

KP governor urges journalists to play role for country's development

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali on Wednesday urged the journalists to play their role in the development of the country. He was speaking as the chief guest at a ceremony organized here at Dera Press Club (DPC) to celebrate its 'Golden Jubilee'. The ceremony was also attended by JUI-F Leader Maulana Ubaid ur Rehman, Commissioner Zafar ul Islam, Regional Police Officer Nasir Mehmood Satti, former provincial minister Haleem Qasuria, Gomal University

Vice Chancellor Dr Shakibullah, and others. The governor said the journalists were 'eyes and ears' of the society, who not only highlighted the public aspirations but also play their role in forming public opinion. He said the journalists should highlight the positive image of their country through their pen. "We should stand with our state and its institutions," he said. The governor quoted examples of some other Muslim countries which faced destruction due to their weak institutions in the recent past.

He said all the citizens should have to fulfill their responsibilities for social development, peace and prosperity. The journalists should also play role to create awareness among the masses and to motivate youth for research and businesses, he added. The people had a potential and talent, however, they needed guidance so that they could work for the country's development and the media could play an important role in that regard, the governor said. Haji Ghulam Ali said after assuming the charge

of his office, he had meetings with the administrations of all universities of the province and steps were being taken to make them all self-reliance. He said the issues of Gomal University would also be resolved as it was the second largest university in the province after Peshawar University. The universities should focus on research work and equip youth with technical training so that they could become useful citizens of the society, he added. Earlier, DPC President Yasin Qureshi, in his welcome address.



LAHORE: A view of MoU signing ceremony between Punjab government and the National Highways and Motorway Police an environmentally friendly measure to combat smog by restricting the entry of vehicles without fitness certificates and route permits on motorways and highways. Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi is also present on the occasion.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali cutting the cake at Dera Press Club (DPC) to celebrate its 'Golden Jubilee'.

Minister urges public vigilance for healthy lungs, fight against air pollution

LAHORE (APP): Punjab's Caretaker Primary and Secondary Healthcare Minister Dr. Jamal Nasir has urged citizens to ensure the use of masks, as healthy lungs are a sign of a healthy life, and to avoid pollution from city dust, dirt, and smoke. He said that for information and guidance regarding treatment of any urban disease, citizens should contact the helpline 1033. Lungs are affected by pollution and smoking, leading to permanent damage. He was chairing a meeting to review the measures and facilities

available in the government hospitals on the occasion of World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Day on Wednesday. Dr. Nasir mentioned that while chronic respiratory diseases are incurable, their harmful effects can be minimized through caution and preventive measures. He emphasized the need to ensure availability of ample oxygen and necessary medication in all district and tehsil headquarters hospitals for convenience and potential treatment of individuals, affected by chronic lung and respiratory diseases.

PML-N to form government with power of vote: Muqam

PESHAWAR (APP): President of Pakistan Muslim League-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engineer Amir Mauqam said on Wednesday that PML-N is the only party capable of steering the country out of crises and towards progress. He made these remarks during a rally in Bisham, Shangla, where local leader Fazal Maqbool Gajar announced his decision to join PML-N along with his family members and hundreds of followers. Amir Mauqam emphasized that under the leadership of Muhammad

Nawaz Sharif, PML-N will bring progress and prosperity to the country through the power of votes. He highlighted that PML-N is the only party capable of creating consensus and resolving the issues faced by the country. Discussing the development schemes in Shangla district, including electrification projects like separate grids, Amir Mauqam asserted that Pakistan Muslim League-N has initiated historic projects like the Khwazakhela to Bisham Expressway, promising to transform the fate of the region.

Mayor says: Mission of serving people to continue

PESHAWAR (APP): Mayor Peshawar, Haji Zubair Ali has said that following the footprints of his father, he will continue his mission of serving the people without any discrimination. He said he will always remember the respect awarded to him by the people, business community and traders of Peshawar. He said he wanted to thank the traders' unions, businessmen, artists, minorities, and people from all walks of life for

their trust and confidence which they reposed in his personality and services. The mayor further said that he was thankful to those who held a coronation ceremony in the honor and services rendered by his father, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali. The people of Peshawar, he said, elected him as their mayor with a thumping majority and he will continue to serve his people without any discrimination.



SIALKOT: Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey Professor Dr. Mehmet Pachaji, is addressing to ceremony of hundred years of Magnitude centenary of Pak - Turk Affinity at GC Women University.

