

# Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Islamabad

Vol. XIV No. 252 Reg. mails-B/ID-445 Wednesday October 30, 2024, Rabi-us-Sani 26, 1446 A.H. Ph: 2158688, 2158997 Pages 4: Rs. 12

## Global peace without end to Gaza bloodshed out of question: PM

*Calls for global partnerships to tackle modern challenges*

RIYADH (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday, while underscoring the importance of knowledge-based economy driven by innovation in domains of artificial intelligence, education and health, called for collective global efforts and partnerships to overcome the contemporary challenges. He said that no nation could overcome today's challenges alone and no single country could harness the potential of tomorrow without the support of others.

"Pakistan stands ready to join those who dare to dream big. We invite you to invest, to bring your expertise and creativity to Pakistan, as we build a future, rooted in resilience and shared prosperity," the prime minister said during his address at the plenary

session of the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of two-day Future Investment Initiative (FII) held here.

The prime minister said that he was elated to share that Pakistan, too, was on a transformative journey; a journey of resilience, sacrifice, and a relentless pursuit of stability and growth.

Attended by global leaders, this year's FII is themed "Infinite Horizons: Investing Today, Shaping Tomorrow" and focuses on global investments aimed at addressing major issues such as artificial intelligence, robotics, education, energy, space, finance, healthcare, and sustainability.

The participating countries engage in the dialogue for the promotion of investment and a sustainable future while highlighting the strength of their re-



RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif delivering his keynote speech at the 8th meeting of Future Investment Initiative.

spective economies.

The FII conference featured discussions on artificial intelligence, robotics, education, energy, space, public health, and challenges, confronting sustainable development.

The prime minister,

citing future course, said Pakistan was laying the foundation for a knowledge-based economy driven by innovation in three pivotal domains, artificial intelligence, education, and health in which they looked forward to forging

useful partnerships.

"AI is more than a trend; it's a force revolutionizing economies, societies, and industries. At this critical juncture, Pakistan is not just embracing AI, we are committed to excelling in it," he said, adding their mission was clear and it was to encourage young minds to redefine the boundaries of AI; training skilled engineers and data scientists as the backbone of Pakistan's AI growth; and equipping their workforce to harness the power of AI across industries.

Along with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and like-minded global partners, the prime minister said Pakistan envisioned AI as a force for good, free from biases.



RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia His Royal Highness Mohammed bin Salman on the sidelines of Future Investment Initiative Forum.

## PM Sharif appreciates KSA's support for economic revival

*Pakistan, Saudi Arabia to enhance bilateral trade, investment*

RIYADH (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday highlighting the importance of deep-rooted brotherly relations between Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, appreciated Kingdom's support for the economic revival and stability.

The prime minister met with Crown Prince and the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al-Saud on the sidelines of the eighth session of the Future Investment Initiative (FII) in Riyadh, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The two leaders took stock of the ongoing bilateral engagements, especially in follow up to the dec-

sions taken in previous high-level meetings held in Makkah and Riyadh in April.

Apprising the crown prince on the government of Pakistan's economic, institutional and policy reforms agenda, the prime minister said that the Kingdom had a central role in Pakistan's future economic plans.

The prime minister appreciated Kingdom's efforts to promote regional

peace and stability in the Middle East and reiterated Pakistan's unwavering commitment to stand by the Kingdom in these efforts.

The two leaders exchanged views on regional developments and agreed to closely coordinate positions on regional issues. The prime minister conveyed best wishes for the health and well-being of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir exchanging views with Colonel General Aleksandr V. Fomin, Deputy Defence Minister of the Russian Federation during meeting held at General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

## DPM Dar says: Pakistan committed to CPEC-II to deepen agri, industrial cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar on Tuesday calling the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) a "wonderful gift" of China to Pakistan, said that his country was committed to taking the project to the next level to deepen cooperation in the fields of agriculture, industrialization, renewable energy and others.

The deputy prime minister in his remarks at the International Conference "China at 75: A Journey of Progress, Transformation and Global Leadership" said that being the symbol of China-Pakistan cooperation, CPEC helped uplift the country's energy infrastructure to address the load-shedding woes of the people. He said the government was taking action to materialise the Chinese of-

fer of sending 1,000 students to China for training in agricultural technology.

He said that Pakistan deeply valued China's support in addressing long-standing issues including Kashmir and Palestine and reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering support to the One-China policy. He said that being time-tested friends, both China and Pakistan supported each other in all circumstances whether they were natural disasters, economic disruptions, or geopolitical shifts.

Lauding China's development journey, Deputy Prime Minister Dar said that over the past 75 years, China, despite leg pulling from certain parts of the globe, unprecedentedly achieved a milestone through a "light-speed" and was also contributing to a better world.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning & Development, Ahsan Iqbal chairing a review meeting of the focal groups constituted by the PM to analyze recommendations made by the Chinese working team.

## Sui gas companies seek up to 53% price hike from July 2024

ISLAMABAD (INP): Another inflationary blow seems imminent as gas companies have requested to increase Sui gas prices by up to 53%, effective from July 1, 2024.

Sui gas prices are expected to rise by 53.47% for Sindh and Balochistan, while for Punjab, Islamabad, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the proposed increase is 3.66%.

The Sui gas companies have submitted their applications to the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) to increase the gas prices from the back date.

Sui Northern has proposed an average price increase of Rs 64.16 per MMBTU, raising the av-

erage rate to Rs 1,810.38 per MMBTU.

Meanwhile, Sui Southern has requested an average price hike of Rs 669.07 per MMBTU, taking the average price to Rs 1,920.39 per MMBTU.

As per the channel report, the sui gas companies aim to implement these price hikes starting from July 1, 2024. In response, OGRA has sought public feedback on these proposals.

The channel reported that OGRA will hold a hearing on November 5 for the Sui Northern Gas Company's application, and on November 8 for the Sui Southern Gas Company's application.

## COAS reiterates Pakistan's commitment to strengthening traditional defense ties with Russia

RAWALPINDI (Online): Colonel General Alexander V. Fomin, Deputy Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation, met General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at the General Headquarters (GHQ) today.

The meeting addressed the regional security environment and matters of mutual interest, including the enhancement of bilateral defense and security cooperation.

COAS reiterated Pakistan's commitment to strengthening traditional

defense ties with Russia, while both sides affirmed their dedication to bolstering collaboration in various security and defense domains.

Colonel General Fomin commended the Pakistan Army's achievements in combating terrorism and highlighted the importance of a unified, cooperative approach among the global community to counter extremism.

Meanwhile, a high level delegation led by Deputy Defence Minister of the Russian Federation,

Colonel General Aleksandr V. Fomin called on Air Chief Marshal Zabeer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force at Air Headquarters here on Tuesday.

The meeting remained focused on bolstering military cooperation and industrial collaboration between the two sides while exploring new avenues to fortify existing ties through joint military exercises and technical support for PAF equipment, an Inter Services Public Relations news release said.

