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Organized groups are involved in anti-state mind making in most of varsities:

GoB to summon conference on prevention of anti-state mind making among students in varsities, says CM Bugti

Mir Sarfraz Bugti seeks suggestions for improvement in Balochistan Universities Act from HEC; says we want to introduce comprehensive reforms for solution of issues being faced by universities of Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has regretfully pointed out that the organized groups are involved in the anti-state mind making in most universities of the country, as such there is a very necessary to stop this trend. He announced that the provincial government would call a national conference to stop this by highlighting it. The chief ministers of all provinces and vice chancellors of all the universities of country would be invited to participate in the conference. The Chief Minister was speaking to the Chairman Higher Education

Commission (HEC), Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, who called on him here on Monday.

During the course of meeting, Provincial Ministers Ms. Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani and Bakht Muhammad Kakar besides MPA, Asghar Khan Tareen were also present.

During the meeting, the matters related to improvement in governance and quality were discussed.

The Chief Minister on the occasion sought suggestions from HEC for bringing improvement in the Balochistan Universities Act.

He said that we want to introduce comprehensive reforms to resolve the issues being faced by the universities in the province.

He said that we have the right of answerability when we would provide resources to the public sector universities of the province.

He noted that the universities are on move to build buildings in the universities, but they haven't funds for paying salaries to their employees.

He stressed that the universities should refrain from unnecessary recruitments and development projects in view of their financial situation.

He asserted that we would not make any compromise on quality and good governance in the universities, adding he made it clear that there would be no political interference in the universities nor we would fall to any blackmailing.

The Chief Minister also said that he hail the positive recommendations of the HEC and vowed to put the universities of province on path of improvement together with it (HEC).



QUETTA: Chairman Higher Education Commission Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti.

PM orders to identify, bring to justice those involved in policeman's martyrdom

Shehbaz Sharif extended his condolences to the family of Constable Mubashir Shaheed, prayed for officer's soul

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday strongly condemned the killing of a policeman by those elements who came to protest.

The prime minister expressed his condolence to the bereaved family of constable Mubashir Shaheed and prayed for his high ranks. PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister directed for immediate identification of those involved in the incident and bringing them to justice.

He also directed to provide the best medical facilities to the police personnel injured as a result of stone pelting and violence stoked by the protestors.



QUETTA: Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani and Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar in a group photo with students of Khuda Bakhsh College during their visit to Assembly.

Non-recovery of kidnapped child from Quetta: Wheel jam strike observed on highways & inter-provincial roads across Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The wheel jam strike was observed on the national highways and inter-provincial roads across the Balochistan province on Monday. The strike was observed on call of all political parties and traders community against non-recovery of the 10-year old child, who was kidnapped on November 15 from the Patel Bagh area of Quetta.

As a result of the strike, the Quetta-Karachi, Quetta-Killa Saifullah-

Zhob, Quetta-Loralai-DG Khan, Quetta-Sibi, Quetta-Chaman, Quetta-Taftan and other inter-provincial roads remained closed for normal traffic.

Following the wheel jam strike, no public transport could be moved from Quetta to rest of the province and country parts causing great inconvenience and hardships to the commuters.

The political workers of different parties blocked the highways and roads at different points.

Belarus President arrives in Islamabad on three-day official visit

ISLAMABAD (APP): President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko on Monday arrived in Islamabad on his three-day official visit to Pakistan at the invitation of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

The Belarus President arrived at the Nur Khan Airbase, Rawalpindi where he was received by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif along with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Ishaq Dar, Minister for Interior, Senator Mohsin Naqvi, Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar, and other senior officials.

Children dressed in traditional attire presented bouquets of flowers to the President of Belarus. During his visit, President Lukashenko will hold extensive talks with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and discuss areas of bilateral cooperation and engagement. Moreover, several agreements and memorandums of understanding (MoUs) will also be signed during the visit.

ECNEC approves dev. projects worth Rs 172.7 bn

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) on Monday approved 10 out of 11 proposed development projects costing Rs 172.7 billion.

A project presented by the Ministry of Health was deferred, requiring further clarification before approval.

The meeting of the ECNEC was held here under the chairmanship of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar.



QUETTA: MPA Zamrak Khan Achakzai, Asghar Tareen, Nasrullah Zarey, Rasheed Nasir Ahmed Jan, Abdul Rahim Kakar, Haji Bashit, Malik Malang, Mir Yasin Mengal, Akhtar Kakar, Amanullah Mehtarzai, Gul Khil, Munir Kakar, Ghulam Nabi and others attending meeting of Dharna Committee for recovery of Musawir Kakar.



RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif receives President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko at PAF Nur Khan Air Base.

We are responsible for protection of rights of women: Every conscious person ought to play due part for ensuring economic empowerment of women, stresses Jaffar Mandokhail

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has emphasized that every conscious person has to play due role for ensuring rights especially economic empowerment of women.

The Governor said that it is fact that women are dependent on men in all affairs of life just because of lack of economic empowerment.

He was addressing the participants of ceremony held marking 16 days of activism against violence on

women here on Monday.

The ceremony was attended by the representatives of different institutions including UN Women, WHO and Women Development Department.

Also present on the occasion were Deputy Speaker of Provincial Assembly, Ms. Ghazala Gola, Advisor to Chief Minister for Women Development, Dr. Rubaba Buledi, Advisor to Chief Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Nasimur Rehman, Secretary Women Development, Ms. Saira Ata,

Chairperson of Balochistan Commission on Status of Women, Ms. Fauzia Shaheen, Sana Durrani, Dr. Noor, Sadiya Ata, Ayesha Wadood, Asfandyar Shirani and other concerned high ups.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor said that if concrete practical measures are being taken for giving legal protection to the animals and birds from violence in the civilized societies, then we can't be dissociated from the human

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A police constable died from injuries PTI convoys enter Islamabad amid violent clashes with police

First round of PTI-govt talks ends inconclusively; PTI stands firm on demand to release Imran Khan, rejects offer to change sit-in venue; Over 70 police officers injured during violent clashes with PTI protesters

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: PTI convoys led by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and Opposition Leader, Omar Ayub, entered Islamabad on the call of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder Imran Khan.

The convoys, originating from the Hazara Interchange, are heading towards D-Chowk in Islamabad.

As the convoys advanced, they encountered heavy resistance from the police at the Ghazi Broth Bridge, where intense shell-

ing was reported. Despite the police crackdown, Omar Ayub's convoy managed to push back Punjab Police forces at the Hazara Interchange. Ali Amin Gandapur, who is leading the Hazara Divisional convoy, played a crucial role in helping the convoy break through the police barricades.