Caretaker CM KP inspects Ayub Teaching Hospital's progress

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice @ Arshad Hussain Shah Wednesday paid a visit to Ayub Teaching Hospital (ATH) and inspected various facilities. Hospital Director Dr. Atif Lodhi along with other key officials were also present on the occasion and warmly welcomed him. During the visit, extensive discussions took place between the Chief Minister and the hospital administration, primarily focusing on the ongoing projects and the facilities offered to the patients. The Chief Minister stressed the pivotal role of delivering high-quality medical services to the people of Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa and underscored the necessity of expanding the hospital's infrastructure to accommodate the increasing number of patients. Dr. Atif Lodhi provided a detailed briefing to the Chief Minister about the hospital's current projects and future plans. Expressing contentment with the progress achieved thus far, the Chief Minister KP pledged complete cooperation to expedite the implementation of developmental projects within the hospital. Engaging with the hospital staff, the Chief Minister commended their dedication and efforts in providing standard healthcare services to the patients.

RTI law ensures transparency, improves governance: Memon

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Information Secretary Nadeem-ur-Rahman Memon stressed the importance of the right to information law in ensuring transparency and improving governance, saying that the Constitution of Pakistan specifies access to information as a fundamental right of citizens. Memon was speaking at a training workshop held on Wednesday to sensitize information officers about the relevant laws. The workshop was organized by the Sindh Information Commission in collaboration with

Transparency International. Public information officers from various government departments as well as active human rights activists attended the workshop. Memon said that the Sindh Assembly has passed the Sindh Transparency and Right to Information Act 2016 to ensure the fundamental right of citizens. He said that the organization of a training session to make the officers aware of the relevant laws and to perform their duties under the said laws and the participation of public information officers of different departments.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan being briefed by the officials during his visit to the Cancer Hospital Minawer.

DIC discuss repatriation of illegal foreigners from DG Khan

DERA GHAZI KHAN (APP): The meeting of the Divisional Intelligence Committee (DIC) was held here on Wednesday, jointly chaired by Commissioner Dr. Nasir Mahmood Bashir and Regional Police Officer Captain (Rtd) Sajjad Hassan Khan. They discussed issues including the repatriation of illegal foreigners from Dera Ghazi Khan division, the ongoing anti-power-theft campaign and matters

about the law and order situation. The meeting was attended by divisional heads of all law enforcement agencies besides heads of Multan Electric Power Company (Mepec), National Database and Registration Authority (Nadra), and district and divisional officers, also discussed matters about security provided to foreigners and threat alerts.

PPP to contest poll on its performance: Gilani

MULTAN (APP): Former Prime Minister and Central leader of Pakistan Peoples Party Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani said that PPP's revolutionary measures were not hidden from the masses and PPP would take part in elections based on its track record of best services towards them. He was talking to people at the residence of Haji Altaf and Fida Hussain, during his visit to Banda Sandela union

council here on Wednesday. Gilani remarked that people were faced with difficulties due to inflation and poor economic conditions in the country. He claimed that PPP would address people's issues by eliminating inflation. PPP strongly believe in the power of masses vote, he added. He said the PPP would take revolutionary steps further to serve the people.

CM Naqvi acknowledges revolutionary steps taken for automation of transport sector

Punjab Govt implements environment-friendly steps; restricts vehicles without certificates on motorways,

LAHORE: The Punjab government has initiated an environmentally friendly measure to combat smog by restricting the entry of vehicles without fitness certificates and route permits on motorways and highways. An agreement was formalized today between the Punjab government and the National Highways and Motorway Police during a signing ceremony at the Chief Minister's Office, attended by Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab

Mohsin Naqvi as the chief guest. The enforcement of an axle load regime will ensure that overweight trawler trucks are prohibited from entering motorways and highways under any circumstances. According to the agreement, there will be a systematic exchange of information regarding vehicle fitness and route permits between the Punjab Transport Department and the Motorway Police. Both departments will appoint friendly focal persons to oversee

the exchange of information and ensure the enforcement of rules, fostering cooperation and collaboration. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by the Additional Secretary Transport (Planning) and DIG (IT) of the National Highways and Motorway Police. Speaking at the MoU signing ceremony, Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi expressed appreciation for the environmentally friendly transport initiative.