## President greets Turkish gov't, people on 101<sup>st</sup> Republic Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari extended his greetings to the government and people of Türkiye as they celebrated the 101<sup>st</sup> Republic Day on Tuesday.

The president said that over the past century, Türkiye had achieved immense development in various fields and expressed the hope that the country would reach more milestones under the leadership of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, according to a President House press release.

He said that Türkiye always raised voice on the issues faced by the Muslim world.

The president said that the government and people of Pakistan desired the progress and prosperity of Türkiye as both countries supported each other in difficult times.

He also observed that the bilateral relationship between Pakistan and Türkiye were getting stronger with the passage of time.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar and Ambassador of Türkiye, Dr. Irfan Neziroglu, and others cutting the cake during the 101st Anniversary of Turkish National Day at a local hotel in Federal Capital.

## PM congratulates newly elected SCBA President Rauf Atta, office bearers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday felicitated newly elected President of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) Mian Rauf Atta and Ahsan Bhoon, a leader of Independent Group on winning the election.

The prime minister congratulated all the leaders of the group for winning the SCBA elections, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He also expressed the confidence that the newly elected office bearers, including the president, would continue their mission of welfare of the lawyers' community.

The lawyers' community would continue playing its positive role for the implementation of 26<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment, Constitution and the supremacy of parliament, he added.

The prime minister said that the lawyers' community deserved appreciation for their election of Rauf Atta as their best leadership.

He hoped that the newly elected office bearers and the lawyers' community would play their positive and effective role for the resolution of issues faced by the community and others including the legal and judicial.

He said the lawyers always acted as a bridge between the Bar and the Bench. Tarar hoped that the newly elected President and other officials would continue to play their positive role for the supremacy of the Constitution and the rule of law. The winning panel would also play an effective role in solving the problems of the lawyers' community.

## SC bar elects best person as its President: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attallah Tarar on Tuesday felicitated Asma Jahangir Group's candidate Mian Rauf Atta on getting elected as the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association. The minister, in a news statement, also congratulated Head of the Asma Jahangir's Group Ahsan Bhoon for the achievement.

The best person has been elected as the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association, the minister remarked. Lawyers are the defender of democracy, human rights and the constitution, he said, adding the fraternity had a crucial law in upholding the rule of law, supremacy of the constitution and democratic norms.

He said the lawyers always acted as a bridge between the Bar and the Bench. Tarar hoped that the newly elected President and other officials would continue to play their positive role for the supremacy of the Constitution and the rule of law. The winning panel would also play an effective role in solving the problems of the lawyers' community.

## PTI challenges decision on formation of Punjab ETs

ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI has challenged the decision regarding formation of Punjab Election Tribunals (PETs) in Supreme Court (SC). Election Commission (EC) and others have been made respondents in the petition. PTI leader Suleman Akram Raja has filed review petition on September 30 decision of SC.

September 30 decision of SC be reviewed. Meeting between Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Chief Justice Lahore High Court (CJLHC) can not become reason for change of Election tribunals. Who will be judge of Election Tribunal, this power rests with Chief Justice. LHC registrar notified 6 election tribunals on April 4. Names of serving judges for election tribunals were returned following the meeting between CJLHC and chief election commissioner.



ISLAMABAD: Mr. Shahid Usman Parliamentary Secretary, Industries and Production visits Engineering Development Board (EDB) for Briefing.

## ADB approves \$500 mln loan to support climate, disaster resilience in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$500 million policy-based loan to support climate change and disaster risk reduction and resilience in Pakistan.

The Climate and Disaster Resilience Enhancement Program (CDREP) will strengthen Pakistan's institutional capacity for planning, preparedness, and response; increase inclusive investment in disaster risk reduction and climate resilience; and support the scale up of disaster risk financing using a risk-layered approach, according to ADB press release received here Tuesday.

Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change and disasters triggered by natural hazards in Asia and the Pacific. Average losses from disaster events exceed \$2 billion per year. Women and other vulnerable groups are disproportionately affected by climate change and disaster events.

"This program builds on ADB's longstanding work in Pakistan to understand and reduce climate and disaster risks and support effective disaster response," said ADB Director General for Central and West Asia Yevgeniy Zhukov.

"We are proud to support an integrated and comprehensive approach to climate and disaster risk management, including a portfolio of disaster risk financing instruments for timely and adequate funding for disaster response," Zhukov added.

The program supports enhanced capacity for disaster risk mapping and modeling for investment and development decisions. It enhances coordination for disaster monitoring and response. It supports enhanced planning and prioritization of gender-sensitive and resilient public investments, including integrated flood risk management and nature-based solutions.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, H.E. Ms. Valentina Matvienko, calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Planning Minister reviews draft plans

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Prof Ahsan Iqbal here Tuesday chaired a review meeting of the focal groups constituted by the Prime Minister to analyze recommendations made by the Chinese working team.

The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh; Secretary Planning, Awaiz Manzoor Sumra; Chairman of the National Highway Authority and high-ranking officials from various ministries and divisions, including Communication, Investment, Petroleum & Natural Resources, Na-

tional Food Security, Power, Commerce, Economic Affairs, Interior, and Railways.

This was the third meeting chaired by Minister Ahsan Iqbal, following the Prime Minister's directives, to review the draft plans prepared by the focal groups. The Minister emphasized the need for action plans for implementation with timelines. He further stressed the need to highlight where Pakistan has already made progress.

During review of agriculture sector, the Ministry of Food Security highlighted that Pakistan lacks a long-term, comprehensive, and independent development plan for the sector.

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**Regional trade**

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb was correct in saying that not trading with your neighbours makes little sense.

In Pakistan's context, trade with regional states is negligible, and South Asia remains one of the least integrated regions in the world. Mr Aurangzeb was replying to a question at an event in Washington, and observed that while "political" and "geopolitical" issues were beyond his purview, Pakistan sought to expand its trade relations. He pointed out that this was one of the key reasons for joining the SCO, and seeking membership to BRICS.

Indeed, trade can be a key conduit to bring states closer and reduce tensions and conflict. But in Pakistan's case, the biggest obstacle standing in the way of greater regional commerce is its long-time strained relationship with India. Yet it is also true that if Pakistan and India were to improve trade ties, better bilateral ties could develop across the spectrum.

The ruling PML-N, with its 'pro-business' outlook, has historically always argued for better trade ties with India. Both the prime minister and the foreign minister have earlier expressed the desire to improve trade ties with our eastern neighbour, hence there is nothing novel in what the finance minister suggested in Washington. The issue is that important stakeholders within the state must be on board if there is to be a normalisation of trade ties.

For example, despite the elected leadership's enthusiasm for trade with India, the Foreign Office had clarified in August that normalisation of commercial ties with Delhi was not on the agenda. This indicated that influential quarters were not overly enthused with the idea of trading with India. Cross-border commerce was suspended in 2019, after the abrogation of held Kashmir's limited autonomy by India, though it has resumed slightly, while smuggling and indirect trade through the UAE continue.

