops stubble on such a mega scale in the Indian Punjab. The prime reason for the rise of smog in Lahore is due to burning of crops stubble at a mega scale in the Indian Punjab. The continuous increase in

the pollution rate in Lahore owing to Indian environmental aggression is highly worrisome and alarming, he added.

The CM apprised that the Punjab government is adopting every step which is humanly possible to combat the hazards of smog. Eyes, breathing and E&T ailments are on the rise due to smog. The people especially children and elders should use masks so as to protect themselves from the detrimental effects of smog, he added.

## Factories causing air pollution be sealed: LHC

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has ordered to seal factories causing air pollution. A single bench of LHC led by Justice Shahid Karim took up the petition filed by a citizen Ferooz Haroon for hearing Friday.

Commissioner Lahore Muhammad Ali Randhawa also appeared in the court. The court while ordering to seal the factories causing air pollution remarked the factories which are emitting black smoke be sealed. These will not be

de-sealed unless owners of these factories submit affidavit. They should give this affidavit that if violation is committed again then factories will be demolished.

Commissioner Lahore told the court action will be taken indiscriminately against vehicles emitting smoke. We have directed traffic police vehicles causing smog be impounded.

The court remarked during the hearing of the case now we are going on right track.

## Five vehicles with smuggled goods seized

DG Khan (APP): Anti smuggling squad recovered multiple kinds of utility items worth about Rs. 10 million during a crackdown here on Friday.

The squad being constituted by DPO seized about five vehicles plying on different routes and foiled smuggling. DPO Ahmed Mohiuddin said in this regard that as many as 384 bags stuffed with non-custom paid items including dry milk, cigarettes, gutka, almond, Chinese salt, Iranian shopping bags etc.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam addressing inaugural ceremony of a road inside Johns Cathedral church at Peshawar cantonment.

## KP Governor inaugurates road at Johns Cathedral church

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali here on Friday inaugurated a road inside Johns Cathedral church at Peshawar cantonment which completed at a cost of over Rs7 million.

He said our relations with Christian community was based on respect, and the minorities communities settled in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were highly respectable for others.

The Governor said the services of Christian community were highly praiseworthy for the country including Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa, says an official statement.

The Christian community is very peaceful that always played a significant role in the province's development and their welfare and uplift was top priority of the Government. The constitution of Pakistan has ensured protection of the personal and religious rights of all minorities, he said. He said, this is our duty to stand with the state of Pakistan and to serve it with best of our abilities and professional commitment.

## PIA's flight schedule not restored fully, 19 more flights cancel

KARACHI (Online): The flight schedule of PIA could not be fully restored, 19 more flights were canceled today (Friday), while the number of canceled flights of PIA has reached 754 in 17 days.

The canceled flights today include PK 368, 369 from Karachi to Islamabad and PK 536, 537 from Sukkur.

Dammam to Karachi PK 242, Islamabad to Sukkur PK 631, 632 have also been canceled while Islamabad to Quetta flights PK 325, 326 could not fly.

## CM KP chairs meeting to discuss matters relating to evacuation of illegal foreigners

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Caretaker Chief Minister, Muhammad Azam Khan here Friday chaired a cabinet meeting to discuss matters relating to the evacuation of foreigners residing illegally in the province.

The meeting was attended by caretaker cabinet members, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Additional Chief Secretary for Interior Abid Majeed, relevant administrative secretaries and officials.

The meeting was briefed about arrangements made for the repatriation of illegal immigrants. Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan expressed his satisfaction with the administration's efforts to facilitate the return of illegal immigrants to

their countries and the facilities being provided to them holding centres. He commended the role played by various departments and institutions including district administration and police in providing facilities and accommodations to returning migrants.

The Chief Minister directed that voluntarily returning illegal immigrants be treated with respect ensuring special care to them during repatriation. He emphasized the need for maintaining a detailed record of both regular and emergency expenses.

He stressed strict adherence to rules and regulations governing these expenses and the development of mechanisms to ensure transparency.

