

Independent

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Vol. XIV No. 264 Reg. mails-B / ID-445 Wednesday November 13, 2024, Jamaadi ul Awwal 10, 1446 A.H. Ph: 2158688, 2158997 Pages 4: Rs. 12



BAKU: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addressing the High-Level Climate Finance Roundtable hosted by Pakistan at COP-29 Climate Summit in Baku.

PCB tells ICC hybrid model not acceptable for Champions Trophy

LAHORE (INP) - Following government instructions, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has taken a firm stance on hosting the Champions Trophy in Pakistan. According to sources, the PCB, under government directives, has sent a letter to the International Cricket Council (ICC), informing them of the Pakistan government's strong position on the matter.

The letter also requested clarification from the ICC regarding India's refusal to travel to Pakistan, asking for solid reasons behind their stance.

The sources further revealed that the PCB had made it clear in the letter that the Champions Trophy would be held in Pakistan, and that the hybrid model (which involves splitting the tournament between multiple countries) would not be accepted. The PCB questioned why India was refusing to travel to Pakistan while other teams were willing. The letter also stated that the Champions Trophy could still be held without India, with another team invited to replace them if necessary.

According to sources, the government gave "policy guidelines to the PCB regarding India." They said that the PCB would involve the International Cricket Council (ICC) requesting the governing body to ask India to give concrete reasons for the refusal of the Board of Control of Cricket in India (BCCI) to play in Pakistan.

Sources said that the government has suggested the PCB that if the Indian team was not ready to play in Pakistan, it should consider inviting another team.

They said that the government urged the PCB "to make it clear to the Indian Cricket Board that the profit was not only due to India, but it was due to Pakistan."

The government told the PCB that if India did not come to Pakistan, the national team would not play against India in any ICC and Asian Cricket Council (ACC) tournament.

Inspector Moroccan Air Force calls on Naval Chief



ISLAMABAD (APP): Inspector of the Royal Moroccan Air Force, Major General Mohammed Gadhi, called on the Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf on Tuesday at Naval Headquarters.

During the meeting, professional matters of mutual interest including bilateral collaboration and regional maritime security, were discussed, said a news release issued by Directorate General Public Relations (Navy).

The Naval Chief expressed that Pakistan and Morocco enjoy cordial relations underpinned by mutual respect, growing economic ties, and cooperation at multilateral forums. Various avenues, including bilateral training and exchange of visits were also highlighted.

PTI leaders released following brief detention

RAWALPINDI (INP): Several top PTI leaders were taken into custody on Tuesday from outside the Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi for violating Section 144 but were released shortly afterwards after being issued a warning, police said.

Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure is a legal provision that empowers district administrations to prohibit an assembly of four or more people in an area for a limited period. It is usually imposed to prevent potential disturbances, maintain law and order, and curb any activities that might escalate into violence.

According to Punjab Police spokesperson, Sajjadul Hassan, "PTI workers were detained for violating Section 144 but were released after being issued a warning."

"The enforcement of the law will be ensured in any case," said the police spokesperson.

Police constable apprehended as key facilitator of deadly police lines blast : IGP



By M. Ilyas

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inspector General Akhtar Hayat Gandapur on Tuesday informed that police have arrested a serving police constable identified as the key facilitator of a deadly suicide blast in a Mosque that claimed lives of 80 police officials in Malik Saad Shaheed Police Lines here in January 2023. Addressing a press conference here, the police chief said the constable, Mohammad Wali, was apprehended a few days ago from Jamil Chowk here along with two suicide jackets. Surprisingly, he said the arrested prime facilitator of the police lines blast, a police constable, was also a member of a banned terror outfit. During interrogation, the accused confessed to bond links with banned Lashkar-e-Tehrik through social media platforms.

He said that following the deadly blast, police traced a suspected facilitator of the blast, named Imtiaz alias Tora Shpa, a resident of Afghanistan

from Bara tehsil of Khyber district who led the police to arrest the prime facilitator and provided crucial information.

The IGP said that the arrested accused had met with terrorists of Jamat ul Ahrar and Mohammad Khurasani in Afghanistan, adding that the suspect had been arrested by the Afghan forces as well but later seen off for Pakistan with an amount of Rs 20000.

On his way back to Pakistan, the accused was arrested by the Afghan forces, however on intervention of a Jamat ul Ahrar member, named Junaid, he was released to continue his journey for Pakistan.

The accused also maintained his contacts with other terrorists, providing them with critical information and a map of the Police Lines and other important places besides, informing them about the deadly suicide blast at police lines after it occurred.

Pakistan for redefining climate finance to enable developing countries meet NDC goals: PM

Shehbaz calls for \$6.8 trillion in climate funding for developing nations; Highlights Pakistan's recent experience with devastating floods, which have left country struggling to rebuild

BAKU (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday urged the world community for redefining the global climate finance to enable climate vulnerable developing countries to meet their NDC goals, half of which may take around US\$6.8 trillion by 2030.

The prime minister, addressing the high level climate finance roundtable on the sidelines of COP29 - international climate negotiations' multilateral forum held under the patronage of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) -, emphasized the urgent need to build momentum for reforming international financial architecture, "forging a path where no nation is left behind in the global response to climate change."

PM Shehbaz while

delivering the purpose of the roundtable briefed the participants that it was intended to foster new thinking on an old problem that was becoming complicated on all the international climate forums without yielding substantial results.

"We stand at a crucial threshold where global climate finance framework must be redefined to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable nations. Despite years of promises and repeated commitments, the gaps are growing in quantum leaps leading to egregious barriers in achieving objectives of UNFCCC. We all agree that financing resilience as well as ambition is the most urgent need of the hour," the prime minister said.

He said that the developing countries needed to

deliver to their masses on nationally-determined contributions (NDCs) that was why it was imperative to spur both ideas and discourse to make international climate finance more responsive, equitable and sufficient enough to address solutions at various scale enhancing effectiveness of climate finance.

Prime Minister Shehbaz underscored that the donor countries should fulfill their commitment to provide 0.7 per cent of their gross national income as developing assistance and capitalize existing climate funds.

"One such commitment is the \$100 billion annual climate finance pledge made over a decade ago at COP-15 is now reported by OECD to reach only \$160 billion. Despite this number remaining a tiny proportion of the defined need, a significant part over the financing is disbursed in the form of loans, further enhancing the debt burden on developing nations and potentially pushing towards mounting debt traps. 'I call it death traps,' the prime minister said."

Pakistan can understand the agony and pain of other vulnerable developing countries as it had faced two devastating floods and still recovering from the loss, he said, adding "In order to spur some transparency and coordination into the financial commitments made to the developing countries on climate transfers, Pakistan alongside many other developing countries call for stronger, more equitable climate finance mechanisms under the UNFCCC."

He suggested a mechanism be set up to measure

the unfulfilled pledges, fragmented at an incomplete landscape of climate funds to developing countries. "What I call INDCs whereby major historic emitters should account for climate finance commitments for both mitigation and adaptation pledges reflecting their proportionate responsibilities," he added.