For its own economic interests, Pakistan should trade with India, Afghanistan, Iran and all other regional states. With reference to India, though it is the larger economy, cross-border trade can offer Pakistani businesses new markets in India, while Delhi can tap Central Asian markets by transiting through Pakistan. If done right, restored trade relations can also open the door to better bilateral ties. But for proper commercial ties to flourish, other ancillary facilities — a friendlier visa regime, direct flights, and banking channels — will be essential. It remains to be seen whether hardliners in the Indian capital would be willing to resume trade with Pakistan, while powerful quarters in this country must also be on board for cross-border trade to succeed. A blueprint for normalising trade finalised in 2012 can be used as a reference point to start the process afresh. As witnessed in other regions, economic interdependence can significantly help reduce chances of conflict.

**Imbalance of power**

Dr Niaz Murtaza

Power is a double-edged sword. It corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. But it produces order as well. Without power, there is chaos. Eschewing absolute power in the hands of a few, the sages suggest a balance of power with checks and balances, one that is diffused vertically and horizontally among state organs. Power must be legitimate to reduce violations and revolt.

But we have long blithely ignored such wisdom. The 2008-18 era had witnessed progress. But the last two years under the PML-N/ PPP have seen a huge reversal of this progress, with power illegitimately sucked upwards vertically and inwards horizontally. This concentration and illegitimacy of power in a diverse, complex and large state bodes ill for stability and peace.

We had earlier devolved power. Sadly, local bodies today are even more in a state of limbo than previously. Even the provinces have lost powers they had won via the 18th Amendment, due to fiscal cuts, court verdicts and the informal sway of an omnipotent centre. The centre dominates the peripheries such as Balochistan and the former Fata areas, leading to local ire, revolt and violence.

We now see autonomous entities being defanged: the ECP and NAB earlier and the higher courts now in the name of parliamentary, but in reality executive, sway. In parliamentary systems, executives come from parliaments. So, it's easy to confuse the executive and parliamentary dominance. True parliamentary sway in hiring judges means legislators in cabinets, not sitting in appointing

committees, which also have cross-aisle parity and follow Article 63-A's party discipline provisions.

A two-stage system with open applications and clear merit criteria is best where legal acers (judges, ex-judges, bar council heads and legal academics) first vet the applicants. Parliament rechecks their decisions, rejecting the nominees only if both aisles agree. This ensures that decisions don't reflect narrow executive concerns but those based on merit. We had a system like this, with its easily fixable gaps being lack of merit criteria and open applications. Instead of fixing them, we adopted an opaque, non-merit, executive-run system.

Some people present long lists of post-2009 judiciary ills — oddly without a proper 'before versus after' review — to argue that 'free' courts caused us harm and deserve their fate. The logic mimics the clichéd one that democracy causes harm. Judicial freedom is a big part of democracy and basic rights such as fair trials; undoing it undoes democracy as well as basic rights of which we have had little experience.

A free judiciary forms slowly when it's not hired by executives but emerges through a process of merit that employs able judges who do not succumb to pressure and who curb personal biases. It is strengthened by formal laws that enhance court freedoms and when agencies don't hound judges. The only formal freedom courts got briefly was the one via the 19th Amendment. So, the blame for the judiciary's many ills goes to the old system when its current old guard leadership was first hired long ago by executives on mainly political grounds.

It is unsurprising if some judges misused the informal space. We are sadly back to that system. But the fruits of limited formal freedom will surely emerge once able judges hired in the high courts via the 19th Amendment adorn the judicial leadership. Six such judges have already shown unprecedented guts in their recent letter against the agencies, which many say spurred the apex court's judges to rule rightly against regime interests on reserved seats. So, the courts are being chained not for old wrongs but present resolve.

This sucking of power upwards and inwards should mean a muscular, omnipotent ex-cutive in Islamabad. Oddly, we see an emaciated one. Where did all the inflow of power go? Wise ones talk in hushed tones of the establishment.

This then is our power (im)balance: top-stuffed, illegitimate and opaque. Diverse and autarkic groups in large and complex states chafe at such power traits and pursue legal, peaceful avenues against them.

But they are all being shut with courts defanged, parliament disabled, media silenced and protests crushed. Unfortunately, in this case, legitimate gripes erupt in ugly forms: crime, mob rage attacks or terrorism. Nearby Sri Lanka and Bangladesh have shown the power of huge upheaval. Earlier years showed our struggles in conflict despite armed power, even against ragtag militants. The future will show if our muscles can curb upheaval. The right way lies in renewing power legitimacy and diffusion. But when power lies elsewhere, more sensible and complex ways evade rulers quite easily. — Courtesy Dawn

**Essential judgments**

Parvez Rahim

While almost all employers in Pakistan engage third-party contractors to carry out some or most of their work, many are not aware as to what type of work they can safely contract out and how the job will be managed administratively.

Human resource professionals had believed that core jobs in the office or factory operations should not be assigned to contractors' employees. Such jobs required constant supervision by the company's staff, which provided an opportunity for the contractors' employees to claim the status of the principal employer's workers. The experts believed that ancillary services, or non-core jobs, such as housekeeping, gardening or canteen operations, could be safely contracted out as supervision by the company personnel was not required.

However, due to a spate of Supreme Court judgments, employers now feel it has become risky to outsource even support services. The provisions of the draft labour codes have triggered caution because they state that permanent jobs cannot be contracted out. Nevertheless, a perusal of three SC judgments, since the 2013 landmark judgment in the Fauji Fertiliser Company (FFC) case, reveals that none of them bars ancillary services' outsourcing. These judgments establish the principle that employees hired through contractors and working with the company's own staff under the same supervision are the latter's employees and not the contractor's.

In a landmark SC judgment on May 16, 2013, then chief justice Iftikhar Chaudhry confirmed the status of 112 workers of the bagging and loading section as

FFC's employees and not of the contractor. The reasons were valid: 1) The authority to hire and fire, including settlement of wages and benefits of the contractor's workers rested with the company; 2) their work was supervised, controlled and looked after by the in-charge of the bagging department and his subordinate staff/ supervisors; 3) these workers had been continuously in the employment of the company for a long time; 4) they were also responsible for cleaning the machines and floors.

Prior to the judgment, this case had been pending in the lower courts for over two decades. FFC had purchased a plant at Mirpur Mathelo in Sindh from the Pak-Saudi Fertiliser Company, a state enterprise. The intention was to manage the plant professionally. But erasing irregular practices required time.

The bagging and loading section was considered the most manpower-intensive area in a fertiliser plant. Another fertiliser plant of an American company at Daharki where I worked till 1982 was grappling with a similar situation. It was acquired by the Engro Fertiliser Company. When I visited it more than two decades later, I was amazed to see that the huge bagging and shipping area was now fully automated. Even the loading of urea bags on trucks was mechanised.