After overcoming the police blockade, the convoys continued their journey, with vehicles stretching over two kilometers as they moved forward. On the Hazara Motorway, PTI

Continued on page 2



ISLAMABAD: A view of Rangers personals stand on closed road to PTI protest in twin cities.

Only targeted operation to be carried out on camps of miscreants: Govt making every possible endeavours for recovery of Musawwar Khan: CM

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has stated that the provincial government is making every possible endeavour for recovery of the child kidnapped from Quetta on November 15.

The Chief Minister was speaking to media soon after the session of provincial assembly here on Monday.

To a query, he said that Musawwar Kakar is like his children, and added that efforts are being made for his recovery, however most of the things can't be told to media.

To another question, Chief Minister said that

the operation in Balochistan would be targeted and added that operation would be carried out where there would be camp of the miscreants.

He said that the political parties which are opposing operations may tell what's the solution of same otherwise. Whether we may witness the bloodshed going on the same way in the province, he questioned.

When asked about the rumours about change in the Chief Minister-ship, Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that he doesn't believe in such rumours. He also said that he would continue to serve as Chief Minister as long as there is trust of House on him.

Heartiest welcome to Excellency Alexander Lukashenko in Pakistan



It is our esteemed privilege to extend a warm and respectful welcome to His Excellency President Alexander Lukashenko, the distinguished Head of State of the Republic of Belarus.

We are deeply honoured by your esteemed presence, Mr. President, and we pay tribute to your visionary leadership, which has been instrumental in shaping the prosperity and progress of the Belarusian nation.

We look forward to strengthening the bonds of friendship and cooperation between our nations and to exploring new avenues of collaboration and mutual understanding.

Courtesy: Independent Group of Newspapers

UN chief calls for urgent action against violence towards women, girls

UNITED NATIONS (APP): In a sharply worded statement, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called attention to the growing epidemic of violence against women and girls, describing it as a "shame on humanity."

His remarks came as a sobering report released by UN Women and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on Monday revealed that in 2023, 140 women and girls died every day at the hands of their partner or a close relative, which means one woman killed every 10 minutes.

Released on the 25th anniversary of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the report sheds light on the global crisis of femicide and calls for urgent action.

"The epidemic of violence against women and

girls shames humanity," said the UN chief in his message for the day on Monday. "The world must heed this call. We need urgent action for justice and accountability, and support for advocacy," he added.

Additionally, he said, online spaces have become increasingly hostile for women, with a surge in misogyny targeting them through social media and digital platforms.

Guterres also expressed concern over a growing backlash against women's rights. In many places, legal protections for women are being weakened, and human rights advocates—especially women—are facing threats, harassment, and even death for speaking out against injustices.

Monday's report also coincides with the start of the annual 16 Days of Ac-

tivism campaign, which runs from 25 November to 10 December.

This year, the UNITE to End Violence against Women campaign is drawing attention to the alarming escalation of violence against women under the theme, "Every 10 minutes, a woman is killed. #NoExcuse. UNITE to End Violence against Women".

Femicide transcends borders, socioeconomic statuses, and cultures, but its severity varies regionally.

According to the report, Africa recorded the highest rates of intimate partner and family-related femicides, with 21,700 women killed in 2023, followed by the Americas and Oceania.

In Europe and the Americas, most victims were killed by their intimate partners, comprising 64



Vice Chief of the Naval Staff Vice Admiral Ovais Ahmed Bilgrami addressing the course members of National Security & War Course (NSWC) at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad.

Pakistan gear up for U19 tri-series final

DUBAI (INP): Pakistan are all set to take on Afghanistan in the final of the U19 tri-series at the ICC Cricket Academy Ground on Tuesday. The toss will take place at 10am PKT, with the first ball of the final to be bowled at 10.30am PKT.

In the seven-match series, both finalists have played four matches each, winning three and losing one, while hosts UAE remained winless. The Saad Baig-led Pakistan side defeated Afghanistan by 13 runs in the two sides' last encounter held on 20 November. However, Mahboob Khan-led Afghanistan secured a 100-run victory in their first match against Pakistan on 15 November.

Pakistan registered convincing victories in their two encounters against the hosts, winning by 10 wickets and 191 runs, respectively.

For Pakistan, the opening duo of Shahzaib Khan

and Usman Khan has been in great form and have scored runs consistently. Left-handed Usman has amassed 306 runs from four matches at an average of 102, which included one century and three half-centuries. His fellow southpaw Shahzaib has accumulated 277 runs at an average of 92.33, which also includes one century and two half-centuries from four matches. Both the batters have also provided two century-run partnerships while opening, including an unbeaten 192-run stand against UAE on 13 November.

In the bowling unit, pacers Abdul Subhan, Ali Raza and Mohammad Ahmed have picked six wickets each, while Faham-ul-Haq has grabbed five wickets. Left-armed Ahmed is the only bowler to take a five-fer in the event, while Ali's best figures of four for 57 came in a 13-run win against Afghanistan.

Educational institutions remain closed in Quetta, other parts of Balochistan

QUETTA: All the educational institutions including schools, colleges and universities remain closed in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan province on Monday.

The educational institutions were closed on directives of the Colleges, Higher and Technical Education Department, issued the other day.

As per the notification of the Education Department, the educational institutions were closed in view of the non-operational of the public transport in Quetta and other province.

The notification mentioned that the activities in educational institutions would resume today (Tuesday).



QUETTA: A view of Metropolitan Corporation staffer busy in demolish illegal encroachment at bacha khan chowk during operation at motton market.

Brilliant Bumrah leads India to thumping win over Australia

PERTH (INP): India fast bowlers Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj took three wickets apiece as the tourists hammered Australia by 295 runs in the first test at Perth Stadium on Monday.

Australia were bowled out for 238 after tea on day four, paceman Harshit Rana wrapping up the fourth innings by clean-bowling keeper Alex Carey for 36 to secure India's 1-0 lead in the five-match series.

The last time Australia won a home series after losing the opening test was 55 years ago against West Indies. "Fairly disappointing," said Australia captain Pat Cummins.

"It was just one of those games where not much went right. We didn't really give ourselves a chance in a few different facets... so there's a few different areas we've got to clean up."

After electing to bat on a seaming first day, India were all out for 150 before fighting back to dismiss Australia for 104 courtesy of a Bumrah five-fer.