Debt could not become acceptable new normal in climate financing which was why the world should focus on non-debt financing solutions enabling developing countries to fund climate initiatives without depositing an additional burden, he said.

In 2022, he said when one third of Pakistan was under water, the country had to re-purpose all its development and climate funds for just financing basic relief and humanitarian efforts.

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Finance minister briefs IMF team on economic headway

ISLAMABAD (INP): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) delegation Tuesday visited Pakistan's Ministry of Finance in Islamabad and received a briefing on the country's economic performance during the first quarter of the current fiscal year.

It reported in media that Finance Minister and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb warmly welcomed the IMF delegation led by Mission Chief Nathan Porter upon their arrival at the ministry.

During the meeting, Minister of State for Finance Ali Pervaiz Malik, the

Governor of the State Bank, the Chairman of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), and other senior finance ministry officials were also in attendance.

The Finance Minister briefed the IMF delegation on Pakistan's current economic situation and highlighted key developments from the first quarter.

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LAHORE: Federal Minister for Interior Moshin Naqvi in a meeting with President PML (Q) Chaudhary Shujaat Hussain at his residence.

17 die as passenger van plunges into river in Astore

ASTORE (INP): At least 17 people were killed after a passenger van fell into a river in Astore district of Gilgit-Baltistan.

According to rescue sources, the passenger van, filled with wedding guests travelling from Astore to Rawalpindi, lost control and plunged into the river. Seventeen people have been confirmed dead, while the search for the remaining passengers is ongoing.

Police and rescue teams reached the site and started the operation.

Shujaat demands naming roads after Quetta blast martyrs

LAHORE (INP): Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Moshin Naqvi on Tuesday called on Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain at his Gulberg residence in the capital.

PML-Q president condemned the Quetta railway station attack while demanding to name roads in Islamabad after the martyrs to which Naqvi agreed.

Both leaders expressed sympathy with the bereaved families of the martyrs who lost their lives in grisly Quetta blast.

"Pakistan has rendered unprecedented sacrifices in the war against terror. Thousands of people embraced martyrdom for which they will never be forgotten," said the PML-Q chief.

During the meeting, Naqvi vowed to eliminate terrorists from Pakistan's soil, adding that people of Pakistan would always remain indebted to the sacrifices given by its martyrs.

Shujaat also lauded Pakistan Cricket Team's performance in Australia where it won the series by 2-1 against the hosts.

PTI founder booked in 54 cases in Punjab, LHC told

LAHORE (INP): The Punjab government has provided the High Court with information regarding the FIRs registered against the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in different districts of province. Farrukh Lodhi, a lawyer for the Punjab government, presented the report in the Lahore high court.

The report indicates that a total of 54 FIRs are registered against PTI founder Imran Khan across various districts in Punjab.

The breakdown of cases against the former prime minister include 21 cases in Lahore, 19 in Rawalpindi, seven in Sheikhupura, five in Faisalabad, and one in Gujranwala.

Earlier on November 8, an anti-terrorism court (AIC) in Lahore granted bail to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan in four May 9 cases.

Tarar calls on Country Representative UNODC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Azam Nazeer Tarar met with Troels Vester, the Country Representative for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Pakistan to discuss expanded collaboration on justice reforms and emerging areas such as environmental crimes.

Both the parties' shared commitment to advancing legal and environmental initiatives in Pakistan. A key focus of the discussion was the Case Assignment and Management System (CAMS), a collaborative project between the Ministry of Law and Justice and UNODC.

CAMS aims to transition case management from traditional methods to a digital system, enhancing real-time case tracking and improving the efficiency and performance of legal professionals.

To date, the Ministry has completed training for

six batches of focal persons across federal ministries. CAMS is currently undergoing testing and a security audit by the National Telecommunication and Information Security Board (NTISB). UNODC has provided critical infrastructure support, including servers and computers, and remains actively involved in addressing technical issues.

In addition to CAMS, Mr. Vester identified potential new areas for collaboration, including climate change and environmental crime prevention. Mr. Tarar highlighted the importance of strengthening the capacity of prosecutors and welcomed UNODC's support in this area. Mr. Vester proposed a joint initiative to identify factors contributing to low conviction rates in Pakistan and explore models for improvement. The Minister also briefed Mr. Vester on recent amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code.

India should visit Pakistan for Champions Trophy: Nawaz

LONDON (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif said Indian team should visit Pakistan to participate in the upcoming Champions Trophy 2025.

The former prime minister was talking to media outside his residence in London along with his daughter Maryam Nawaz, Punjab Chief Minister.

He stressed on amicable relations with all the neighbouring countries.

The statement comes as India has officially informed the International Cricket Council (ICC) that its team will not travel to Pakistan to participate in tournament, which is scheduled to be played at three venues in Pakistan from February to March 9.



BAKU: Secretary General United Nations Antonio Guterres and President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev received Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif upon his arrival at the inaugural session of COP-29 Climate Action Summit in Baku.

PM interacts with world leaders at COP29 summit; bilateral ties, climate change discussed

BAKU (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday interacted with the global leaders as they gathered here to participate in the opening plenary "World Leaders' Climate Action Summit" of the 29th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29).

President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warmly received the prime minister as he arrived at the summit venue, according to a PM Office press release.

As the participating leaders gathered for a family photo, Prime Minister Shehbaz held an informal interaction with them and exchanged pleasantries besides discussing matters of mutual interest.

He interacted with UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and discussed matters of mutual interest including bilateral cooperation

in the climate change field.

During interaction with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Turkish First Lady Emine Erdogan, the two sides discussed ways to cooperate in highlighting the issues of climate change and environmental pollution at the international level.

In their informal interaction, PM Shehbaz and UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer exchanged views on the promotion of Pak-UK relationship.

He also met Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon and discussed protection of glaciers and water resources in Pakistan and Central Asia as well as the strengthening connectivity with both the countries.

Prime Minister Shehbaz also interacted with President of Nepal Ram Chandra Poudel and Chief Advisor of Bangladesh



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, chaired the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) at the Finance Division.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

System failure

The experiments continue apace, with nary a worry for their consequences. Internet users countrywide experienced yet another disruption in their digital lives this past Sunday when an “issue with the system” rendered not only various VPN services but also popular platforms useless or inaccessible for a period of five hours or so. This time, the problems faced by internet users were not specific: some said they could not use VPNs at all, some said they could use them on mobile data, some said they were only working on broadband, while others still said they faced no issue. At the same time, various websites, social media platforms, internet service providers and even bank payment systems were also seemingly affected by the breakdown.

As usual, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority decided it would say nothing about what was going on, leaving the people speculating about what fresh changes it was making to the internet communications infrastructure. Clearly, the authorities have yet to come to terms with how rapidly Pakistan is adapting to the digital age. From the bustling metropolises to rural backwaters, smartphones have connected Pakistanis of all shades to the modern world like never before and created unprecedented economic opportunities both for the country and for those within it in the process.

However, it often appears as if the relevant institutions still see the right to internet connectivity as an essential means of communication as a privilege. They often treat it with the same disdain as they do civil and political rights. They seem to believe that all digital activity should be managed with an “on/off switch”, with which the voices of millions of users can be silenced on a whim. And because few dare to question such ideas or ask for accountability, their actions continue to cause immeasurable economic damage.