In the second SC judgment on Dec 8, 2017, a three-judge bench headed by chief justice Mian Saqib Nisar regularised the services of 210 employees at Pakistan State Oil. During the hearing, the top judge observed that unfortunately, companies, including large enterprises, do not regularise their employees. In fact, the hiring was carried out

through the contractor. The court also noted that it was sad that companies do not bother to own their workers. Instead of granting workers their rights, the companies file cases to avoid doing so. Some of the contractors' employees had been in service since 1984.

In the third SC judgment on April 4, 2024, the services of 20 employees, allegedly employed by contractors, were confirmed at IFFCO Pakistan (Private) Ltd, the user company. The judges stated "there is no bar to contract out the whole job, or in bits and pieces, to the outsource contractor, including human resource, within its own pre-mises or through toll manufacturing agreements, but what is crucial is that the outsourcing should not be used as a weapon of circumvention of labour laws by means of sham agreements".

There is a common factor in the aforementioned judgments: the supervision and control of the employees hired through the contractors and regularised by the SC rested with user companies. Employers must bear in mind that they need to avoid hiring employees through contractors to save on costs or to retain the right to terminate their employment at will.

The judgment in IFFCO's case is significant as it clearly spells out the outsourcing of jobs in totality or partly, provided a lawfully executed agreement is complied with in letter and spirit.

The employers should honour such verdicts by ensuring that the contractors abide by the labour laws applicable to the establishment, and secure social security and pension schemes for their employees. — Courtesy Dawn

**National News**

**Governor Punjab credits President Zardari for stable coalition govt in country**

RAWALPINDI (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan has said that positive criticism was meant for improvement of the government's performance. He credited President Asif Ali Zardari for a stable current coalition government. "Pakistan People's Party always plays its positive role when the country faces challenges of national integrity and dignity", he said and added that the credit goes to President Asif Ali Zardari for present stable coalition government. The governor remarked this during his address at the 8th annual session of Ghulam Rabbani

Qureshi Welfare Foundation (GRQWF) in Kahuta here Tuesday. He said that education and health were the responsibility of the government, but unfortunately, the past governments did not pay attention to it. He further said that government owned schools should not be privatized. "Where there is a shortage of staff, the government should fill this shortage", he maintained.

The Governor Punjab appreciated the dialysis center and the health facility being provided to the poor by the GRQWF in Kahuta, the governor said that people should come ahead

to serve the needy segments of the society. He said that the poor are treated free of cost in Sindh province. He informed that a dialysis center would soon be established at Tehsil Hospital Pindi Gheb, Attock. A large number of people including former federal minister Mehreen Anwar Raja and former MNA Ghulam Murtaza Sati participated in the ceremony.

The Governor Punjab visited Al-Fateh Women Vocational Free Technical Center, Computer Lab, Laboratory, Free Kidney and Dialysis Center and other departments established in GRQWF.



LAHORE: Participants are holding Breast Cancer Awareness Walk organized by Lahore Press Club Administration, held in Lahore.

**Swedish envoy, CM agrees to strengthen cooperation**

LAHORE (APP): Swedish Ambassador to Pakistan Alexandra Berg von Linde called on Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif here on Tuesday. The meeting explored avenues for strengthening bilateral relations. The discussions focused on potential collaboration in various sectors, including education, health, IT, agriculture, trade, and environmental sustainability, with an emphasis on creating a

conducive investment climate in Punjab. CM Maryam Nawaz emphasized a strong focus on agriculture and support for farmers, stating, "There is a favorable environment for investment in Punjab." She assured investors that they can invest in the province without fear of risk. The Swedish ambassador commended the Punjab government's initiatives to protect sustainability and women's rights.

**KP Govt forms body to appoint VCs in universities**

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has formed Academic Search Committee to appoint Vice Chancellors in public sector universities of the province. A notification issued said that Professor Abdullah Malik had been appointed as the convener of committee while the other members included Anwar-ul-Hasan Gilani, Muhammad Aslam Baig and Dr Sara Safdar while the secretary of higher education department had been appointed as secretary of the committee.

**Smog engulfs Multan, disrupts routine life**

MULTAN (APP): Early morning smog blanketed Multan and surrounding areas, intensifying pollution and disrupting daily life. According to Deputy Director Meteorological Department, Muhammad Arshad, the smog index hit 226 on Tuesday, with a further rise expected over the next two weeks.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi presides over the meeting of Pakistan Red Crescent Society Merged Districts Branch at Governor House.

**Minister attends 25th COTHM convocation**

LAHORE (APP): COTHM (Global UK) organised its annual 25th convocation on Tuesday at Golden Pearl Hall, Faletti's Hotel, in which Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora participated as the chief guest. A large number of students of various programmes, including hospitality, culinary arts, baking & patisserie and travel & tourism management were awarded appreciation certificates and medals. In his address, Ramesh Singh Arora congratulated all graduating

students, emphasizing that their achievements are a result of their hard work, prayers of their parents, and the blessings of Allah. He lauded the role of COTHM in leading the youth towards economic empowerment through meaningful education and training. He said that COTHM does not just prepare graduates equipped with market-driven skills but also produces graduates who are able to discover their own identity and serve the hospitality, travel and tourism industry in true sense of the word.

**PITB, Al-Khidmat signs MoU**

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) and Al-Khidmat Foundation Pakistan have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to empower women with digital and entrepreneurial skills. In this regard, an Al-Khidmat Foundation delegation visited PITB Chairman Faisal Yousaf, marking a significant step towards fostering inclusive growth within Pakistan's digital ecosystem. PITB Director General (DG) e-Governance Sajid Latif and Al-Khidmat Foundation Lahore President Engr Ahmad Hammad Rashid signed the MoU on behalf of

their respective organizations. Key participants included PITB Director Skills Development Chaudhary Ahmad Islam, Al-Khidmat's Director BanoQabil Program Lahore Dr. Usman Afzal, and Regional Head VMD Al-Khidmat Foundation Lahore Moawiz Bin Tahir. As part of the MoU, PITB will provide Al-Khidmat Foundation with a database of high-achieving and deserving female students from its SheWins program. Al-Khidmat Foundation will support these students by offering interest-free financing for essential digital tools, including laptops and mobile phones.

**Kundi for promotion of merged districts**

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday urged the development of a comprehensive operational proposal to attract donor funding, highlighting that the Red Crescent should actively engage in fostering interest among potential donors regarding the merged districts.

He said this in a meeting of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) merged districts chapter was convened at the Governor's House. The meeting included participation from the chairman, Imran Wazir, Vice President Farzand Wazir, members of the

managing committee, and various officials. During the session, comprehensive briefings were provided on the objectives, duties, financial management, and administrative matters of the merged districts branch. Key discussions focused on the availability of relief supplies for natural disaster response, annual income and expenditures, securing funds from donors, and the importance of volunteer services. Governor Kundi emphasized the effective use of PRCS-managed properties and the necessity of utilizing funds responsibly.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora distributing certificates amongst the students during annual convocation.