Dual centurions Virat

Kohli and Yashasvi Jaiswal took the tourists to 487-6 declared, setting a massive fourth-innings target of 534 for the hosts.

Resuming day four on 12-3, the hosts quickly lost Usman Khawaja (four) after the opener mistimed Siraj (3-51) to wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant.

Rana (1-69) bowled with fire, temporarily immobilising Steve Smith with a rib-tickler and getting Travis Head jumping as the pair added 62.

Steve Smith, returning to his favoured number four position after an ill-fated opening experiment, fell caught behind on 17 to Siraj.

Head crunched boundaries aplenty on his way to his 89 but fell shy of an eighth test ton when he edged to Pant off Bumrah (3-42), who picked up eight wickets for the match.

Bumrah was captaining the side in place of Rohit Sharma, who missed the match as he recently welcomed his second child but has since rejoined the squad.

"Very happy with the

beginning, we were put under pressure in the first innings but the way we responded after that, I'm really proud of the team," said Bumrah, who was named Player of the Match for his 8-72 over both innings.

"Obviously, this wicket was a little less spicy than the last one that I played here, but we were really well prepared.

"So I was just telling everyone to have faith in their process and ability, because over here at this moment, you have an opportunity to do something special."

Mitchell Marsh put up 47 before chopping debutant Nitish Kumar Reddy onto his stumps, and Dhruv Jurel showed off his reflexes at short-leg to catch Mitchell Starc (12) off Washington Sundar (2-48) before tea.

Washington bowled his Australia spin counterpart Nathan Lyon after the break for a duck as India marched towards a welcome victory, which comes after they were humbled 3-0 at home by New Zealand earlier this month.

Belarusian Minister for Military Industry calls on Khawaja Asif

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State Authority for Military Industry of Belarus Mr. Pantus Dmitry called on Minister for Defence and Defence Production, Khawaja Muhammad Asif here Monday.

Matters pertaining to bilateral cooperation between both countries in the field of defence and defence production came under discussion, said a press release issued here. Both sides also agreed to work together to strengthen their bilateral cooperation in mutually beneficial fields.



QUETTA: A delegation led by President Japan Karate Association Hussain Ali Changezi meeting with Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Violent protests on November 24: Case registered against PTI founder, his wife Bushra and Arif Alvi

ISLAMABAD (Online): Police registered a case against former Prime Minister Imran Khan, his wife Bushra Bibi and former President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi, among others, for violent protests by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf on November 24.

The first case of the protest was registered under anti-terrorism provisions at Taxila police station. More than 300 local leaders and workers, including Opposition Leader Omar Ayub, Chief Minister KP Ali Amin Gandapur, Aleema Khan, Azam Swati, Taimur Masood, Shehryar Riaz, have been named in the case.

According to the text of the case, the protesters damaged a government motorcycle and vehicle, while the accused kidnapped a police driver and tortured him before releasing him.

The PTI founder planned to march party leaders from Adiala Jail to Islamabad. Case No. 2594 includes charges including interference in the government, violation of Section 144, while the protesters are also accused of damaging government and private property and blocking highways by gathering crowds.

It should be noted that on Imran Khan's call, PTI convoys were sent to Islamabad on November 24 to protest. They left Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the leadership of Chief Minister Amin Ali Amin Gandapur. While entering Punjab from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, there was a clash between the protesters and the police. PTI workers pelted stones at the police, which was shelled by the police.

Pakistan, Belarus FM's reaffirm commitment to promote mutually beneficial cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Monday met his Belarusian counterpart Maxim Ryzhenkov here, wherein two sides underlined the importance of bilateral relations and reaffirmed their commitment to promote mutually beneficial cooperation.

In the meeting, the two foreign ministers discussed bilateral and regional issues and the agenda and the

Pakistan, Belarus FM's reaffirm commitment to promote mutually beneficial cooperation

programme of the visit of President Lukashenko to Pakistan, who is scheduled to arrive here later in the day, according to a Foreign Office press release.

The two sides expressed satisfaction over the momentum of bilateral exchanges and high-level visits between Pakistan and Belarus and expressed the hope that President Lukashenko's visit would further boost bilateral relations.

The ministers also dis-

cussed key regional and global developments, including the situation in the Middle East. They expressed their support for a peaceful resolution of conflicts and underlined the need for a coordinated approach to address the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

The two sides emphasized the importance of enhanced cooperation in international and regional organizations to advance mutual interest and jointly address global challenges.

AJK-PM committed to divert public money to people's welfare

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that every single penny of tax-money would be spent on the welfare of people. He said this while talking to different delegations that called on here on Monday. He said that the present government was committed to improve the lives of economically less-privileged sections of society. He said that the recently announced health package would be instrumental in addressing health-related problems of the people. The present government, he said, has promoted a merit-based system and transparency in public affairs. "In addition to improving infrastructure, the government has chalked out a comprehensive policy to promote tourism in the state", he added.

The PM said that the provision of cheap electricity and cheap flour to citizens of the region were the major initiatives the present government has taken. "Clean Muzaffarabad project worth 360 million rupees has been approved to make the capital city more attractive", the PM said. "Recruitments in different departments have been made on merit through NTS", the PM said, adding that around 3000 youth have got jobs.

The PM on the occasion reaffirmed his government's support to Kashmiris' ongoing struggle for right to self determination. He said that it was high time that the United Nations should take effective notice of the worsening political and human rights situation in the Indian occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir and take practical measures to resolve the lingering Kashmir dispute which, he said, was the main cause of unrest and human rights violations in the region.

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People of GB reject anti-state elements: Iman Shah

Independent Report

GILGIT: Iman Shah, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan, has stated that the people of Gilgit-Baltistan have once again rejected anti-state elements, foiling their attempts to create unrest in the region.

Addressing a press conference, Iman Shah praised the people of Gilgit-Baltistan for their awareness and commitment to peace, saying that only 300 people out of a population

of 1.8 million responded to the call of anti-state elements. He criticized the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for its role in creating unrest in the region.

Iman Shah also condemned Khurshid Khushnood, a fugitive from the law, for attempting to mislead the people of Gilgit-Baltistan from the safety of Peshawar. He said that Khurshid had promised to lead convoys from Gilgit-Baltistan but failed to do so, exposing his true intentions.

Champions Trophy tour concludes in Pakistan

LAHORE (INP): The global trophy tour of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 came to an end in Pakistan on Monday. The coveted silverware is set to be transported to Afghanistan as part of the trophy tour.