Just a few months ago, a popular freelancing platform had temporarily flagged Pakistani gig workers as “unavailable” because of their inability to ensure uninterrupted accessibility to their clients. Many industry leaders and commerce bodies also warned that continuous experimentation with the country’s communications infrastructure would discourage foreign investors from setting up shop in Pakistan or outsourcing their business to local service providers.

It seems that those warnings fell on deaf ears. It is also not only those who export their services who are being affected. Local e-commerce, which has mushroomed in recent years, has faced severe disturbances due to our authorities’ inability to resist tinkering with the internet, and many businesses stand to lose serious money if the situation does not improve soon. Given the already decrepit state of our economy, this should be unacceptable to policymakers — more so since Pakistan plans to leverage its digital economy to boost overall growth.

Power discipline

Ammar Qaseem

Electricity demand in the national grid plummeted by 17 per cent in August this year, compared to the same period last year. It is common to attribute the blame to unforeseen circumstances or incorrect forecasting, as is evident in the recent memoirs of former civil servant Salman Faruqi, who attributed the induction of a large number of IPPs in the national grid to incorrect projections of electricity demand by the government in the 1990s. While his account may carry weight, it is high time the government realised that the plummeting demand for electricity is not independent of its own behaviour.

Flawed planning, coupled with erratic policies, has alienated consumers and investors alike, and the recent rise in rooftop net metering is an example of the public’s growing distrust in the government’s ability to provide reliable energy. This comes at a time when the government is planning to add 19.8 GW of additional generation capacity in the grid within the next decade. Without careful reassessment, Pakistan risks burdening itself with unnecessary electricity projects that could impose unsustainable costs for generations to come, a mistake that we have continued to make in the past and are in the process of making yet again.

The government’s planning of generation capacity expansion continues to face credibility challenges despite being regularly conducted within an established regulatory framework. The Integrated Generation Capacity Expansion Plan is a comprehensive document prepared annually by the National Transmission and Dispatch Company as per

the Grid Code, 2022, and approved by the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra). The IGCEP plays a crucial role in the power sector, outlining the specific power plants that will be constructed under least-cost criteria in the next 10 years. The plan notably limits the share of wind and solar technologies to 13 per cent of the total capacity by 2034, in stark violation of the Alternative and Renewable Energy policy, 2019, in which a target of 30pc wind and solar capacity by 2030 was set by the government.

A critical evaluation carried out by Renewables First and the Policy Research Institute for Equitable Development has further shown that nearly \$10 billion can be saved in total system costs if projects that are deemed committed beyond 2027 in the latest IGCEP are re-evaluated on merit. At the same time, this re-evaluation would allow for a higher share of wind and solar technologies in the national grid — as high as 20pc (10 GW) of the total capacity by 2034 in medium-growth scenarios. Committed projects are plants that have not been built or have not entered commercial operation to date, yet their feasibility is not evaluated by the IGCEP, and they bypass the least-cost criteria under the pretext of their advanced status.

It is also important to note that the net metering quantum continues to increase in the national grid and has already crossed 2 GW. If this trend continues, no further capacity additions would be necessary in the national grid. Measures must be taken to improve electricity demand, including incentives for shifting captive load to the grid, augmentation and

rehabilitation of the transmission system, and promotion of electric vehicle-friendly policies which can massively increase electricity off-take from the grid. It is also important to give up on mega-scale projects such as Diamer Bhasha and Chashma-5, which are neither needed in the grid, nor fulfil the least-cost criteria.

While it is important to set clear plans, it is also necessary to implement them. Each year, the IGCEP lays down some quantum of wind and solar to be added to the national grid. However, the government has failed to procure a single project of re-newable technology through competitive bidding in the past five years. The attempt — twice — to procure 600 MW of solar technology under the fast-track framework failed spectacularly as it did not receive a single bid from investors. This was not hard to foresee, and the government had been warned by experts but their advice went unheeded.

On the contrary, recent auctions by K-Electric received winning bids of four cents and 3.1 cents per unit for solar and hybrid projects, the lowest in our history, and a clear sign that investors would rather do business with the private sector than the government. Perhaps this is also an indication of the sector’s readiness to be opened for competitive bilateral trade of electricity, as envisioned under the Co-mpetitive Trading Bilateral Contracts Market, formally approved by Nepra in 2020 but still awaiting operationalisation. Will the policymakers act in a timely and prudent manner? One certainly hopes so. — Courtesy Dawn

Economic pipe dream

Dr Niaz Murtaza

Regime gurus claim to have put us on the path of progress — except that all past regimes falsely claimed this too. Progress includes not only economic stability and durable growth but also equity and sustainability. Each earlier trait is necessary but not sufficient to produce the latter ones.

So far, we have only regained economic stability after the 2022 crisis, with falling inflation and interest rates, a stable rupee and higher dollar reserves. But past rulers, too, gave us stability after crises — the PPP after 2008, following the crisis under the PML-Q; the PML-N after 2013, following the crisis under the PPP; the PTI after 2018, following the crisis under the PML-N; and now the PML-N after 2022, following the crisis under the PTI. Each inherited and bequeathed a crisis. But no party produced durable growth. So, the PML-N may fail again.

These crises are a result of the flawed ways in which we have pursued growth. China and India’s growth came by upping investment and productivity via reforms. China’s investment-GDP ratio is 40 per cent, while India’s is 30pc. Our highest level under the PML-Q, PML-N and PTI was 18pc, 17pc and 15pc. Our productivity is low too, as we shun reforms. We achieve growth via high external and fiscal deficits and money supply growth. But the first shrinks reserves while the next two generate inflation to cause crises and end growth. We must not be fooled by the high growth but check the investment and twin deficit ratios to see if growth is durable.

Attaining economic stability after a

crisis is easy. Under IMF-led reforms, it can be achieved largely via administrative fiat in a few months. The State Bank chief can up interest rates and devalue the rupee by ending its dollar sales. The finance guru can cut development outlays, up import tariffs and borrow from the Gulf and China. These can shrink the deficits to contain the crisis, but they also cut growth badly. But it took the PML-N much longer to do so due to Ishaq Dar’s policies. The PML-N also put the burden of crisis on the poor, while shielding the rich from taxes. Even our new-found stability is at risk as the expected early arrival of the IMF team shows.

To now achieve durable growth, the PML-N has to usher in huge reforms in sick state units, the energy sector, subsidies, tax and tariff structures, and the bureaucracy to increase investment, productivity, sectoral growth and exports. But all our major parties shun reforms as they harm the elites. The second step is the most critical but even harder — to develop a creative vision for a pro-poor economy and upgrade exports via a deep study of niches in the global economy and allow dynamic entrepreneurs to enter them. But none of our political parties think this way. Most think that after stability, our market will achieve such growth itself. However, our market is as stagnant as our state. Many ills, for example, sleaze, originate in the market whose elites capture the state for their own good. The 2022 political change led to key exits at the Planning Commission to end a solo effort there on crafting such an export strategy.