**Opposition decries worsening law, order situation in merged areas, demand to convene APC**

PESHAWAR (APP): Opposition parties in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly on Tuesday demanded to convene All Parties Conference (APC) to ponder over the deteriorating law and order situation in merged areas and to address feelings of insecurity among people. The proceedings of the day were presided over by Muhammad Idrees of Panel of Chairman. Opposition benches demanded convening of APC to deliberate over law and order situation while treasury benches stressed to form a full house committee to assess the situation. Parliamentary leader of Awami National

Party, Arbab Usman said that incidents of insurgency had been increased in merged districts during last two months and writ of government was being challenged time and time again. He suggested a meeting of APC and a visit of parliamentarians to meet members of affected families and express solidarity with them. He also questioned delay in investigation of attack on Bara Check Post and said that compensation amount should be paid to heirs of martyred. Ahmad Kundi of PPP said that insurgency was not confined to district Khyber but whole province is affected by these incidents.

# Maritime Minister lauds China's economic model, strengthens bilateral ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh, on Tuesday emphasized China's economic model as a global example during a recent conference, underscoring the strengthening partnership between Pakistan and China.

Addressing the conference "China at 75: A Journey of Progress, Transformation & Global Leadership," organized by the Pak-China Institute, Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh praised China's economic approach, which he said surpasses Western liberal and neo-liberal models. He highlighted the Chinese

economic model as an ideal for other countries, adding that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is also inspired by this approach.

The minister discussed the strengthening strategic partnership between Pakistan and China, noting that the two nations consistently support each other in international fora, a reflection of their close ties. He expressed optimism about the completion of Phase II of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with China's continued support and thanked the Chinese government for prioritizing Pakistan within South Asia.

Sheikh pledged to elevate Pakistan's maritime sector to meet the standards of China's port and shipping industry. He emphasized that terrorism and actions by hostile groups would not weaken the longstanding friendship between the two nations. He also assured that Pakistan's federal government is addressing the concerns of the Chinese government and investors.

The minister reiterated the importance of CPEC for the development of Balochistan and other provinces, stressing Pakistan's commitment to seeing all CPEC projects through to completion.

## 巴基斯坦 - 中国渔业 B2B 投资会议

PAKISTAN-CHINA B2B INVESTMENT MEETING ON FISHERIES



QINGDAO: The first 'Pakistan-China B2B Investment Meeting' on Fisheries was organized in Qingdao, Shandong province, on 29 October 2024. Ambassador of Pakistan to China Mr. Khalil Hashmi and Secretary of the Board of Investment Mr. Rahim Hayat Qureshi in a group photo with the representatives of participating companies of Pakistan and China.

### Chinese-Pakistani companies participate in B2B Investment Meeting on Fisheries in Qingdao

BEIJING (APP): As many as 45 Chinese and 28 Pakistani companies participated in the first Pakistan-China B2B Investment Meeting on Fisheries held on Tuesday in Qingdao, Shandong province in China.

The event was the first in a series of sector-specific meetings to foster joint ventures and partnerships between Pakistani and Chinese companies.

### Shahid Usman lauds EDB efforts in promoting innovation technologies

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary Secretary Ministry of Industries and Production Shahid Usman on Tuesday commended the Engineering Development Board (EDB) for its remarkable progress in promoting innovative technologies, aligning with the government's vision.

During his visit to the EDB for a detailed briefing on its activities, the secretary expressed his appreciation, said a news release.

The secretary praised the efforts of EDB's current management in formulation of Auto Industry Development and Export Policy (AIDEP 2021-26), Mobile Device Manufacturing Policy, interventions for promotion of Solar and Allied Equipment.

He also applauded EDB new initiatives for development of engineering sector including New Energy Vehicles (NEV) Policy, Indigenization of Agriculture Implements, and mainstream Petrochemical Policy and Promoting.

Additionally, he commended the EDB for preparing a comprehensive policy to promote local manufacturing and the early adoption of Electric Vehicles (EVs), including New Energy Vehicles (NEVs), in support of a sustainable transport system in Pakistan, energy efficiency, and the transition to clean technologies and environment in the country.



ISLAMABAD: Japanese Ambassador HE Wada called on the Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain in Islamabad.

### Chairman WAPDA reviews construction work on Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project

TARBELA (APP): Chairman WAPDA Engr Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd) on Tuesday visited under-construction 1530 MW-Tarbela 5th Extension and reviewed the progress on the project.

The Chairman had a detailed visit of the key sites, which include the Raised Intake, the Tunnel and the Power house, and witnessed construction work going on there, said a press release.

During the on-site

### PCCC, CEMB to collaborate on cotton research

MULTAN (APP): The Pakistan Central Cotton Committee (PCCC) and Centre of Excellence in Molecular Biology (CEMB) have agreed on a joint proposal to advance cotton research and development in Pakistan.

The initiative was agreed between Dr. Yusuf Zafar who represented PCCC, and Dr. Abdul Qayyum, on behalf of CEMB.

Under this proposal, the PCCC will supply valuable genetic material, while CEMB would contribute cutting-edge gene technology to support research. Together, both institutions aim to develop cotton varieties with higher yield potential that can withstand climate challenges. This initiative would surely modernize Pakistan's cotton sector, boosting economic resilience. Dr. Yousaf Zafar highlighted the partnership as a unique opportunity to transform the cotton industry and expressed hope that it would bring Pakistan's cotton standards

### New Service Center launched to enhance China-Pakistan cooperation in agriculture

BEIJING (INP): The Overseas Luban Workshop Agricultural Machinery Service Center, Pakistan was inaugurated at the International Conference Center in Changsha, Hunan.

It aims at enhancing agricultural capabilities in Pakistan and fostering greater cooperation between China and Pakistan in agricultural mechanization, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Tuesday.

The unveiling ceremony marked a collaboration between the China Agricultural Machinery Distribution Association (CAMDA), Tianjin Modern Vocational Technology College, Tianjin Tailai Import and Export Co., Ltd., Tianjin Agricultural Mechanization Technology Testing Service Center, and Wugu Media.

On the occasion, according to CEN Asif Shah, Honorary Consultant of the Pakistan Luban Workshop and Executive Board Member of the Punjab Agricultural Research Board,

### Rupee sheds 06 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Tuesday depreciated by 06 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.74 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.68. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.25 and Rs 278.75 respectively. The price of Euro increased by 27 paise to close at Rs 300.23 against the last day.

### Ch Shafay chairs SMEs Council meeting

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Industry and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain chaired the first meeting of the Provincial Council on SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) here Tuesday.

The meeting took several key decisions aimed at promoting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Managing Director of Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC) Saira Umar gave a detailed briefing on actions and strategies being taken to support SMEs.

During the meeting, it was decided to start a new loan scheme with easy terms for SMEs. This scheme, to be advanced in partnership with banks, will provide easy loans to promote solar energy in small industrial estates. Additionally, a new program aimed at enhancing business skills for women investors was approved. Under this program, with the support of the Asian Development Bank, Women Resource Centers will be established in Faisalabad.