7 injured in road accident

FAISALABAD (APP): Seven people including a woman received injuries in a road accident in the area of Balochni police station. Rescue 1122 spokesman said here on Wednesday that a speeding passenger van going from Faisalabad to Lahore went out of control due to brake failure near Balochni Stop on Sheikhpura Road. As a result, the van hit wall of a roadside hotel and caused serious injuries to 7 passengers including Tasleem Shahid, wife of Shahid (41), a resident of Abdullah Pur Faisalabad, Umair Shahid, son of Shahid (16), a resident of Abdullah Pur Faisalabad, Ashraf, and unidentified old man, Shehzad, son of Hassan (35) of Sammundry Road Faisalabad, Imran, son of Asghar (36), Gulam Mohiuddin, son of Gulam Murtaza (58).



KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Sindh President, Senator Nisar Ahmed Khuhro addresses to media persons during press conference, held at Peoples Secretariat building in Karachi.

Minister visits South Waziristan Upper, reviews development activities

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged Districts Affairs, Dr. Aamer Abdullah on Wednesday visited South Waziristan Upper to review ongoing development activities. He was also briefed about development projects, the law and order situation and public concerns during a Jirga that was also attended by the Deputy Commissioner of South Waziristan Upper and leaders of the Mehsud and Barki tribes. Tribal leaders informed the caretaker minister about their problems and emphasized the need for development funds and tax-free facilities in tribal areas urging the minister to play an active

role in these matters. Addressing the Jirga, the caretaker provincial minister highlighted the provincial government's primary focus on the development, prosperity, and peace of tribal districts. The minister announced the establishment of a commission relating to border boundaries and pledged to take steps to connect Upper South Waziristan to the Pak-Afghan border through a road. He also met with a youth delegation from Upper South Waziristan and discussed health, education, public issues and tourism promotion. Stressing the pivotal role of tribal youth in societal reform.



KARACHI: 3rd day of IMO Workshop under Integrated Technical Cooperation Program for Implementation of Hong Kong Convention at Avari Towers.

GCWUS organises international seminar and art exhibition

SIALKOT (APP): An international seminar and art exhibition was organized on the completion of 100 years of Republic of Turkey at the Government College Women University Sialkot (GCWUS). Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Dr. Mehmet Paçaci was the chief guest at the ceremony. Vice Chancellor (VC) Government College Women University Sialkot (GCWUS) Prof. Dr. Zarin Fatima Rizvi welcomed the guests. The Turkish ambassador appreciated the artwork related to the

relations between Pakistan and Turkey by the students of Fine Art Department of GCWUS. He said the artwork of students was full of creativity which fully reflected his thoughts and feelings regarding the hundred years of relations between Pakistan and the Republic of Turkey. Later, an international seminar was also organized at the GCWUS Auditorium, in which students presented a performance on Allama Iqbal's Kalam which was applauded by the guests and audience.

Biden, Xi meet amid disputes over military and economic issues

Monitoring Desk
SAN FRANCISCO: U.S. President Joe Biden meets Chinese leader Xi Jinping for the first time in a year on Wednesday for talks that may ease friction between the two superpowers over military conflicts, drug-trafficking and artificial intelligence.

However, deep progress on the vast differences separating them may have to wait for another day.

Officials on both sides of the Pacific have set expectations low as Biden and Xi are set to discuss Taiwan, the South China Sea, the Israel-Hamas war, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, North Korea, and human rights - each of them areas where the leaders have been unable to resolve long-standing disagreements.

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Biden and Xi arrived in San Francisco on Tuesday,

where they were set to hold their meeting on the sidelines the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit. Leaders from the 21-country group - and hundreds of CEOs in San Francisco to court them - meet amid Chinese economic weakness, Beijing's territorial feuds with neighbors, and a Middle East conflict that is dividing the United States from allies.

Efforts to carefully choreograph Xi's visit may be upended in San Francisco despite efforts to drive homeless people from the streets. The route from the airport to the conference site was lined with demonstrators for and against China's ruling Communist Party, an unusual sight for Xi, who last visited the United States in 2017.

Biden has sought direct diplomacy with Xi, betting that a personal relationship he has cultivated

for a dozen years with the most powerful Chinese leader since Mao Zedong might salvage ties that are increasingly turning hostile.

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Chong Ja Ian, a political science professor at the National University of Singapore, said the two sides are engaged in what Mao referred to during the Chinese civil war as "talk and fight, fight and talk".

"That is, to talk while building up forces," Chong said. Xi and Biden are expected to meet far from the conference location at Filoli Estate, miles outside of San Francisco and carefully chosen for its security, serenity and remoteness.

"The table has been set...over the course of many weeks for what we hope will be a very productive, candid, constructive conversation," White House spokesperson John Kirby said.