The new IMF deal, with its usual neoliberal bent, covers such reforms, but patchily and without a new economic vision. Such external reform pressure must come proactively before a crisis, when its seeds are laid via high twin deficits etc, to pre-empt the high cost of the crisis. So, the PML-N itself must develop a strong reform, growth, equity and sustainability agenda. However, strong outcomes stem from strong strategies which come from a strong team. One look at the anaemic, politically appointed, economic and social sector teams at the centre and in the provinces shows that durable growth cannot be achieved, let alone equity or sustainability, without merit.

So far, the government has failed to carry out even basic reforms in FBR, the energy sector and state units, as the PIA sale fiasco shows. That was the failure of not only the state but also our market and of the ‘privatisation only’ neoliberal mantra that ignores better restructuring options: management transfer, independent boards, or staff-owned companies. Its investment pursuit via the controversial SIFC reflects a faulty triple focus: foreign flows but not local ones, even for non-dollar earning sectors; politicised flows from big states but not reform-induced private flows; and low-end sectors such as mining and corporate farming that cause social problems. Thus, its efforts will either give precarious economic stability sans growth, like PPP during 2008-13, or high growth that causes another economic crisis. But sustainable and equitable growth will again remain elusive pipe dreams. — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Pakistan, Finland seek stronger trade ties, explore new sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Finland are moving toward a new chapter in economic relations following a productive meeting between Pakistan’s Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, and Finland’s Ambassador to Pakistan, Hannu Ripatti.

The ambassador met with Jam Kamal Khan at the Commerce Ministry to discuss strategies for expanding trade ties and exploring untapped areas for collaboration, said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

Minister Jam

welcomed Ambassador Ripatti and reaffirmed the Pakistani government’s commitment to strengthening economic ties with Finland. “I believe in deep coordination with our counterparts to enhance trade relations,” Jam stated, emphasizing the importance of identifying dormant sectors and activating them for economic benefit.

The minister highlighted his vision of tapping into untapped resources and expanding into areas such as education, information

technology, textile, health, construction, and social development. There is a possibility of a government-level delegation from Finland visiting Pakistan, which could mark a milestone for both countries, with expectations to solidify agreements and increase investment opportunities, he added.

One of the key initiatives discussed during the meeting was Pakistan’s establishment of the National Compliance Council (NCC), which seeks to ensure that local products meet

international standards. Minister Jam Kamal explained that the NCC will work with provincial and federal bodies to “sensitize” them on the importance of compliance, positioning Pakistani exports to be competitive in international markets. “The NCC will play a crucial role in aligning our products with global quality standards,” Jam added.

Finland’s presence in Pakistan’s business landscape has already proven fruitful, with companies such as Nokia, Kone,



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb holding a meeting with Nicolas Gale, Ambassador of France to Pakistan, at the Finance Division in Islamabad. The meeting was also attended by the Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, Ali Pervaiz Malik and Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Rashid Mahmood Langrial.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui while addressing the inaugural ceremony of the PIFD Karachi chapter.

Pakistanis turning to harvest opportunities in homeland: FCCI President

FAISALABAD (APP): Pakistanis migrated abroad decades ago are now returning to harvest the opportunities available in the homeland, said Rehan Naseem Bharara, President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI).

Addressing a 9-member Irish trade delegation at the FCCI, he said that it is the third largest chamber of Pakistan representing the business community of the metropolises.

number of industrial units have increased to 7,000 with diversification in various sectors of the economy.

He said that Faisalabad has one of the largest chemical plants while its pharmaceutical sector was also making phenomenal growth. “With the help of foreign and domestic investment, we could introduce latest technologies to further improve the quality of different units.

We need sustainable and environment-friendly technologies to exploit the full potential of livestock, processing and other segments of the economy.”

FTO appoints LCCI President Mian Abuzar as Advisor

LAHORE (APP): Federal Tax Ombudsman has appointed President of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry as Advisor to the Federal Tax Ombudsman. This appointment recognizes his outstanding contributions to the business community and his continuous efforts to address their concerns.

Expressing his gratitude for the confidence placed in him, Mian Abuzar Shad said, “I am honored by the trust the Federal Tax Ombudsman has shown in me. I will prioritize resolving the tax-related issues of the business community.” The announcement has been warmly welcomed by business circles who regard Mian Abuzar Shad as a key advocate for their interests. They said that his leadership and commitment to the business sector have earned him recognition as a strong voice for the community. Industry leaders believe that Mian Abuzar Shad’s vast experience and dedication will be instrumental in addressing the longstanding challenges within the tax system. They are confident that his involvement will help simplify the tax processes.

Ambassador Linulf says: Danish Embassy, SDPI Carbon Markets Project to bridge knowledge gaps

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and the Embassy of Denmark in Pakistan, together launched the second phase of the knowledge partnership initiative titled “Unlocking the Potential of Carbon Markets in Pakistan.”

The launch of project was announced at reception of high-level delegates, diplomats, and

policy makers of Pakistan, said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

Speaking at the inception, Ambassador of Denmark, Jakob Linulf said, “This partnership has not only bridged knowledge gaps but has also fostered collaboration between federal and provincial governments, setting a solid foundation for a sustainable carbon market framework in Pakistan.”

Promotion of trade activities vital to uplift economy: SCCI

SARGODHA (APP): Sargodha Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) President Khawaja Yasir Qayyum on Tuesday stressed the need for further reforms in trade policies to support the growth of local industries and remove obstacles faced by the business community. Talking to APP, he also emphasised the importance of addressing the lack of banking channels with countries

like Iran to facilitate smooth and more viable trade processes. He also called for the inclusion of local industries in the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS), as the absence of industrial development was leading to increased unemployment and social issues among the youth. Regional trade, transit trade, land trade corridors, border markets, and the promotion of barter trade were essential, he observed.

Dr. Khalid underscores role of creative education in driving economic growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui Tuesday underscored the role of creative education in driving economic growth and societal transformation. He was addressing the inaugural ceremony of the Karachi Chapter of Pakistan Institute of Fashion and Design (PIFD) at the historic Mohatta Palace Museum. The minister highlighted the importance

of trade, fashion, and design for Pakistan’s future. This milestone event celebrated PIFD’s expansion into Karachi, with a mission to promote education in fashion and design for a brighter future, said a news release received from Karachi.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice Chancellor, Prof. Hina Tayyaba Khalil emphasized PIFD’s role in cultivating design talent and contributing to the nation’s cultural and economic landscape.

Dr. Maqbool Siddiqui’s commitment to advancing skill development through education was a central theme, and his efforts were pivotal in establishing the PIFD Karachi Chapter. The establishment of PIFD Karachi Chapter was made possible through the dedicated efforts of Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, Federal Secretary, Education and Professional Training, whose vision has been critical to this initiative.

Gold prices decrease by Rs.7,000 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of 24 karat per tola gold decreased by Rs.7,000 and was sold at Rs.270,500 on Tuesday against its sale at Rs.277,500, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also came down by Rs.6,000 to Rs.231,911 from Rs.237,911 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold decreased to Rs.212,584 from Rs.218,085.