## Punjab Governor says: Overseas Pak playing vital role in the stability of the country's economy

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: A delegation of overseas Pakistanis from Saudi Arabia called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at the Governor's House, here on Friday.

During the meeting, the delegation expressed satisfaction over the political and economic stability in Pakistan.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that overseas Pakistanis are the valuable asset for the country, who are playing an important role in the stability of the

country's economy by sending remittances. He said that whenever the country faced difficult times, be it floods or earthquakes, Pakistanis living abroad always came forward and helped their countrymen.

The Governor Punjab said that economic and political stability in the country is the harbinger of a bright future. He said that the journey of development will start again in the country. He further said that the young generation is the most valuable asset of the country.

## 13 more dengue cases reported in 24 hours

RAWALPINDI (APP): As many as 13 more dengue cases were reported in Rawalpindi during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 2,382 in the district.

District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mahmood, Friday said among the new cases, eight cases had arrived from Potohar town urban and five from Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi.

He added that 50 patients were admitted to district hospitals of which 40 were confirmed cases while 2,341 were discharged after treatment.

Dr Sajjad informed that the district administration had registered seven FIRs.



KARACHI: SSP Irfan Bahadur presents flowers to younger Afghan girl after transported by police in a bus to shift them in a deportation center in Provincial Capital.



ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner to Pakistan Jane Marriott addressing during inaugural ceremony of 9th Islamabad Literature Festival at Fatima Jinnah (F-9) Park in Federal Capital.

# International News

## Putin says some Western weapons for Ukraine are ending up in the Taliban's hands

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Friday that some Western weapons supplied to Ukraine were finding their way to the Middle East through the illegal arms market and being sold to the Taliban.

"Now they say: weapons are getting into the Middle East from Ukraine. Well of course they are because they are being sold," Putin said. "And they are being sold to the Taliban and from there they go onto wherever."

Since Russia sent troops into Ukraine on Feb. 24 last year, Western powers have sent Ukraine tens of billions of dollars worth of weapons in an attempt to defeat Russian troops. Ukraine says it keeps

tight control over any weapons supplied to it, but some Western security officials have raised concerns and the United States has asked Ukraine to do more to tackle the broader issue of corruption.

In June 2022, the head of Interpol, Jürgen Stock, warned that some of the advanced weapons sent to Ukraine would end up in the hands of organised crime groups.

A report about the Ukraine war and the illegal arms trade by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime said in March that there was "currently no substantial outflow of weapons from the Ukrainian conflict zone."

"However, every precedent suggests that, espe-

cially if the threat is not addressed proactively and imaginatively, when the current war ends, Ukraine's battlefields could and will become the new arsenal of anarchy, arming everyone from insurgents in Africa to gangsters in the streets of Europe," the report said.

The eight biggest Western donors to Ukraine led by the United States have made military commitments to Ukraine totalling at least 84 billion euros (\$90 billion), according to the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, which tracks donors. U.S. military support includes 160 155mm howitzers, 109 Bradley fighting vehicles, more than 111 million rounds of small arms ammunition and 38 high mobility artillery rocket systems.



A man carries away an injured girl following an Israeli strike on the Bureij refugee camp, in Gaza Strip.

## Hezbollah leader says Hamas Oct 7 assault was '100pc Palestinian'

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIRUT: Celebratory gunshots rang out over Beirut as thousands packed into a square in the Lebanese capital's southern suburbs on Friday to watch a televised speech by Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of the Lebanese Hezbollah group. It was Nasrallah's first public remarks since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war, sparked by the Palestinian militants' deadly Oct 7 incursion into southern Israel.

The speech came a day after the most significant escalation in clashes between Hezbollah and Israeli forces on the border since the war started and on the same day as a visit to Israel by the top US diplomat. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to urge protections for civilians in the fighting with Hamas, as Israeli troops tightened their encirclement of Gaza City.



Members of Tunisia's parliament hold the Palestinian flag as they observe a minute of silence for civilian deaths in the Gaza Strip.

## Bahrain halts trade ties with Israel; envoys return

**Monitoring Desk**  
MANAMA: Bahrain's parliament said on Thursday that the Gulf state's ambassador to Israel had returned home and economic ties had been suspended in protest over the Israeli aggression in Gaza.