## International News

### Israeli strike in northern Gaza kills at least 60, officials say, as Hezbollah announces new leader

DEIR AL-BALAH: An Israeli strike on a five-story building where displaced Palestinians were sheltering in the northern Gaza Strip killed at least 60 people early Tuesday, more than half of them women and children, Gaza's Health Ministry said.

In a separate development, Lebanon's militant group Hezbollah said it has chosen Sheikh Naim Kassem to succeed long-time leader Hassan Nasrallah, who was killed in an Israeli airstrike last month. Hezbollah vowed to continue with Nasrallah's policies "until victory is achieved."

Israel also faced backlash from aid groups after its parliament passed legislation that could severely restrict the ability of the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees to operate in the Palestinian territories. The agency, known as UNRWA, is the largest aid provider in Gaza. Israel has long accused it of militant ties, allegations denied by the agency.

A spokesperson for the U.N. children's agency said the decision "means that a new way has been found to kill children."

Hezbollah said in a statement that its decision-making Shura Council elected Kassem, who had been Nasrallah's deputy leader for over three de-

acades, as the new secretary-general.

Kassem, 71, a founding member of the militant group established following Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, had been serving as acting leader.

He has given several televised speeches vowing that Hezbollah will fight on despite a string of setbacks.

Hezbollah began firing rockets into Israel, drawing retaliation, after Hamas' surprise attack on Gaza on Oct. 7, 2023, triggered the war there. Iran, which backs both groups, has also directly traded fire with Israel, in April and then again this month.



Chinese President Xi Jinping attends the welcome ceremony for Finnish President Alexander Stubb at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China.

### Russia's air attacks kill four in Kharkiv, injure four in Kyiv, Ukraine says

Monitoring Desk KYIV: At least four people were killed and another four injured in Russia's multi-wave overnight attacks on Ukraine's two largest cities of Kharkiv and Kyiv, Ukrainian officials said on Tuesday.

Four people were killed in Kharkiv after midnight on Tuesday in Russia's bombardment of the city's Osnoviyskiy district, Mayor Ihor Terekhov said on his Telegram messaging channel.

That attack followed a Russian guided bomb attack on Kharkiv late on Monday that shattered much of the Derzhprom building, one of the most celebrated landmarks in the city, dating from the 1920s.

In Kyiv, falling debris from a destroyed Russian drone injured four people and set a residential building on fire, the mayor of the Ukrainian capital said.

### Hezbollah elects Naim Qassem to succeed slain head Nasrallah

Monitoring Desk BEIRUT: Lebanese armed group Hezbollah said on Tuesday it had elected deputy head Naim Qassem to succeed slain secretary general Hassan Nasrallah, who was killed in an Israeli air attack on Beirut's southern suburb over a month ago.

The group said in a written statement that its Shura Council had elected Qassem, 71, in accordance with its established mechanism for choosing a secretary general.

### Finland warns Xi of 'provocation' by North Korea in Ukraine war

Monitoring Desk BEIJING: Finnish President Alexander Stubb said he told China's President Xi Jinping that North Korean activities with Russia were an escalation and provocation in a message on behalf of NATO and the EU during talks in Beijing on Tuesday.

Stubb and Xi met as North Korea's foreign minister arrived in Russia, with Western military alliance NATO and South Korea warning that Pyongyang's troops could soon be entering the Ukraine war on Moscow's side.

The U.S. estimates 10,000 North Korean troops have been deployed in eastern Russia.

"My message to the president was that North Korean activity right now is in terms of arms exports. Especially in terms of sending troops to Russia, is escalation. Expansion and provocation. So we had a good discussion about this," Stubb told reporters.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has not denied the presence of North Korean troops, while Pyongyang has not commented. Stubb, who met various European leaders in recent weeks, said he delivered to Xi messages coordinated with Finland's allies in NATO and the EU.



A crowd gathers to watch as first responders work after a tram derailed and crashed into a building in the center of Oslo, Norway.

### US warns Iran at UN of 'severe consequences' in case of new attacks

Monitoring Desk UNITED NATIONS: The United States warned Iran at the United Nations Security Council on Monday of "severe consequences" if it undertakes any further aggressive acts against Israel or US personnel in the Middle East. "We will not hesitate to act in self-defense. Let there be no confusion. The United States does not want to see further escalation. We believe this should be the end of the direct exchange of fire between

### Ship with suspected toxic waste in Albania

Monitoring Desk DURRES: A ship carrying hundreds of tonnes of possibly toxic industrial waste returned to Albania's largest seaport of Durres on Monday, months after setting sail to dispose of the material in Thailand.

The Turkish-flagged Moliva container ship, believed to be carrying around a hundred containers filled with suspicious waste, was expected to be tested by Albanian authorities.

### Bangladesh immunity order sparks fears of justice denied

Monitoring Desk DHAKA: Hundreds died in the student-led revolution that toppled Bangladesh's autocratic leader Sheikh Hasina, but those implicated in the violent aftermath fear the new authorities' promise of justice will exclude them.

The family of 16-year-old Shahriar worried those who beat their son into a coma may never face trial.

### Firework explosion at temple in India's Kerala injures over 150

Monitoring Desk NEW DELHI: Indian police detained two people on Tuesday after a temple fireworks show erupted into a ferocious explosion, leaving almost a hundred people in hospital, eight in a critical condition. Hundreds were crowded around a Hindu temple at Nileschwaram in the southern state of Kerala on Monday evening to watch the fireworks, videos posted by Indian newspapers showed.

Then, from inside a building, a surge of crack-

### Israel votes to ban UN aid agency, Palestinians say 100,000 residents trapped

Monitoring Desk JERUSALEM: Israel's parliament passed a law on Monday to ban the UN relief agency UNRWA from operating inside the country, alarming some of Israel's Western allies who fear it will worsen the already dire humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Israeli officials cited the involvement of a handful of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees' thousands of staffers in the Oct. 7, 2023,



US Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris speaks during a campaign rally at Burns Park in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

### Harris to rally where Trump riled Capitol riot crowd

Monitoring Desk MICHIGAN: Kamala Harris will urge Americans to turn the page on Donald Trump as she delivers her closing election argument Tuesday on the spot where her rival rallied supporters before the January 6, 2021 US Capitol attack.

With polls in a dead heat exactly one week before Election Day, the Democratic vice president's campaign said she chose the symbolic site to push her case that the Republican former president is a threat to American democracy.

But Harris will also deliver an "optimistic and hopeful" message, a senior campaign official said, amid rumblings in the party that she is focusing too much on Trump and not enough on her own policies.

She will address some 20,000 people on the Ellipse, a park outside the White House where Trump delivered a fiery speech in which he ranted up his false claims that he won the 2020 election.

Trump supporters then marched on the Capitol to disrupt the certification of Joe Biden's victory, in an assault that left at least five people dead and 140 police officers injured.