Women have vital role in economy: Qurratul Ain

LAHORE (APP): Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Acting President Qurratul Ain said on Tuesday that women’s role in Pakistan’s economy is vital, and their day and night work should prove more helpful in the country’s development.

FPCCI has consistently recognized women’s role and has provided numerous

opportunities for women entrepreneurs, she said and added that the FPCCI has taken various initiatives to facilitate women’s economic independence and entrepreneurship.

She expressed these views here at a special meeting with the newly elected presidents of all Women Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Punjab.

Punjab Governor says: Smog is a big problem needs to be addressed on war footing basis

LAHORE (Online): A delegation of PPP members of parliament and Mohmand Agency Loya Jirga met with the Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan here today at Governor House Lahore. The deteriorating smog situation in the province was discussed in the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion, Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that there is a need to solve the basic problems faced by the people and take practical steps to address the current smog situation.

He said that smog is a big problem that needs to be addressed on war footing basis. Governor Punjab said that due to smog, business and life have been paralyzed and the people are suffering from

diseases. In these circumstances, the people cannot be left at the mercy of smog. He said that the Punjab government is nowhere to be seen at this time. Governor Punjab said that the Punjab government should realize the seriousness of the situation and ensure practical steps to resolve it.

Governor Punjab said that democracy was vital to the strengthening of institutions to bring stability in the country. He said that the success of coalition government is essential for the development and prosperity of the country. Punjab Governor further said that he was determined to fulfill his constitutional responsibilities for the betterment of the

province.

On this occasion, the Mohmand Loya Jirga delegation apprised the Punjab Governor of various problems faced by them.

The delegation told the Punjab Governor that they are facing difficulties in obtaining identity cards and passports. Punjab Governor assured the delegation to resolve the problems by talking to the NADRA Chairman and other officials.

The PPP members of parliament included MNA Samina Khalid Ghurki, former MNA Chaudhry Manzoor Ahmed, MPA Qazi Ahmed Saad, senior PPP leaders Aurangzeb Burki, Azizur Rehman Chan and others, while the Mohmand Loya Jirga delegation included Haji Sanobar Khan.



LAHORE: A delegation of PPP members of parliament and Mohmand Agency Loya Jirga in a group photo with the Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

CM Punjab sets Dec 31 deadline for revamping 1,236 health centers

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said that the record revamping of health centers across the province is nearing completion.

In her statement on Tuesday, she revealed that the project to upgrade and rehabilitate 1,236 health centers in Punjab is progressing rapidly. "Dilapidated health centers will be transformed into makeshift clinics to ensure access to healthcare," she said. CM Maryam Nawaz set a deadline of December 31 for the completion of the project, underscoring her commitment to providing the best medical facilities to the people of Punjab.

The CM highlighted that the revamping project includes 286 health centers in Central Punjab, 363 in the North Zone, and 587 in South Punjab. She further shared that 20 percent of health centers in Central Punjab, 28 percent in the North Zone, and over 25 percent in South Punjab have already been completed.

"The transformation of 1,219 health centers into family clinics is progressing rapidly," she added, noting that plastering of 772 units, flooring of 384 units, and finishing work on 74 units are currently underway. "Teams of C&W Punjab are working diligently to ensure the timely completion of the project."



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora presenting shield to Ambassador of Netherlands.

Bilal Yaseen visits Wasa, reviews digital systems

LAHORE (APP): Minister for Housing and Urban Development Bilal Yaseen paid a visit to the Water and Sanitation Agency (Wasa) Headquarters on Tuesday and reviewed digital system and solarization.

The minister was welcomed by Vice Chairman Chaudhry Shahbaz and Managing Director Ghufraan Ahmed.

During his visit, the minister was given a detailed briefing on the agency's various departments, performance and ongoing projects.

MD Ghufraan Ahmed briefed the minister on several innovative systems being implemented at the Wasa, including the Digital Complaint Management System, Rainwater Board, and the SCADA system, aimed at improving efficiency and service delivery. Discussions also

focused on the Revenue Dashboard, IT reforms, and revenue collection initiatives. Minister Bilal Yaseen expressed his appreciation for the IT reforms and the underground water tank projects, which, he described, as revolutionary steps towards improving public convenience. He emphasized the need for the timely completion of all development projects under the Wasa to ensure better facilities for the public. He underscored the importance of fully digitizing all revenue systems to enhance transparency and operational efficiency. Bilal Yaseen also signaled an immediate push for the implementation of solarization projects as part of efforts to reduce electricity bills and promote cost-saving measures.

Motorway Police SI dies on Hazara Expressway

PESHAWAR (APP): Sub-inspector of motorway police died and a constable was critically injured when a pickup van hit them on Hazara Expressway on Tuesday.

A motorway police spokesman said the unfortunate incident occurred near the Chinar Kot area on Hazara Expressway, where the motorway police sub-inspector, Shabbir Ahmad, and constable were hit by a van when they were providing assistance to a stalled vehicle.

Both the police officials were shifted to DHQ Hospital Battagram, from where the sub-inspector was referred to AMC Hospital Abbottabad.

Sub-inspector succumbed to his injuries at AMC Hospital.

LHC wraps up petition filed against allowing security agencies to record phone calls

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) while declaring unnecessary the miscellaneous petition filed against granting permission to security agencies to record phone calls of citizens has wrapped up the plea.

Chief Justice (CJ) LHC Aalia Neelum took up petition filed by Judicial activism panel and others for hearing Tuesday.

Assistant Attorney General Rafaqat Dogar appeared on behalf of the

government.

Challenging July 8 notification the petitioners took plea in the petitions that recording calls of citizens runs contrary to the constitution. It is requested to court to declare notification on phone calls tapping null and void.

The CJ while declaring the petition unnecessary and wrapping it up remarked Justice Farooq Haider has been nominated for hearing such cases.

Entry of buses, vans banned on BRT route in Peshawar

PESHAWAR (APP): The district administration has banned the entry of buses and vans onto the BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) route to address traffic-related issues.

The decision was made during a meeting attended by the Deputy Commissioner and other officials from relevant departments to discuss traffic congestion and problems related to rickshaws and loaders in the city. The committee extensively discussed measures to tackle Peshawar's traffic issues and decided to prohibit buses and vans from entering the BRT route.

SCO expands IT infrastructure in AJK: Lt. Col. Adeel

MIRPUR (APP): The Special Communications Organization (SCO) is rapidly expanding its information technology infrastructure in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) particularly in the Mirpur division, on Tuesday.

According to Lt. Col. Adeel Malik, the SCO's Mirpur Division Commanding Officer, the initiative aims to improve public services and boost economic growth through digital transition.

The SCO is establishing numerous software technology parks and freelancing hubs across the region, providing training and employment opportunities for young people.

Currently, around 50 such centers are operational in AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Further expansion is planned with new facilities slated for completion this year in Bhimbar, Khairwal and Mirpur city, he said.

54 cases registered against Imran, detailed report filed in LHC

LAHORE (Online): Detailed report in respect of cases registered against PTI founder Imran Khan has been filed in Lahore High Court (LHC).