Throughout its time in Pakistan, the trophy embarked on an adventurous path, traversing a variety of picturesque cities. It began its journey in the capital, Islamabad, before making its way to the scenic hills of Murree and Nathia Gali.

The trophy continued its travels to Abbottabad, Khanpur Dam, Taxila and Karachi. After a whirlwind tour, it has now returned to the Pakistan Cricket Board

(PCB) Headquarters in Lahore, marking the conclusion of its leg in Pakistan.

The next stop for the trophy will be Afghanistan, where it will be on display from November 26 to 28. Following its time in Afghanistan, the Champions Trophy will head to Bangladesh, set to captivate fans from December 10 to 13. From there, the trophy will touch down in South Africa, continuing its international celebration from December 15 to 22. The Champions Trophy will then venture to Australia, enthralling cricket enthusiasts from December 25 to January 5, before heading to New Zealand from January 6 to 11.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar answering questions of MPAs Asghar Ali Tareen and Zafar Agha during Balochistan Assembly session.

PTI convoys enter Islamabad amid...

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supporters successfully forced police to retreat, with reports of violent clashes and heavy stone-pelting.

Several police personnel were injured in the scuffles, and two officers were severely wounded and transferred to hospitals.

Among the injured officers were DSPs Chaudhry Zulfiqar and Shahid Gilani, as well as ASI Tabassum. DSP Zulfiqar suffered significant injuries to his back and legs during the confrontation.

A police constable has died from severe injuries, and over 70 officers were injured during violent clashes with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) protesters in Islamabad.

Constable Mubashir, 46, succumbed to head injuries after PTI protesters allegedly attacked police personnel near Hakla. The injured officer was rushed to Tehsil Headquarters Hospital in Hassan Abdal, where he was later pronounced dead. Mubashir is survived by his wife, two daughters, and a son.

The first round of talks between the government and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) ended inconclusively, sources told Geo News.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi held nego-

tiations with PTI leaders Barrister Gohar Ali Khan and Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif on behalf of the federal government.

They said PTI stood firm on its demand to ensure the immediate release of PTI founder Imran, who has been behind bars since August last year.

The PTI leaders, insiders said, also rejected the government's offer to hold a sit-in at the Parade Ground or Peshawar Mor in the federal capital.

The interior minister will inform Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif about the talks with the PTI leaders, sources said.

They said these is a possibility of the next round of negotiations between the government and the PTI leaders.

Barrister Gohar Khan and Saif held a 90-minute meeting with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan in Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi. Following the meeting, Barrister Gohar described the discussion as significant, confirming that Imran Khan's call for a protest remains final and that rumors about it being canceled were untrue. Speaking to journalists after the meeting, Barrister Gohar emphasised that the PTI founder's stance on the protest was unchanged, and the movement would proceed as planned. The meeting focused on strategic discus-

sions regarding the ongoing political situation and the party's future course of action.

When asked about the ongoing negotiations surrounding the protest, Barrister Gohar assured reporters that updates would be provided in due course. He further confirmed that discussions were still ongoing but did not offer further details at this time.

"Final call"

The PTI gave its final call for the protest to meet its four demands: release of all political prisoners, including Imran Khan, reversal of the 26th Constitutional Amendment, restoration of democracy and Constitution in the country and return of allegedly "stolen mandate".

The demands surfaced on November 13 after Imran had urged people via a post on X, formerly Twitter, to reach Islamabad and not to return until those were met. The PTI had said that its rallies would be converted into a sit-in in the federal capital and end only when the demands were met.

Since then, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)-led government, backed by a recent order of the Islamabad High Court (IHC), has been stating that neither the protesters would be allowed to enter the capital nor any leniency would be shown to them this time around.

Every conscious person ought to play...

Continued from page 1

rights especially rights and protection of women anyway.

He made it clear that we have to acknowledge that women can provide better guidance than men in imparting proper education to the children and running the domestic affairs.

Referring the women, Governor said that our women are equally talented like women of other provinces, but they lag behind in all spheres of life because of lack of necessary facilities and opportunities.

He stressed that it is responsibility of present government and other private institutions to prepare new programme for socioeconomic protection of women home based workers besides learning them skills. In the end, Governor distributed commemorative shields among organizers and participants of the event.

violence on women that these endeavours are commendable.

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QUETTA: Director General Public Relations Balochistan Muhammad Noor Khetran distributing appreciation certificates on eve of anniversary of BNC.

PM's climate aide, Belarusian Minister meet, agree to work for environmental sustainability, climate resilience

ISLAMABAD (APP): PM's Coordinator on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam and Belarusian Minister for natural resources and environmental protection, Sergey Maslyak have agreed to closely work together to boost cooperation for achieving common environmental sustainability and climate resilience-related goals, with focus on eco-tourism, water conservation, circular economy, green technology transfer, exchange programmes, biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation.

Both sides met on Monday and highlighted and discussed the potential for launching joint projects between Pakistan and Belarus to build up climate change adaptation and resilience against the exacerbating impacts of global warming, particularly floods, heatwave, droughts, groundwater depletion and renewable energy.

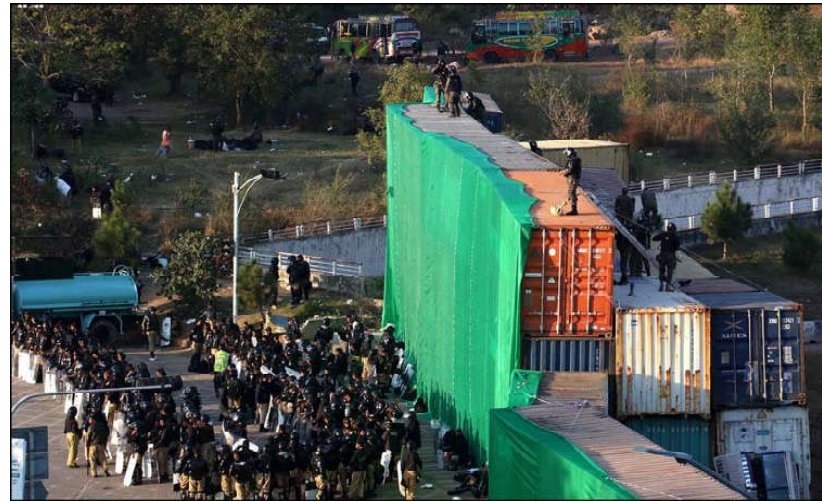
The PM's climate aide emphasized that collaboration between the two countries on biodiversity research and innovative wetland preservation techniques by leveraging Belarus's expertise would prove to be of unprecedented value. Romina Khurshid Alam also called for joint efforts in policy development to align strategies with international standards, aiming to bolster sustainable climate development in Pakistan.