German Economy and Climate Minister Robert Habeck, Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Finance Minister Christian Lindner leave following their comments on the ruling of Germany's Constitutional court that the government's re-location of 60 billion euros (\$65 billion USD) of unused debt from the pandemic era to climate fund was illegal, in Berlin, Germany.

Russian resources minister visits North Korea amid new missile development

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: A Russian delegation led by natural resources minister Alexander Kozlov is visiting Pyongyang, North Korea state media said on Wednesday, as the politically isolated state announced new progress in its banned ballistic missile programme. Kozlov arrived on Tuesday, as U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin met with U.N. member states enforcing the Korean War armistice in Seoul and said they were concerned

that China and Russia are helping North Korea expand its military capabilities by enabling Pyongyang to evade U.N. sanctions.

Russia and North Korea were conducting talks on the economy, science and technology, KCNA state media reported, without elaborating.

Kozlov told a reception that Russia wants to develop "substantial cooperation" with North Korea based on the agreements made by Russian

President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un when they met in September in Russia's far east, KCNA reported.

He also cited North Korea's "full support" for Russia over regional and international issues, the report said.

A delegation led by the country's culture minister left for St. Petersburg on Tuesday to attend a cultural event, KCNA said in another article.



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak (L) chairs a cabinet meeting with his new cabinet including Britain's Foreign Secretary David Cameron (R) at 10 Downing Street in central London.

US extends sanctions waiver allowing Iraq to buy electricity from Iran

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The Biden administration has extended by four months a sanctions waiver that will allow Iraq to continue to purchase electricity from Iran and gives Iran limited access to the proceeds to buy humanitarian goods.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken signed the 120-day waiver extension and it was transmitted to Congress on Tuesday, U.S. officials said. The move is likely to draw criticism from Iran hawks on Capitol Hill and elsewhere who believe the extension will reward Iran at a time when it is coming under increasing pressure to end its support for proxy groups, including Hamas, that are destabilizing the Middle East.

There is roughly \$10 billion in Iraqi payments

for Iranian electricity currently being held in escrow accounts in Iraq, and the waiver will allow Baghdad to maintain its energy imports without fear of U.S. penalties for violating sanctions on Iran.

It will also keep in place a provision - included in the last 120-day waiver - under which portions of the electricity proceeds can be transferred to accounts in Oman and then converted to euros or other widely traded currencies for Iran to buy non-sanctioned products. The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the decision-making process, said Blinken signed the waiver mainly because the administration doesn't want to cut Iraq off from a critical source of energy.

Lebanon releases man suspected of killing Irish UN peacekeeper on bail

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Lebanon's military tribunal released a man accused of killing an Irish United Nations peacekeeper almost a year ago on bail, security and judicial officials said Wednesday.

The development comes as UNIFIL, the U.N.'s peacekeeping mission in Lebanon, monitors ongoing clashes along the border between Hezbollah militants and Israeli troops.

Lebanon's military tribunal in June charged Mohamad Ayyad and four others with the killing of Pvt. Sean Rooney, 24, of Newtown Cunningham, Ireland, following a half-year probe. Rooney was killed on Dec. 14, 2022.

400 employees of Biden govt call for ceasefire in Gaza

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: More than 400 Biden administration employees have sent an open letter to the US President, demanding an immediate ceasefire in Gaza while more than 10,000 carnation stems were laid on the steps of the Capitol Hill, each representing a civilian life lost since Oct 7.

The open letter by the Biden administration employees reflects a significant call for the ceasefire, breaking from the usual practice of aides staying in the background. The appeal outlined specific actions they want President Biden to take for de-escalation and humanitarian relief in the region.

"We call on President Biden to urgently demand a ceasefire, and to call for de-escalation of the current conflict by securing the immediate release of Israeli hostages and arbitrarily detained Palestinians," the federal employees wrote in their letter. They also demanded the restoration of water, fuel, electricity and other basic services to Gaza and the passage of adequate humanitarian aid to the besieged Palestinian enclave.

The letter, signed and released to the media on Tuesday, said the signatories represent a coalition of Biden-Harris administration political appointees.



A Russian delegation led by Alexander Kozlov, the minister of natural resources, arrives in Pyongyang.

One killed in Russian missile strike on east Ukraine town

Monitoring Desk
SELYDOVE: At least one person was killed in an overnight Russian missile strike on a town in eastern Ukraine, authorities said on Wednesday. Rescuers were searching through the debris of a wrecked building for survivors on Wednesday morning after the attack on Selydove, northwest of Russian-occupied Donetsk.