State counsel Farrukh Lodhi filed the report of cases registered against Imran Khan in the court.

According to report overall 54 cases are registered against Imran Khan in Punjab.

NAB gives clean chit to Sheikh Afzal, Hamesh in BoP fraud case after 17yrs

LAHORE (APP): The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Tuesday cleared former Bank of Punjab (BoP) president Hamesh Khan and CEO of Harris Steel Industries Sheikh Muhammad Afzal in the BoP fraud case after 17 years, citing a lack of evidence.

A NAB prosecutor filed an application before Accountability Court Judge Zubair Shahzad Kiyani for the withdrawal of the reference during the proceedings, stating that a recent review revealed no

substantial evidence of corruption against the accused.

He further submitted that the NAB chairman had instructed the withdrawal of the case against the accused.

However, the BoP counsel opposed the withdrawal, arguing that the accused had opened numerous fake accounts and committed fraud.

Sheikh Afzal's lawyer, Muhammad Umar Qureshi, urged the court to officially discharge his client from the case.

International News

COP29 host Azerbaijan hits out at West in defence of oil and gas industry

Monitoring Desk
BAKU: The president of Azerbaijan, host of this year's UN climate summit, lashed out at Western critics of his country's oil and gas industry on Tuesday. Speaking in his keynote address at the COP29 climate summit, where nearly 200 nations are negotiating global action on climate change, President Ilham Aliyev described his country as a victim of a "well-orchestrated campaign of slander and blackmail."

Within moments, UN Secretary General took the stage to say that doubling down on fossil fuels was an absurd strategy. The opposing views underscored the challenge at the heart of the climate negotiations: while

nations are urged to shift to green energy sources, many including wealthy Western nations continue to rely on fossil fuels.

Azerbaijan says oil and gas are falling as a share of its economy as it diversifies into other sectors.

"As a president of COP29 of course, we will be strong advocate for green transition, and we are doing it. But at the same time, we must be realistic," said Aliyev, who has labelled his country's oil and gas resources a "gift from god."

"Countries should not be blamed for having them, and should not be blamed for bringing these resources to the market, because the market needs them. The people need them."

He singled out the United States, the world's largest historic carbon emitter, and the European Union for particular criticism.

"Unfortunately, double standards, a habit to lecture other countries, and political hypocrisy became kind of modus operandi for some politicians, state-controlled NGOs and fake news media in some Western countries," he said.

The United States is the world's largest oil and gas producer. European countries, meanwhile, have some of the world's strictest targets to cut emissions by 2030 - but have also raced to secure new gas supplies following Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine.



United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and other leaders pose for a family photo at the United Nations climate change conference, known as COP29, in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Hit-and-run attack in southern China's Zhuhai kills 35, injures 43

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: A hit-and-run attack at a sports centre in the southern Chinese city of Zhuhai killed 35 people and severely injured 43, local police said on Tuesday.

The incident happened at 7:48pm (1148 GMT) on Monday, when a small off-road vehicle was driven into a large group of people exercising outside the sports centre.

Zhuhai police said in a statement that the suspect, a 62-year-old man surnamed Fan, was being treated at a hospital after

hurting himself with a knife in his car.

A Reuters reporter at the scene on Tuesday evening said people had begun leaving wreaths, counting 18 laid in front of a sign for the Zhuhai People's Fitness Square. Others lit candles and incense. The police presence was low.

A video, verified by Reuters, of the scene on Monday following the attack had shown at least 20 people lying on the ground. Cries of "terrorist" could be heard as ambulances arrived to take the injured to hospital.

New Israel FM says Palestinian state not 'realistic'

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar on Monday (Nov 11) rejected the establishment of a Palestinian state as a "realistic" goal, after Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas reiterated his commitment to a "sovereign" country.

"I don't think this position is realistic today and we must be realistic," the newly appointed minister said in response to a question about the creation of a Palestinian state in exchange for a normalisation of ties between Israel and Arab countries.

Russia and China must counter any US attempt at containment, Shoigu says

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: The key task for Russia and China is to counter any attempt by the United States to contain their countries, an ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin told China's foreign minister on Tuesday.

US President-elect Donald Trump has threatened to impose steep tariffs on China and other countries, raising fears of

a trade war and the United States casts China as its biggest competitor and Russia as its biggest nation-state threat.

China's Xi Jinping and Putin in May pledged a "new era" of partnership between the two most powerful rivals of the United States, which they cast as an aggressive Cold War hegemon sowing chaos across the world.

Afghan Taliban eye aid at their first UN climate talks

Monitoring Desk
BAKU: The first Afghan official to attend UN climate talks since the Taliban came to power has said that his country hopes to benefit from a global finance deal under negotiation at COP29 in Baku. Heading a three-person team, former Taliban negotiator Matiul Haq Khalis stood out in the bustling halls of the conference in Azerbaijan's capital where delegates from nearly 200 countries began two weeks of talks, on Monday.

Israeli strikes kill 37 as attacks intensify in central and southern Gaza, medics say

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: An Israeli airstrike killed seven people late Monday at a café near the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, Palestinian medics said, bringing the death toll from Israeli strikes at least 37.

In central Gaza, Israeli forces earlier on Monday sent tanks into the Nuseirat camp from the west, sparking panic among residents and displaced families as advancing tanks opened fire.

Twenty people were killed by air and ground strikes in Nuseirat, one of the Gaza Strip's eight historic refugee sites, overnight and into Monday, including some in a tent encampment, health officials at Al-Awda Hospital in Nuseirat said.

Resident Zaik Mohammad said the tank incursion caught residents

by surprise.

"Some people couldn't leave and remained trapped inside their homes, appealing to be allowed out, while others rushed out with whatever they could carry as they fled," Mohammad, 25, who lives one kilometre (half mile) away from the targeted area, told Reuters via a chat app.

There was no Israeli comment on Monday's violence. With the war in Gaza now in its 14th month, Israel is focusing its operations in the north and centre of the enclave in what it says is a campaign to stop Hamas from waging attacks and regrouping.

Tens of thousands of Palestinian residents have been told to evacuate the areas, fueling fears that they may never be allowed to return.

Climate crisis worsening already 'hellish' refugee situation: UN

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: Climate change is contributing to record numbers of people being uprooted from their homes globally, while worsening the often already "hellish" conditions of displacement, the United Nations said on Tuesday.

With international climate talks underway in Baku, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) highlighted how soaring global temperatures and extreme weather events are impacting displacement numbers and conditions, as it called for more and better investment in mitigating the risks.

In a fresh report, UNHCR pointed to how climate shocks in places like Sudan, Somalia and Myanmar were interacting with conflict to push those already in danger into even more dire situations.

"Across our warming world, drought, floods, life-threatening heat and other extreme weather events are creating emergencies with alarm-

ing frequency," UNHCR chief Filippo Grandi said in the foreword to the report.

"People forced to flee their homes are on the front lines of this crisis," he said, pointing out that 75 per cent of displaced people live in countries with high-to-extreme exposure to climate-related hazards. "As the speed and scale of climate change increase, this figure will only continue to rise."