Collaborative initiatives between two countries for enhancing biodiversity conservation would be of paramount importance, aiming at restoring native species in Pakistan, enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem stability, she said.

Romina Khurshid said that Pakistan would appreciate collaboration with Belarus on the exchange of academia, exchange of technical know-how, knowledge sharing and capacity building to promote green education and awareness in the field of nature and environmental protection.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the PM on Climate Change Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam in a group photograph with Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Belarus Sergey Maslyak.



ISLAMABAD: A view of large number of police personal stand near container at D chowk due to PTI protest in twin cities.

2,353 Kashmiri women martyred, 11,265 molested by Indian troops since 1989

ISLAMABAD (APP): The world is observing the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, today, while women in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) continue to suffer from Indian state terrorism, injustice, atrocities, fear, agony and the pain inflicted by India.

According to a report released by Kashmir Media Service in connection with the day, India has weaponized draconian laws to target the sanctity and dignity of Kashmiri women.

Particularly after the illegal actions of the Indian BJP government on August 5, 2019, the Indian army, paramilitary forces, police personnel, and their agencies have used legal cover

to openly pursue their agenda by targeting, detaining, and passing derogatory remarks about Kashmiri women while ignoring their social, political, economic, human, and other rights.

The report stated that 2,353 women have been martyred, and 11,265 molested and disgraced by Indian troops in the occupied territory since 1989. Indian state terrorism has rendered 22,980 Kashmiri women widowed in the past 36 years. It added that over three dozen women, including 65-year-old Aasiya Andrabi, Naheeda Nasreen, Fehmeeda Sofi, Aashiya Bano, Aafreena, Nigeena, Ishrat Rasool, Munira Begum, Sarda Begum, Safeeqa Begum, Rubeena Nazir, Nusrat Jan,

Shabroza Bano, Mudifa, and Sheema Shafi Waza, have been illegally detained in infamous Tihar Jail and other prisons in India and IIOJK for more than seven years.

In 2024, Indian troops arrested several women during house raids based on fabricated cases, including the wife of a nomad, Aqam Din, and Gulshan Naaz, wife of Talib Shah, in Rajouri, Poonch, Samba, and Kathua districts of the territory. The report highlighted that India is using rape as a weapon of war in IIOJK to humiliate Kashmiris. Incidents like the Kunanposhpora mass rape, the Shopian double rape and murder, and the Kathua rape and murder remain glaring examples.

World 'End violence against Women Day' observed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Like other parts of the world the country observed the Elimination of Violence against Women day on Monday.

This year the UN has launched the unite campaign, which will run from November 25 to December 10, under the theme 'Every 10 Minutes, a woman is killed. #NoExcuse. Unite to End Violence against Women'.

This campaign highlights that in 2023, every

10 minutes a woman lost her life to violence, and made it a part of their campaign theme.

This 2024 campaign Every 10 Minutes, a woman is killed across the world. #NoExcuse.

Unite to End Violence against Women will draw attention to the alarming escalation of violence against women to revitalize commitments, call for accountability and action from decision-makers.



ISLAMABAD: Heavy machinery being used at the site of under-construction PTCL Chowk underpass project during development work in Federal Capital.

Strengthening police-press bond for public Safety: DIG

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Headquarters, Jawad Tariq, on Monday emphasized the importance of strengthening ties between the police and media to ensure public safety and effective communication during law-and-order situations in the federal capital.

According to a police spokesperson, following special instructions from Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the Islamabad Police is actively working to assist representatives of both public and private media organizations during the ongoing law and order situation.

In light of these directives, DIG Headquarters Jawad Tariq instructed Islamabad Police's Public

Relations Officer, Taqi Jawad, to ensure complete coordination with all local and international journalists.

Measures have been taken to provide journalists with full access to cover events and implement timely security arrangements to ensure their safety and the protection of their equipment during any violent occurrences, Jawad Tariq added.

Highlighting the role of journalists in society, PRO Taqi Jawad acknowledged that journalists play a vital role in every field. Taqi emphasized that the information provided by journalists helps the police improve their performance.

Furthermore, Jawad stated that the partnership between journalists.

Fauzia says: Violence against women remains significant issue

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Ombudsman for protection against harassment of women at workplace Fauzia Waqar on Monday said that violence against women has been a significant issue in Pakistan.

Talking to a private news channel, she said that cases of domestic violence, honor killings, and harassment are frequently reported in different parts of the country. She emphasized the urgency of addressing the rising cases of workplace harassment.

She said that victims, often unaware of available support, can seek assistance by filing complaints in the offices of federal or provincial ombudsmen. She further highlighted the role of the Federal Ombudsman against Harassment in delivering swift, efficient and free justice to the affected.

Workshops held on best practices in online education

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education System Strengthening Activity (HESSA), in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission (HEC), organized two training workshops on Sunday at the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) Islamabad. The workshops, aimed at enhancing the state of online education, featured presentations and interactive sessions led by distinguished experts including Dr. Deborah Keyek-Franssen, Dr. Chanté Wilson and Dr. Abaidullah Anwar.

The sessions were a significant step towards advancing online education readiness and internationalization, with participants engaging in discussions on a comprehensive playbook, readiness index, and next steps for the sector. Advisor HEC Awais Ahmed presented souvenirs to the esteemed trainers as a token of appreciation.

Mashhood stresses Collective efforts to end discrimination against women

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Prime Minister Youth Program Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan on Monday emphasised the need for collective efforts to work to create a world where women and girls are free from violence and fear.

In a message on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, he said that despite progress, violence against women remains a major problem, affecting

millions of women around the world.

Mashhood said that as individuals and as a society, "We must understand our responsibilities to end violence against women."

He said committing violence against women in any form was a sheer violation of human rights and dignity, adding "We must raise our voice against attitudes and systems at all levels that promote discrimination against women."

GB's development top priority of Federal Govt: Amir Muqam

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam said that the development and prosperity of Gilgit Baltistan was a top priority of the Federal Government and progress work on all announced projects by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif recently would be started very soon.

Talking to the Chief Minister of Gilgit Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan in a meeting here on Monday, the minister said that to maintain the law and order situation in GB, Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) would be established very soon.

The minister underlined that the incumbent regime was committed to launching mega projects for the promotion of tourism and speeding up the local mobility of the citizens.