However, the government did not confirm the moves, and Israel said it had received no word of any such actions, saying its relations with Bahrain were "stable".

In its statement, the parliament—a consultative body with no powers in the area of foreign policy—said the moves "confirmed Bahrain's historic position in support of the Palestinian cause".

"The Council of Representatives affirms that the Israeli ambassador in the kingdom of Bahrain has left Bahrain and the kingdom of Bahrain has decided on the return of the Bahrain ambassador to Israel," the parliament said in a statement. "The cessation of economic relations was also decided," it said, without making clear who had made the decision.

Abdulnabi Salman, parliament's first deputy speaker, confirmed the decision, saying the "ongoing conflict in Gaza cannot tolerate silence".

Israel's foreign ministry said in a statement: "We would like to clarify that no notification or decision has

been received from the government of Bahrain and the government of Israel to return the countries' ambassadors. Relations between Israel and Bahrain are stable." The parliament's statement was not carried by the kingdom's state television or its official news agency.

Any suspension of diplomatic and economic ties, if confirmed, would mark a significant setback for Israel.

Bahrain, which is home to the US Navy's Fifth Fleet, is a signatory of the Abraham Accords, a series of normalisation agreements between Israel and several Arab nations signed in 2020.

## Fire at drug rehabilitation centre in Iran kills at least 32: report

**Monitoring Desk**  
TEHRAN: At least 27 people died in a massive fire that broke out at a drug rehabilitation centre in northern Iran early on Friday, the judiciary said.

"Twenty-seven have died and 12 others were taken to hospital after a fire erupted at a drug rehabilitation centre in Langarud," a city in Gilan province north of Tehran, said the judiciary's Mizan Online news website, quoting provincial chief

justice Esmail Sadeghi. The cause of the fire was not immediately clear but Sadeghi said an investigation "was under way," according to Mizan, which said the centre could accommodate up to 40 people.

Local ISNA news agency shared footage of the fire which lit up the night sky and sent huge plumes of smoke into the air.

Other images showed the heavily damaged site after the fire was contained.

## Japan, Philippines agree to hold talks on reciprocal troops pact

**Monitoring Desk**  
MANILA: The leaders of Japan and the Philippines on Friday agreed to start negotiations on a reciprocal troop access deal, strengthening military cooperation amid rising maritime tensions in the region and an increasingly assertive China.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said he and President Ferdinand Marcos Jr had agreed to work together closely with the United States, and, in a veiled reference to China, shared concern about "unac-

ceptable" attempts to "unilaterally change the status quo by force" in the East and South China Seas. "A further decision was made to start negotiations on a reciprocal access agreement and we agreed to further strengthen trilateral cooperation," Kishida, who was on an official visit to the Philippines, told a joint press conference.

Both the Philippines and Japan, two of the United States' closest Asian allies, have taken a strong line against what they see as aggressive behaviour by Chinese.



Japan Prime Minister Fumio Kishida signs the guestbook beside Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos at Malacanang Palace in Manila, Philippines.

## Islamophobia won't be allowed to take root, says US President

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden said on Thursday that his administration wouldn't watch silently as Muslims in America are targeted by hate-mongers.

The White House announced on Wednesday the administration will develop a strategy to counter Islamophobia in the United States. "We can't stand by while hate against Muslims, and those wrongfully perceived to be Muslim, including Arabs and Sikhs, is given oxygen," President Biden said in his statement.

"Silence is complicity. We won't be silent," he said, adding that his administration was developing a national strategy to counter Islamophobia and related forms of hate. Vice President Kamala Harris said taking on hate was a national priority and that's why "we are developing a strategy to combat Islamophobia". "This action is the latest step forward in our work to combat a surge of hate in America," she said.

The strategy is a joint effort led by the Domestic Policy Council and the White House National Security Council. It aims to create a comprehensive and detailed plan to protect Muslims and those perceived to be Muslim "because of their race, national origin, ancestry, or any other reason, from discrimination, hate, bigotry, and violence."