National police said four S-300 missiles struck shortly after midnight, killing one person, wounding at least three and damaging six apartment buildings and 20 homes. Five people, including a child, were rescued from one building that had been heavily damaged in the attack. Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko said on Telegram. Local officials, in a separate Telegram statement, said four other people are believed to be trapped under the rubble.

US House speaker endorses Trump for president

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US House of Representatives Speaker Mike Johnson, the highest-ranking Republican in Congress, endorsed Donald Trump for the Republican presidential nomination on Tuesday, an unsurprising move that underlines the grip the former president holds on much of the party's establishment. "I'm all in for President Trump," Johnson said on CNBC. Johnson implied that he had "endorsed" Trump in the past, but it was unclear when he had previously done so.

Brightest flash ever disturbed Earth's atmosphere last year

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: Last year the brightest flash of light ever seen in the night sky disturbed Earth's upper atmosphere in a way that has never before detected before, researchers said on Tuesday.

A massive burst of gamma rays from an enormous cosmic explosion around two billion light years away arrived at Earth on Oct 9, 2022, lighting up telescopes around the world. Quickly nicknamed the "BOAT" - for Brightest of All Time - the flash lasted just seven minutes but its afterglow was visible to amateur astronomers for seven hours.

The flash activated lightning detectors in India and triggered instruments that normally study explosions on the Sun called solar flares.

It also affected long wave radio communications in the lower ionosphere, a section of Earth's upper atmosphere around 60 to 350 kilometres above the surface. The BOAT also affected the upper ionosphere - the very first time a gamma-ray burst has been observed in this section of the atmosphere, a team of Italian and Chinese researchers said on Tuesday.

Students urged to stay home in smog-hit Tehran

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Iranian authorities urged young schoolchildren and many civil servants in the capital Tehran to stay at home on Wednesday due to a spike in air pollution levels.

"One-third of the employees of all executive bodies will work remotely on Wednesday due to the accumulation of pollutants," the official IRNA news agency reported, citing a government committee tasked with monitoring pollution.

It also said that preschool and elementary school classes in Tehran "will be held virtually on Wednesday due to worsening air pollution levels".

UK parliamentarians to vote on Gaza ceasefire today

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Members of the UK House of Commons are likely to vote on Wednesday on an amendment brought by the Scottish National Party on an immediate ceasefire and halt to fighting in Gaza.

The motion was moved last week by the Scottish National Party, which said it intends to seek a vote calling on the UK government to "join the international community in urgently pressing all parties to agree to an immediate ceasefire".

Last week, SNP Westminster leader Stephen Flynn said Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer "cannot just sit on their hands" while "collective punishment" takes place.

A second amendment calling for a ceasefire has been tabled by a Labour backbencher. House of Commons Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle will decide if the amendments are selected for consideration, which would then lead to a vote.

On Tuesday evening, multiple news reports suggested the Labour party is in turmoil over the impending ceasefire vote. The Guardian reported that Labour leader Keir Starmer is facing growing pressure to support the Labour amendment backing a ceasefire in Gaza to avoid the possibility of his own MPs voting for an SNP motion that will call for an immediate halt to the fighting.

UN Security Council is trying for a fifth time to adopt a resolution on the Israel-Hamas war

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: After four failed attempts, the U.N. Security Council is trying for a fifth time to come up with a resolution on the Israel-Hamas war, but it remains to be seen whether serious divisions can be overcome to produce a consensus on wording.

The current draft under negotiation would demand "immediate extended humanitarian pauses" throughout the Gaza Strip to provide civilians with desperately needed aid. It also would demand that "all parties" comply with international humanitarian law that requires protection for civilians, calls for special protections for children, and bans hostage-taking.

But the draft, proposed by council member Malta and obtained Tuesday by The Associated Press, makes no mention of a ceasefire. It also doesn't refer to Hamas' surprise attack on Israel on Oct. 7 that killed around 1,200 people and took some 240 others hostage. Nor does it cite Israel's retaliatory airstrikes and ground offensive in Hamas-ruled Gaza that the Gaza health ministry says has killed more than 11,000 Palestinians, two-thirds of them women and children.

The 15-member council, which has the responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, has been paralyzed since the war began by its internal divisions. This is especially the case between China and Russia, which want an immediate ceasefire, and the United States, Israel's closest ally that has called for humanitarian pauses but objects to any mention of a ceasefire.