A record 120 million people already live forcibly displaced by war, violence and persecution — most of them inside their own countries, UNHCR figures from June showed. "Globally, the number of people that have been displaced by conflict has doubled over the last 10 years," Andrew Harper, UNHCR's special advisor on climate action, pointed out to AFP.

At the same time, UNHCR pointed to recent data from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre indicating that weather-related disasters have displaced some 220 million people inside their countries.



Lebanese Red Cross members look for remains of bodies at the site of an Israeli airstrike on the northern Lebanese town of Ain Yaaqoub, Lebanon.

Israeli airstrikes hit Beirut suburbs

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: The Israeli military carried out at least five airstrikes on the Hezbollah-controlled southern suburbs of Beirut on Tuesday, after Israel's defence minister ruled out any ceasefire in Lebanon until Israel's goals had been met. Smoke rose over Beirut as blasts shook the capital around mid-morning. The explosions followed an Israeli military warning posted on social media identifying 12 sites in the southern suburbs and saying it would take action against them soon. It warned residents they were located

near Hezbollah facilities.

There were no immediate reports of casualties from the latest strikes. Residents have largely fled the southern suburbs since Israel began bombing the area in September.

In Israel, air raid sirens sounded in parts of the north, sending residents running for shelter, and the military said a number of "suspicious aerial targets" were launched from Lebanon. There were no reports of injuries. Ignited by the Gaza war, the conflict at the Lebanese-Israeli border had been rumbling.

Trump picks Kristi Noem as Homeland Security secretary

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US President-elect Donald Trump has picked South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem to serve as the next secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, CNN reported on Tuesday, citing two sources. Noem, once seen as a possible running mate for Republican Trump, is currently serving her second four-year term as South Dakota's governor after a landslide re-election victory in 2022. She rose to national prominence after refusing to impose a statewide mask mandate during the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, Noem had a turbulent few months politically this year. She faced widespread backlash in April this year when she wrote in a memoir that she shot to death an "untrainable" dog that she "hated" on her family farm.

Ahsan calls for emergency measures to tackle increasing pollution, smog in twin cities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday expressed serious concerns over the growing environmental pollution and smog in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, stressing the need to tackle these issues on an emergency basis. He described the causes and worsening impact of the smog as a 'consequence' of human behavior, which now necessitated urgent action. Chairing a meeting on

the escalating smog and air pollution in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, he said "Without a change in public behavior, smog and air pollution will lead to severe consequences for both health and the economy, posing a risk not only to public health but also to the country's GDP growth rate." Among others, the meeting was attended by senior officials from the World Bank (WB), the Punjab Planning and Development Department, the National Disaster Risk Management Fund

(NDRMF), the Ministry of Environment, the Country Director of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Nadia Rehman, Member of the Planning Commission for Environment and Climate Change, representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency, civil society, the NDMA and environmental protection agencies from all provinces. During the meeting, Ahsan Iqbal called for a unified national approach to combat this challenge. He said environmental protection was a key com-

ponent of the government's Five-E framework, which includes various measures to address these issues. He pointed out that while there was no shortage of knowledge on the matter, the real problem was the lack of implementation, stressing that all relevant institutions must take joint actions to tackle the issue effectively. The minister further identified cross-border pollution, vehicle emissions, crop burning and urban development as primary contributors to smog.



A meeting was held under the chairmanship of the federal Minister for Planning Development Ahsan Iqbal to address the growing smog and air pollution in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain addressing two-day Pakistan's National Tripartite Labour Conference closing ceremony, jointly organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (MOPHRD).

NA Speaker urges collective effort to raise awareness about pneumonia

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Tuesday highlighted the vital role of parents, teachers, media, and civil society in raising awareness about pneumonia, particularly among the general public. In his message for World Pneumonia Day, the speaker emphasized that everyone must contribute to the effort to realize the vision of a healthy and safe Pakistan. He also stressed the importance of providing every citizen with comprehensive and accurate health information. Speaker stated that parliament has consistently played a key role in developing comprehensive plans and policies to address health-related issues.

IHC serves notice to Sher Afzal on ICA

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday served notices to respondents in an intra-court appeal against the verdict for nullifying ban on political discussion of prisoners during meetings in jail. Advocate General Islamabad contended that the single member bench has set aside the rule-265, which was not the jurisdiction of IHC. A division bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Saman Rafiq Imitiaz heard the ICA filed by Chief Commissioner ICT. During the course of proceeding, Advocate General Islamabad Ayaz Shaukat said that the single member bench has dismissed the rule-265 of the jail rules. They have challenged the verdict in ICA. He said that the IHC has no jurisdiction to intervene in prisons' rules of Punjab.

Rida appreciates growing interest of women in Thal jeep rally

ISLAMABAD (APP): Position holder in 9th Thal desert rally, 2024 (prepared category - women), Syeda Rida Zainab on Tuesday appreciated the growing interest of women in jeep rally sports for the recognition of Pakistan's image at international level in this sport. This sport is very difficult as technical and mechanical knowledge main hurdle to attract the interest of women, she told APP. She also informed that compatibility and modification of jeep according to the requirement of race was most important factor for any driver. She further added that one could not meet the requirement of jeep rally without the any support. To a question she also complained that finding sponsor at individual level was very difficult.

CDA unveils ambitious long-term beautification plan for Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Capital Development Authority (CDA) Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa has spearheaded a new long-term beautification initiative aimed at transforming Islamabad into a model capital. In a meeting on Tuesday, attended by top CDA officials and the Baku Team from Azerbaijan, Chairman Randhawa discussed projects to revitalize iconic sites like Said Pur Village and Melody Market in G-6, alongside city-wide

upgrades to avenues, green belts, and public spaces. The Chairman, acknowledging the Baku Team's contributions during the recent Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit, emphasized the need for these efforts to continue and become a lasting feature of Islamabad's urban landscape. He directed CDA teams to prioritize natural landscaping, preserve green areas, and incorporate sustainable designs in their projects.



ISLAMABAD: A visitor learning to spin a spinning wheel during Lok Mela festival, at Lok Virsa, in the Federal Capital.

HEC launches women empowerment mentoring program

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has launched Women Empowerment Mentoring Programme (WEMP) to facilitate women employees serving the higher education sector through dedicated mentoring enabling them to overcome challenges at the workplace. The programme rolled out by National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE), HEC under the Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) project will offer growth opportunities to the women employees in the education sector while empowering them to achieve their goals in their personal and professional lives. It also aims to improve their communica-

tion, networking, and conflict management skills while becoming an effective leader in their respective domains. Designated mentors with globally recognised best practices and coursework materials will offer expert mentorship and trainings to improve communications and manage work related conflicts and challenges more effectively. WEMP, besides the accomplishments of HEC's Women Leadership Programme which has already empowered 196 women from various universities, is a promising start by NAHE to offer a complete support system for women working in the higher education sector. Chairman Prime Minister Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashood

Rana Mashood says: Women's role imperative for country development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Prime Minister Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan has said that Pakistan's future is in the hands of the youth and women's role is imperative in the country's development. He expressed these views while addressing the launching ceremony of the "Women Empowerment Monitoring Program" held at the Higher Education Commission (HEC) on Tuesday. Mashood said that to empower women laws have been made to ensure their inheritance share and prevent violence. He said that the positive economic indicators show the remarkable achievements of the present government in every sector and the country is moving in the right direction. The Chairman PMYP added that the country under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was advancing towards the path of development and growth in the exports of textiles and Information technology, increase in the stock exchange index, and growth in other sectors reflected the result-oriented policies of the government.