# Ahsan Iqbal reaffirms govt's commitment to inclusive development for all Pakistani

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning and Development Prof. Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday reiterated the government's commitment to an inclusive development framework that integrates and empowers every citizen, regardless of physical or mental limitations.

Addressing the National Consultation on the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, the minister highlighted Pakistan's ongoing initiatives for disability inclusion, asserting that equitable progress must be at the core of the country's development strategy, said a news release.

The event was attended by a diverse audience of government officials, UN representatives and social sector stakeholders.

Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the critical role of human-centric policies in Pakistan's long-term growth plans. He said, "True development is centered on the empowerment of people, not merely the construction of infrastructure." Drawing attention to

the government's Vision 2025 strategy, Prof. Iqbal stressed that Pakistan's development journey prioritizes advancing its people, including those with disabilities, as a central objective. "The foundation of Vision 2025 was laid to ensure that human development drives our progress," he remarked, underscoring the importance of equal opportunities for all.

The minister outlined four essential pillars necessary for sustainable growth—peace, political stability, policy continuity, and progressive reforms.

For any development plan to be effective, these pillars must be in place," Prof. Iqbal said adding that Pakistan's Vision 2025, originally launched in 2013, aimed to integrate these principles.

However, he acknowledged that political instability has at times hindered Pakistan's progress, forcing the nation to restart its journey multiple times.

The Minister also highlighted several key government initiatives focused on improving accessibility and inclusion for people

with disabilities across Pakistan.

He referenced an impactful government project to distribute electric wheelchairs to students with disabilities in higher education institutions, initiated during his previous term as Planning Minister. "This program ensured that students with disabilities could independently access libraries, classrooms, and laboratories," he said.

Under the project, universities were mandated to install ramps and other accessibility features, enhancing campus environments to support all students' learning needs.

He said the resumption of the electric wheelchair distribution program during the recent term, which was previously interrupted, underscoring the government's dedication to providing a supportive infrastructure for students with disabilities.

"Witnessing the joy and confidence among students who could finally navigate their campuses independently was deeply rewarding," he said.



Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication, Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja witnessing MoU signing among Jazz, National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) and National Information Technology Board (NITB) in Islamabad.

# Shaza calls for adopting emerging technologies

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Tuesday underlined the urgent need to adopt emerging technologies to drive the country's progress, calling for joint efforts to uplift Pakistan.

She expressed these views during a signing ceremony of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) among Jazz, the National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST), and the National Information Technology Board (NITB).

Secretary IT, Zarrar Hasham Khan and Special Secretary IT Division,

Azfar Manzoor, were also present. Shaza Fatima highlighted the necessity for Pakistan to stay aligned with global advancements in technology.

She said that the collaboration between Jazz, NUST and NITB would not only foster innovation but also position Pakistan as a leader in AI, aligning the country's capabilities with international standards. "This initiative marks a significant step in leveraging technology for national development," she added.

Shaza Fatima stressed the importance of develop-

ing Pakistan's first Local Large Language Model (LLM) within a defined timeline. She also pointed out that academia-industry linkages could generate job opportunities for the youth, emphasizing the need to equip them with the latest digital skills.

Speaking at the event, Jazz CEO Aamir Ibrahim highlighted the critical role of Artificial Intelligence and big language models in shaping the country's future. "We are committed to building a local ecosystem that meets the needs of our communities," he said.

# Afghan envoy says: CPEC offers great opportunities for Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Mawlawi Sardar Ahmad Shakeeb, the Chargé d'Affaires of Afghanistan said that CPEC created many opportunities for the region which could benefit Afghanistan as well.

He was speaking at a seminar titled "Strengthening Economic Ties between Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia" organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) while emphasizing that Afghanistan will not allow its soil to be used by terrorist groups against Pakistan, a news release said.

Mawlawi Shakeeb also stated that Afghanistan's involvement in the Belt and Road Initiative would not only enhance investments in its infrastructure, but also bring the regional countries closer. "We believe that trilateral cooperation among Afghanistan, Pakistan, and China can usher in a new era of regional collaboration."

Termining Pakistan as

one of the leading trade partners of Afghanistan, he expressed Afghan interim administration's commitment to enhancement of trade and investment between the two countries. He acknowledged the recent challenges in trade and economic relations between the two countries but felt that Afghanistan was striving to revitalize the economic relations. Besides the security-related issues, Mawlawi Shakeeb highlighted the Western sanctions, frequent closures of crossing points, limited customs facilitation, sudden and unilateral increases in tariffs, and frequent checking of loaded vehicles as major obstacles to trade flows.

He underlined the need for the two countries to invest in trade infrastructure, streamline customs processes, strengthen trade facilities, develop transportation links, build mutual trust, and enhance diplomatic dialogues for achieving long-term trade benefits.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif departs for his two day official visit of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to represent Pakistan in Future Investment Initiative.

# Calls for adherence to fair practices, promotion of best standards

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: Wafaqi Mohtasib Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi said that Pakistan was among the few countries in the world which had a unique distinction of establishing a dedicated insurance ombudsman institution which offered a sound oversight mechanism for judicious protection of the interests of various stakeholders.

He was addressing an international webinar organized by the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA) in cooperation with the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat at Islamabad today.

Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi is the current President of the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA), which is a 47-member strong non-po-

litical, professional body of ombudsman institutions in the Asian region.

Addressing the participants Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi said, "The commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights is a corner stone of the country's Constitution. Pakistan has ratified several human rights instruments on the subject and is committed to achieving the collective aspirations of the internationally recognized human rights regime."

He referred to the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights as endorsed by the UN Human Rights Council and underlined the need to address the adverse human rights impact resulting from the business activities.

# NA Deputy Speaker refers four bills to concerned committees

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Deputy Speaker National Assembly Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah has referred four bills to the concerned committee including the Civil Servant Amendment Bill 2024 which was introduced by Sahibzada Sibghatullah and two other bills were introduced by Shaista Pevaz Malik (The Islamabad Healthcare Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2024) and (The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (Amendment) Bill, 2024).

Ms Shaista Pevaz proposed amendment to the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (Amendment) Bill to provide speedy justice to the people, besides tightening rules to allow the practice of physiotherapy to only qualified persons.

She quoted the ex-ample of the Islamabad murder case where Zahir Jaffer, a mentally ill physiotherapist murdered a girl Noor Muqaddam. The parents of Noor still were in search of justice.

# CDA board approves refund policy for overseas Pakistanis

ISLAMABAD (APP): Capital Development Authority (CDA) Board, on Tuesday approved a full refund of processing fees for overseas Pakistanis who had invested in the Nelore Heights Housing Project.

The CDA held its 15th board meeting chaired by Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa, where several crucial decisions were made. The meeting focused on supporting overseas Pakistanis, affected residents of Islamabad, and CDA staff members.

The Board decided that plots in Sector C-14 would be allocated through a balloting process, with priority given to overseas Pakistanis.