Federal Secretary Waseem Ajmal was also present in the meeting. CM GB thanked the Federal Minister for taking a personal interest in the development of GB.

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PJN, UNDP hold workshop on strengthening Dispute Resolution Councils in Mardan Division

ISLAMABAD (APP): A consultative workshop was held in an effort to strengthen the Dispute Resolution Councils (DRC) of Mardan Division which was attended by DRC representatives from Mardan, Nowshera, Charsadda and Swabi at Police Lines Mardan. The workshop was organized by Peace & Justice Network (PJN) in collaboration with UNDP Pakistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police.

The activity was held through the EU-funded "Deliver Justice Project" aimed at making justice more accessible and inclusive in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. The DRCs are an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) forum established under the KP Police Act 2017 and provide alternative dispute resolution services at the police station, subdivision, and district level.

A statutory forum, the DRC provides services to the masses at the grassroots level enabling citizens to benefit from out of court services for dispute resolution. During the opening session of the workshop on strengthening Dispute Resolution Councils (DRCs) in Mardan Division, the District Police Officer (DPO) of Mardan

Zahoor Babar Afridi emphasized the importance of DRCs, highlighting their operational framework and the positive impact they have in resolving community disputes effectively.

He appreciated the effort of UNDP Pakistan and Peace & Justice Network for organizing this important workshop. During the session, District & Sessions Judge Muhammad Zeb Khan also highlighted the critical role of ADR and DRCs in addressing court pendency and supporting speedy justice. Ms. Caitlin Chittenden, Rule of Law & Justice Reforms Specialist, Rule of Law Program UNDP Pakistan and Syed Raza Ali, CEO Peace & Justice

Network also highlighted that the strengthening of Dispute Resolution Councils (DRCs) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was crucial to enhancing their ability to serve communities effectively in resolving disputes.

By addressing existing gaps—such as inadequate resources, limited training for members, lack of inclusivity, and insufficient public awareness—DRCs can become more efficient, accessible, and responsive to community needs. Strengthened DRCs not only provide timely and cost-effective justice but also play a vital role in reducing the burden on formal courts and fostering social harmony at the grassroots level.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit Baltistan and SAFRON, Engr. Amir Muqam exchanging views with Gulbar Khan, Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan during meeting held in Islamabad.

COMSTech, Gourmet announces Industrial Internship Program

ISLAMABAD (APP): The OIC Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTech), in collaboration with Gourmet Industries, has announced the COMSTech-Gourmet Industrial Internship Program for its first batch in January 2025.

This program aims to promote innovation, research, and skill development across various industrial sectors, offering participants practical training and exposure to advanced technologies and industrial processes.

According to COMSTech, the internship is open to applicants

from OIC member countries holding a BS/BSc or MS/MSc in relevant fields and under the age of 40.

Hosted by Gourmet Industries, the largest food processing complex in Pakistan, the program offers 10 internships lasting four weeks. The selected candidates will receive accommodation, meals, and return economy-class air travel.

The objective of the COMSTech-Gourmet Industrial Internship Program is to foster innovation and research and development (R&D) across diverse industrial sectors, including food processing, engineering, plant operations, recycling, and so forth.

Ensuring law & order in capital, top most priority: IGP

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, visited D-Chowk and various duty points on Monday.

IG Rizvi met with the officials of Islamabad Police and other law enforcement departments in order to boost their morale while performing duties to maintain the law-and-order situation in the capital, a spokesman told APP.

On the occasion, IG Rizvi has instructed the officials to be highly alert and vigilant to deal with any emerging law and order situation.

"We shall take every

possible necessary measure to protect the lives and property of citizens as well as private and commercial property and ready to thwart adventurism from any element" IG said while addressing the officials.

Rizvi further said that, all the officials, while performing duties, were putting in their best efforts to maintain the law-and-order situation.

He said all the officers have been directed to stay vigilant in their own respective areas and brief the personnel to deal with any law-and-order situation and check all the duties by themselves.

SC for intel-based system to check drugs use at educational institutions

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan's constitutional bench judge Justice Musarrat Hilali on Monday suggested introducing a system of intelligence in the educational institutions akin to that of the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in order to keep an eye on the people selling drugs to students.

During the hearing of the petition filed against the sale of narcotics in the country's educational institutions, she remarked that a large quantity of drugs were supplied to prisoners. "Even in border areas, they are not supplied in such large quantities as they are supplied in prisons."

A five-member bench, headed by Justice Aminuddin, heard the plea. Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar asked what

steps the government had taken so far to deal with the scourge. "I have read in a report that people in Balochistan have stopped consuming heroin," the judge added.

Justice Musarrat remarked jokingly, "Is it because the people have consumed the drug so much that it is now no longer available?" "I don't know which heroin has been mentioned in the report."

The judge went on to say she was pleased as well as amazed at the same time to learn about the findings of the report.

"However, KP is the most affected province," she said, adding, "I am at a loss to understand why the government of the province is not taking steps in this regard."

The bench ordered the ANF as well as the provincial government to submit

their replies in writing in which a complete mechanism should be given to eliminate the practice of drugs supply at educational institutions. The bench later adjourned the case's hearing for an indefinite time period.

Also on Monday, the bench disposed of the petition related to making rules about the Exit Control List (ECL).

Speaking on the occasion, Additional Attorney General (AAG) Amir Rehman said that it was the federal government's prerogative to frame rules for the purpose. "If somebody's name is on the ECL, it will be deleted after the passage of 180 days," he added.

The bench also sought a detailed report from the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) in the journalists harassment case.

SCP disposes off suo moto notice against Azam Swati

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court disposed of a suo moto notice against Former Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Azam Swati.

The notice was taken by the then Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Saqib Nisar on the basis of misuse of authority and transferring Islamabad Police Chief for not siding with the Minister's son in a personal land dispute.

The Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court was headed by Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan and comprising Justice Jamal Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Musarrat Hilali.

The Court observed that the matters of tax and property may be dealt with by the department concerned.



ISLAMABAD: A view of deserted roads of the Federal Capital during lockdown.