In the four previous tries, a Brazil-drafted resolution was vetoed by the United States, a U.S.-drafted resolution was vetoed by Russia and China, and two Russian-drafted resolutions failed to get the minimum nine "yes" voted needed for adoption.

North Korea says it tested new solid-fuel engines for intermediate-range ballistic missiles

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea said Wednesday it successfully tested new solid-fuel engines designed for intermediate-range ballistic missiles as it works on enhancing its nuclear-capable arsenal with more powerful, harder-to-detect weapons that can potentially target U.S. military bases in Guam and Japan.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said the country's military scientists tested the first-stage and second-stage missile engines on Saturday and Tuesday. The report did not say when the new missile system was expected to be completed.

The tests extend a torrid run in North Korea's weapons development efforts, which some analysts say could be boosted by an alleged arms cooperation with Russia as they align in the face of separate, intensifying confrontations with the United States. Tuesday's test came as Russia's natural resources minister, Alexander Kozlov, arrived in North Korea for talks over unspecified trade and technology exchanges, as the countries continued to build on a rare summit in September between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian Vladimir Putin.

Kim's trip to the Russian Far East, where he also visited major rocket and military sites, sparked concerns about a potential arms alignment between the countries, in which North Korea provides munitions for Russia's war in Ukraine in exchange for Russian technology transfers that would upgrade Kim's military nuclear program.

The North's existing intermediate-range missiles, including the Hwasong-12 that may be able to reach the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam, are powered by liquid-fuel engines, which need to be fueled before launch and cannot stay fueled for long periods of time. Missiles with built-in solid propellants can be made ready to launch faster and are easier to move.

First fuel truck starts crossing into Gaza from Egypt

Monitoring Desk
RAFAH: The first truck to deliver fuel to the Gaza Strip since Israel imposed a total siege on the enclave in its war with Hamas began crossing from Egypt on Wednesday, two Egyptian security sources said.

The delivery was made possible by Israel giving its approval for 24,000 litres (6,340 gallons) of diesel fuel to be allowed into Gaza for use by UN aid distribution trucks, but not for use at hospitals, according to a humanitarian source.

Limited deliveries of humanitarian aid have been crossing from Egypt into Gaza since Oct. 21, but Israel had refused to allow in fuel, saying Hamas held plentiful stocks.

The United Nations had warned in recent days that it would soon have to halt humanitarian operations, including the distribution of relief within Gaza, as its fuel stocks became fully depleted.

Aid workers say a lack of fuel, which is needed for hospital generators and provision of water as well as the distribution of relief, has contributed to a sharp deterioration of conditions for Gaza's 2.3 million residents.

The initial delivery of 24,000 litres of fuel was intended to be carried out over two days, with 12,000 litres allocated for each day, an international source with knowledge of the operation said.

"This is not enough for anything - not for hospitals, not even for aid deliveries," said the source, speaking on condition of anonymity. "It's meant to be enough only to bring some of the aid that has been outside - and got rained on for example - indoors to the warehouses."

Witnesses said two other trucks were lined up on the Egyptian side of the Rafah crossing and waiting to drive into Gaza, but it was unclear when they might enter.

US helps forge global group on measuring natgas' climate-warming emissions

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The U.S. and more than a dozen countries and groups have forged a working group to advance efforts to measure greenhouse gas emissions across the natural gas supply chain to cut global output of the pollution blamed for climate change, the Energy Department said on Wednesday.

The MMRV Working Group aims to advance efforts to measure, monitor, report and verify emissions of methane, carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. It seeks to do so for the entire gas supply chain including production, processing, transport, liquefaction, and distribution of the fuel.

Participants are: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, East Mediterranean Gas Forum, European Commission, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mozambique, Norway, South Korea, Britain and the U.S.

Brad Crabtree, assistant secretary of fossil energy and carbon management at the Energy Department, said there is a pressing need to provide comparable, reliable information on emissions cuts by gas producers and exporters to global markets.

"It's really critical that we develop on a global basis a framework that is agreed to and supported by both importing countries and exporting countries, one on the governmental side, but also has the investment and support of industry and other stakeholders," Crabtree told Reuters.

In the first half of this year, the U.S. was the world's largest exporter of gas that is super-chilled so it can be transported by tanker in the form of liquefied natural gas, or LNG.



A police personnel attends a phone call near the wrecked bus, subject to an accident on a remote mountain road in the Doda area, about 200 kilometres (124 miles) southeast of the Srinagar.