The CDA Board

also addressed long-standing concerns of Islamabad's affected residents by forming a seven-member committee to scrutinize their cases.

A third-party validation committee was approved to review the findings, ensuring fair rehabilitation benefits for the affected.

A committee comprising the Member Administration and the Deputy Commissioner of Islamabad was established to amend CDA's land acquisition regulations.

Additionally, the board directed the law wing to develop recommendations for the establishment and restoration of covered markets within the city.



ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi presides over important meetings at the Central Police Office.

# Effective policing, citizen support key to reducing crime; IG Islamabad

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi presided over important meetings at the Central Police Office, Islamabad, on Tuesday.

During the meetings, IGP Rizvi reviewed the performance of all officers and SHOs, instructing them to ensure effective patrolling within their precincts and to combat street crime and other criminal elements, a police spokesperson told on Tuesday.

Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi emphasized that each SHO should eradicate criminal elements in their area with the help of the public, and also ensure the arrest of land grabbers and criminals involved in serious offenses, enhance

security duties at important points, and expand the scope of patrolling.

The IGP further said that all police vehicles should be on patrol 24/7 within their respective areas. Patrolling should be made more effective and purposeful, and all beat officers should remain present in their beats and stay informed about local issues.

Ali Nasir Rizvi directed the investigation in-charges to form special raiding teams to ensure the arrest of criminal elements.

All SHOs were also directed to ensure their presence at police stations to address citizen grievances effectively, prioritizing complaint resolution at the station level.

# Naqvi flays terrorist attack on polio team in Orakzai

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday strongly condemned the terrorist attack on a polio team in Orakzai. He paid tribute to the bravery of two police personnel who were martyred while fighting the terrorists.

Mohsin Naqvi commended the police personnel for neutralizing three terrorists, stating that the martyred personnel courageously foiled the terrorists' nefarious plans. The interior minister emphasized that the martyred police personnel are national heroes, who sacrificed their lives while safeguarding the polio team.

# Bilal questions global silence on Palestinian genocide

ISLAMABAD (APP): Member of the National Assembly (MNA) and Member of Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), Bilal Azhar Kayani, on Tuesday questioned the silence of the international community regarding the ongoing genocide in Palestine.

Speaking at the 47th Annual Forum of Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), hosted by Pakistan, he voiced disappointment that international human rights organizations remain passive in the face of atrocities being committed by Israel against the innocent people of Palestine.

During a session titled "Effective Cooperation in

# IHC gives time to AG till Nov 2 in Intezar Panjottha recovery case

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has given time to Attorney General (AG) till November 2 in the case of recovery of Intezar Panjottha, focal person of PTI founder. AG said he would give good news here on Friday. The petition seeking recovery of Intezar Panjottha came up for hearing in IHC Tuesday. Chief Justice (CJ) IHC Aamer Farooq heard the petition. No progress could be made regarding recovery of Intezar Panjottha. AG Mansoor Awan said efforts are underway. Give me two days.



ISLAMABAD: Famous TV artist Leyla Zuberi telling story in a ceremony held at Model college for girls F11/3 organized by National book foundation.

# Russian delegation visits PNCA; admires art works

ISLAMABAD (APP): A distinguished Russian delegation during its visit to the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) on Tuesday expressed their admiration for the creativity and cultural depth embodied in the art works of Pakistani artists displayed at different galleries.

The delegation was led by Speaker of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation, Ms. Valentina Matvienko.

The delegation was warmly welcomed by Director Publications Research and Reference (PRR), Dr. Bilal Karim,

along with PNCA officers, including Designer Visual Arts Division (VAD), Saba Zia, who guided the delegation during a tour of the Council's galleries.

The delegation had the opportunity to experience a diverse array of Pakistani art, particularly showcasing impressive artwork of masters and modern masters.

During this visit, both sides engaged in meaningful discussions on shared interests and potential collaborations in arts and culture, further strengthening the cultural ties between Pakistan and Russia.

# Missing child reunited with his family

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police, Bhara Kahu police station team reunited a missing boy with his parents on Tuesday.

A public relations officer told APP that a citizen, Salim Khan, submitted a report at Bhara Kahu police station, stating that his son, Tariq Shah, had been missing from Biji Dan Kot Hathial, Bhara Kahu, and could not be traced despite hectic efforts by family members.

He said Upon receiving the application, the police team registered a case and immediately started the investigation.

# PCRWR organizes national youth contest on Water Challenges of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) in collaboration with the partner organizations including UNICEF, UNESCO, IWMI Pakistan, Islamic Relief, WaterAid, Muslim Hands and Riphah International University on Tuesday organized a national youth contest on "Water Challenges of Pakistan."

The event aimed at encouraging young minds of the country to engage with water-related challenges through creative posters, thought-provoking debates, and interactive water-themed UNESCO's board games, said a press release.

Debate competition, poster competition, essay

writing, documentary and water board games competitions were features of the event.

The debate competition featured 16 students from 08 schools, who passionately expressed their views on topics related to water conservation, wastewater management, climate change, and sustainable water management.

Their insightful arguments highlighted the critical role of youth in shaping solutions for Pakistan's water challenges.

The poster competition displayed the creativity of 62 students from 15 universities, with participants presenting innovative ideas on water related themes.

# IG Motorway awards cash prizes to officials for rescuing a family

ISLAMABAD (APP): Inspector General (IG) Motorway Police Salman Chaudhry honoured the officers of the National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) with cash prizes and certificates of appreciation for saving a family from a burning vehicle, in a ceremony held.

The IG praised the NHMP officer's dedication and encouraged them to continue serving with the same commitment, ensuring the safety and support of all travellers on national highways.

Earlier, the NHMP officials had saved a family from a burning car while risking their lives during an incident near M-1 Sial Mor on the motorway.

# Holistic regional dialogue critical for effective int'l law regime: Barrister Aqeel

ISLAMABAD (APP): Spokesperson of the federal government on legal affairs, Member National Assembly (MNA), Barrister Aqeel Malik on Tuesday emphasized upon the urgent need of a holistic regional dialogue for ensuring effective international law regime amid rapidly evolving global world order.

In his keynote address at the 45th Annual Forum of Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) hosted by Pakistan, the government's legal

advisor highlighted the need to bring moderation to the existing legal and judicial systems across the globe for ensuring impartial justice.

Barrister Aqeel Malik in his special remarks during the session title Future Opportunities for International Criminal Justice said that amid a multi-polar world the alleged accusation pertaining of biases and dual standards in the international legal systems were a matter of seri-

ous concern that developed a perception of selective enforcement of laws and prejudices among the developing nations facing conflicts, climate and humanitarian crises.

He added that the member countries to the Rome Statute and the International Criminal Court (ICC) should have to align their domestic laws as per the global legal framework, and mull over instruments to adapt the Rome Statute.



ISLAMABAD: CDA workers are busy cutting surplus grass to maintain green belt area vegetation.