Daily Voice of Masses
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Anti-women state

Globally, women are tormented by the worst tools of exploitation: rape, sexual abuse, GBV, IPV, and more are among the most pervasive human rights violations that strip females of bodily autonomy. Unicef estimates show that over 370m women and girls today have endured rape or sexual violence before the age of 18. On the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and the launch of the UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign, which focuses on the upsurge in crimes against women and the revival of obligations as well as demands action from policymakers, Pakistan looks back on a harrowing crime graph. The human rights ministry states that in the last three years, 63,000 cases of violence against women were reported; unfortunately, most cases do not come to light. In August, the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan was alarmed by the escalation in GBV nationwide; its report, Unveiling Shadows: An Overview of Gender-Based Violence Cases, 2023, exposed an 81pc rise in the backlog of unresolved GBV cases.

While it is true that GBV incidents surge in times of conflict and socioeconomic distress, the blame for an odious state of affairs lies at the door of successive governments who did little to build protective systems, or counter patriarchal narratives. This, alongside a corrupt, feeble and prejudiced criminal justice system, has resulted in an environment where a rape occurs every two minutes due to a pathetic 3pc conviction rate. The JPC study shows a conviction rate of 5pc and a high acquittal rate of 64pc. Additionally, a slew of pro-women laws to curtail excesses against females and protect their inheritance, with ensuing amendments in several decrees, such as a mandatory prison term for honour killing, were rendered lifeless by the state's inability to end impunity. The toxic machismo in assemblies ensured that a few were watered down: Sindh raised the marriageable age of females from 16 to 18 years through the Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2014, but KP and Punjab maintained the age of marriage at 16 years. Balochistan continues with the colonial Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929.

Culture wars cannot be fought over women's bodies. Violence — the daily reality of rural and urban women — has placed Pakistan among the most dangerous countries for females. This silent epidemic, a sobering commentary on the hold of misogynistic power structures that prevent equity and diversification, has to be acknowledged. Women parliamentarians need to unite for greater female representation in parliament and agitate for women's education and stringent application of the laws. Orthodox elements, operating in consonance with the state to dilute the national discourse on women empowerment, must be defused. Without justice, the social contract between women and the state will unravel.

Right to Information a cornerstone of democracy

The RTI can play a pivotal role for spelling out correct information to public and countering misperception and misinformation

By Azad Khan

The values and laws are the manifestation of a society aspiration and traditions. It is crafted and drafted in a way to maintain the balance between aspiration of the people and public order in the society.

The laws also related to the nature of Government in place, it will be different in a communist, socialist and democratic mode of Government. In a democratic society the laws evolve through the voice of the people and through the movement of the civil societies that prove instrumental to bring the need of the specific law to the legislature.

The civil society hold discussion, sensitize the leaders and the public, develop consensus and that's how the laws are formulated reflecting the aspiration of the people. In Pakistan, most of the laws are made and enforced through an upside-down approach.

The rulers decide what laws are to be enacted and mostly under obligations of some foreign commitment or being signatory of an international treaty. Secondly laws are made to control the public or to clip or enhance the powers of some of the institutions.

When to discuss the RTI law, where it come from, there is no evidence that it is an outcome of a struggle of the civil society and whether it truly reflects the aspiration of the people. The empirical evidence for the notion is that still huge number of people in Pakistan are ignorant of this law. Nonetheless the law in question is one of the benchmarks of the democratic system regardless of its origin.

Accepting the Right to information as a fundamental right is complementary to other basic human rights as the right to expression and speech can only be utilized more forcefully when one has access to correct information.

The enforcement of law through the constitution of RTI commission makes it compelling on public service. This is the first time that there would be a public body to oversee, monitor and penalize the public office holders for not sharing information with the public. The mindset of the public officers towards official information is conservative and sharing of information with public is considered as a crime. The public office holders and offices usually offend when asked for information. This is the reason that even the research scholars have no access to the official information.

The sharing of information is usually deemed as a tool to blackmail from information seeker or accounted beyond their legal or civil right. It is similar to the restaurant owner who thinks his kitchen access to people is an intrusion to his personal affairs. The right to information to

the citizens is a way forward to strengthen the core values of democracy in the country and at the same time opening the door for good governance, better service delivery through inclusiveness, transparency and accountability.

This will enable the people to form a well-informed opinion and weed out the wrong and misguided perception especially on the issues which are controversial and most concerning to them. For instance, the Public in Balochistan is seriously concerned about the CPEC, Riko Dek, Royalty on Sui gas and employment quota.

The unavailability of correct information on these issues usually spoils the minds of the youth with misinformation and preconceived ideas. The perception of the public when questioned is found to be usually based on hearsay or a sort of conspiracy theory but at the same time there is nothing to counter

their perception based on verified information.

In addition to these big issues the public is also interested to know that where and how the development budget of their area is being spent.

They have witnessed that people who reach to assemblies turn billionaire while the people and their area keep clamoring for basic amenities of life.

The information when secured by the citizen under this law will ultimately exert pressure on the Representative of the area and they have to face most pinching and evidence-based criticism if anything found skeptical. A feature which embellishes the law is a self-Disclosure section which urges the public bodies to disclose information at their own on their websites so that people could download the requested information without knocking the door of any department.

The information shar-

ing has now become more vital than it was ever before due to the advent of social media. The social media and AI technology working beyond boundaries posing a great challenge for the countries which are more conservative and less open.

The world has not yet devised any mechanism to control misinformation on this medium because the benefits associated with internet and social media are far greater than its abuse.

The abuse of social media would ultimately rise if not countered by sharing correct information on right time and place.

The best way to counter social media is to spread correct information as timely as possible to the public by using the same social media platforms. The Right of Information can play a pivotal role for spelling out correct information to public and countering misperception and misinformation.

The challenge of informality

Umair Javed

Speaking to an audience in Riyadh earlier this year, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb labelled the undocumented economy Pakistan's "biggest challenge". Given his role, and the associated IMF-coloured pressures that come with it, his understanding of the challenge is concerned primarily with the narrow tax base and the lack of taxes collected in the country.

Each Pakistani government over the past three decades has voiced a similar concern, even if it's been phrased differently. In the past, this problem was sidestepped and bypassed through loans and support from foreign countries. With support less forthcoming and the IMF being a little less forgiving, the tax challenge is proving to be far more consequential.

Efforts to make the tax system fairer, and to make the proverbial big fish in sectors such as agriculture and retail-wholesale trade pay up, are long overdue. At the same time this recent attention towards the undocumented or informal economy pro-

vides a chance to develop an improved understanding of how many Pakistanis actually go about eking out a living (and a how a few make a lot).

To paraphrase Castells and Portes's definition, the informal economy is "all income-generating activity that is unregulated in a context where similar activities are regulated". The first thing apparent from this definition is that much of the informal or undocumented economy is different from the 'illicit economy', ie, it does not consist of trade and production of goods and services that are deemed illegal.