IG Rizvi orders proactive measures against criminal elements

ISLAMABAD (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasser Rizvi, conducted a meeting with the Zonal Superintendents of Police (SPs) at the Central Police Office on Tuesday to review the law and order situation and assess the performance of the Zonal officers. A spokesperson told APP that, IG Rizvi issued instructions to all Zonal officers (SDPOs) and Station House Officers (SHOs) to take effective measures to enhance law and order, curb criminal elements, and ensure the safety of public life and property in their respective areas. He also directed the Zonal officers to make the patrols of Dolphin Squad and police officers in their areas more effective. The presence of police officers in the field should be a sym-

Mukhtar appreciates UK's health sector support

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Health Dr Malik Mukhtar Bharath on Tuesday appreciated the UK government for its enduring support through the UK-PAK Health Partnership. He was talking to the British High Commission's Development Director, Ms Jo Moir who met him to advance the UK-Pakistan partnership and ongoing support in strengthening healthcare in Pakistan. Dr Bharath highlighted the transformative role of technical assistance in advancing Pakistan's health and population goals. "The UK government's support has been invaluable in achieving key milestones in our health sector," he noted, underscoring the positive impact of the partnership. Ms Jo Moir commended the strong partnership between the UK and Pakistan and reaffirmed the UK's commitment to support Pakistan's healthcare systems. "Through initiatives such as the Evidence for Health (E4H) program, GAVI, GFATM, and sustained support for polio eradication, we are dedicated to strengthening healthcare delivery in Pakistan and ensuring essential services reach those in need," she remarked. As part of this ongoing commitment, a high-level UK delegation is scheduled to visit Pakistan shortly to review the UK-Pakistan Health Partnership Agreement signed in 2023.

ISSI, UMT ink MoU for mutual collaboration

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) and the Department of Political Science and International Relations (DPSIR) of the School of Social Sciences and Humanities (SSSH) at the University of Management and Technology (UMT) Lahore, on Tuesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The MoU was signed by Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director Administration, ISSI and Dr Usman Askari, Chairperson and Associate Professor, DPSIR, UMT on their respective sides. DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood was present at the ceremony, which was also attended by other delegation members, said a press release. Representatives from both ISSI and UMT expressed optimism that this MoU would pave the way for enhanced cooperation between academia and the policy research community. Both institutions aimed to bridge the gap between scholarly research and practical policy solutions, enabling a richer exchange of knowledge and expertise on issues relevant to national and regional geopolitical affairs. As part of this partnership, ISSI and UMT discussed several initiatives, including offering internship programs for UMT students, the organization of joint seminars on topics of mutual interest, and collaborative studies and publications in areas related to strategic and policy issues relevant to Pakistan. These collaborative efforts are expected to enrich academic discourse.

AJK President for more vibrant role of legal fraternity to make struggle for IIOJK's freedom complete success

MIRUR (AJK) (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has said that the importance of lawyers in the society was key since the lawyers played a decisive role in the establishment of supremacy of the constitution and law in the society by performing as the defenders of the constitution and the law. Addressing lawyer's congregation in his native Mirpur AJK town, he said that since Azad Jammu and Kashmir served as the base camp of the Kashmir freedom struggle, the lawyers' community should always play a more vibrant role in the struggle for freedom of Kashmir from Indian unlawful occupation. The president said that since the Mirpur District Bar Association serves as the largest lawyers bar in AJK, the bar produced big names in both the fields of law and the State Legislative Assembly and the constitutional sector. He that Mirpur Bar Association had always played the role of front-line defenders and volunteers for the restoration of Kashmir human rights and the custodians of the oppressed classes. Barrister Sultan Mahmood assured that all problems of Bar Association Mirpur would be resolved on a priority and urgent basis. "I am also an honorary member of the bar. The demand for new chambers for lawyers is already in my notice", he said and assured that meet and implement the demand soon.

Gilani expresses grief over tragic Astore bus accident

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senate Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Tuesday expressed profound sorrow over a tragic bus accident near Astore, which claimed multiple lives. In his message he extended heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased, affirming his solidarity with them in this time of grief. He offered prayers for the forgiveness and elevated ranks of those who lost their lives, patience for the bereaved families, and a swift recovery for the injured. Deputy Chairman Senate Syed Ahsan Ali Khan, leader of the House Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar, and leader of the opposition Senator Syed Shibli Faraz also issued separate condolence messages, expressing deep sadness over the incident and offering their sympathies to the affected families. Intra party election PTI files 2nd review petition in SC against Oct 21 decision



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid in a group photo with Ms. Waheeda Mahesar, Executive Director SZABIST-ZABTech visits Benazir Income Support Programme HQs.

Rubina highlights BISP's success as West African Countries seek insights

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of BISP, Rubina Khalid has said that a delegation from West African countries is visiting Pakistan to learn about the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), which is considered a successful initiative in the country's efforts to reduce poverty. Rubina Khalid expressed these views during a meeting with National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) Chairman Lt. Gen. Muhammad Munir Afsar on Tuesday. She invited them to attend the closing ceremony of the delegation's study tour on November 14. During their discussion, Senator Rubina Khalid emphasized the need to issue Form B to women beneficiaries of BISP and requested easier access to other important services from NADRA for them. In response, Chairman Afsar assured her of NADRA's full support in providing these essential services to the deserving women without any delays.



ISLAMABAD: Principle Shagufta Rauf giving bouquet to MNA Anjum Aqel Khan as chief guest during oath taking ceremony held at Model College for Girls G-10/2

Smog to persist in major cities as weather conditions worsen in Nov, Dec: NDMA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Smog conditions are expected to persist across urban centers in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Lahore, Faisalabad, Multan, Bahawalpur, Peshawar, Mardan, and Nowshera, throughout November and December due to high humidity, low wind speeds, and upper atmospheric pressure. In an advisory on Tuesday, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) urged the public to take necessary precautions. The advisory highlights the rising smog levels in the affected areas, driven by the current weather conditions, and advises residents to avoid prolonged outdoor exposure and adopt protective measures to safeguard their health. The advisory states that the National Emergency Operation Centre has been monitoring the current smog situation in Pakistan and surrounding regions. According to the advisory, the team has access to advanced ground-based and space-based monitoring tools, enabling the analysis and projection of pollution emissions from various sources, including industry, transportation, and agriculture. This includes emissions from stubble burning, volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides, surface-level ozone, and particulate matter like PM10 and PM 2.5. By analyzing aerosol optical depth data, the team is identifying hotspots heavily impacted by smog. The NDMA advisory recommends several measures to mitigate the effects of smog, such as avoiding unnecessary outdoor exposure during peak smog hours, especially in the morning, and wearing masks during outdoor activities.