Most of what gets made and traded in the informal economy is licit, but some part of the process through which it is made and/or traded is not according to existing laws and policies. To give an example, a registered importer bringing in fully taxed consumer goods will be part of the formal economy, while a businessman bringing in the same goods via misdeclaration that involves bribes to custom officials, or smuggling through a land border, will

be part of the informal economy.

To give an example from the manufacturing sector, there is no law forbidding the production of soap. But the soap made by a registered factory, paying taxes and meeting environmental, social, and labour regulations, is part of the formal economy; while soap being made in a small unregistered workshop by a proprietor and their own family labour would be considered part of the informal economy.

Broadening our perspective on what the undocumented economy actually is allows several facts to emerge. First, there is a great deal of variation within the informal sector. It includes everything from smuggled tyres and cigarettes that are traded from Karachi to Khyber, to homemade soap sold only within a village or a small community. When we talk about the taxation challenges of the undocumented sector, it is important to be aware of what type of activity is worth going after.

Secondly, informality operates on a spectrum. It is possible that some aspect of any activity may

be registered or regulated. A sales tax-evading shop will likely be registered with the local Disco or it may even be filing tax returns but misreporting its actual sales and income. Similarly, a lot of smuggling takes place via trade by registered entities through formal channels like the seaports in Karachi, but laced with undeclaration and evasion.

Third, and closely related to the previous point, is the integral role of the state in actually sustaining the undocumented economy. Any person who has worked in large wholesale markets in big urban centres, or seen the nature of trade in border districts can tell you that most informal trade happens under observation of, and with approval from, state officials, especially those tasked with border security. Their reasons for allowing it might include personal gain through bribery, but also perhaps a need to maintain social peace and sustain livelihoods necessary in remote localities.

In an op-ed last week, my teacher Aasim Sajjad Akhtar pointed out

how militant activity currently wreaking havoc in two provinces is at least partly sustained by smuggling along borders otherwise manned by the state. Seen in this vein, some part of the undocumented economy challenge speaks not just to the basic arithmetic of government budgets, but of the very ability of the state to enforce rules on its own personnel, maintain territorial sovereignty, and ensure peace.

Fourth, and perhaps most crucially, the informal economy deserves far more attention in any analysis of Pakistan's societal functioning and stability. It is frequently speculated, with good reason, that pervasive undocumented economic activity may be the safety net that sustains livelihoods for millions of households in an otherwise faltering economy.

When people wonder why the crushing inflation of the past three years didn't bring people out on the streets in spontaneous rage, part of the answer could be that the undocumented economy — small-scale trading, petty production, charitable

acts, and even gift-giving among families and kin groups — is what allows basic subsistence and consumption to continue.

This is not to suggest that somehow Pakistan enjoys widespread off-the-books prosperity. Such wealth is probably only true for a small number who are accumulating large profits by undocumented means. But rather when government decision-makers talk about the challenges of the undocumented economy, two things should be kept in mind: the state is intimately involved in perpetuating informality and sustaining undocumented wealth accumulation. Therefore, the challenge of the undocumented economy is actually a challenge for the state to fix itself.

And secondly, the undocumented economy comprises immense internal diversity and sustains households who are otherwise ignored and excluded by the formal sector. Steps for documentation need to be thought through carefully to guard against harmful consequences for those who have no other option.

Protecting women

Van Nguyen

As Pakistan embraces the digital age, women face a troubling new reality: technology-facilitated violence.

Digital platforms, intended to open opportunities in education, employment, and civic engagement, have also become instruments for gender-based abuse. This threat — from cyber harassment and stalking to deepfake pornography — is more than a personal affront; it is an assault on women's digital freedom, mental well-being, and societal participation, demanding urgent and targeted reforms to reclaim online spaces for all.

This rise in technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) against women mirrors a troubling global trend that intensified during the Covid-19 pandemic as women increasingly turned to digital platforms for work, education, and social connection. This surge in abuse has exposed critical gaps in legal protections, calling for urgent regulatory reform.

According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, 85 per cent of women worldwide report experiencing some form of online harassment, with rates even higher in the Asia-Pacific region at 88pc. In Pakistan, this issue is acute: nearly 90pc of harassment complaints received by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) are filed by women, according to the Digital Rights Foundation. This abuse impedes women's access to education, employment, and political engagement: 70pc of female students report harassment, with 20pc considering dropping out while 45pc of working women face online abuse, with 15pc leaving their jobs as a result. Women in public office face triple

the online abuse of men, with 67pc contemplating leaving politics altogether. These statistics underscore the critical need for comprehensive protections to ensure women's safety in digital spaces.

The psychological and social toll of these attacks is profound. Victims report depression, anxiety, and isolation, leading many to withdraw from online spaces, which further impacts their social and professional lives. For young women, TFGBV can disrupt their education and discourage them from pursuing careers in fields such as STEM or public service.

Pakistan's Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (Peca), 2016, was introduced to address cybercrimes, yet its provisions fall short of adequately addressing TFGBV. While the Act includes clauses aimed at protecting personal dignity and privacy, it lacks explicit provisions for TFGBV and suffers from limited enforcement capacity. The FIA's Cyber Crime Wing, tasked with enforcing the Act, operates only 15 cybercrime stations with 144 officers nationwide to serve a population exceeding 240 million.

Additionally, the requirement for victims to file complaints in person discourages many women, particularly in rural areas, from reporting incidents of online violence. Peca also lacks a transnational mandate to require social media companies to share data necessary for prosecuting offenders, allowing perpetrators to act with relative impunity.

Addressing TFGBV in Pakistan requires a collaborative approach that engages governments, technology companies, feminist organisations, and digital rights advocates.

First, legal reforms

are essential. A comprehensive legal framework with specific provisions for TFGBV is needed to address current ambiguities, with laws regularly updated to keep pace with technological advances. Equally essential is strengthening enforcement by equipping the FIA's Cybercrime Wing with adequate resources, providing gender sensitivity training, increasing cybercrime stations, and eliminating the in-person reporting requirement.

Collaboration with technology companies is also vital to ensure social media platforms adhere to local regulations. Platforms should be required to share data necessary for investigations and implement transparent, gender-sensitive content moderation to curb abusive content. Leveraging AI to flag harmful content can further enhance these efforts.

Providing victims with accessible support services is crucial. Strengthening referral systems to offer counselling, legal assistance, and digital literacy training can empower women to navigate the legal landscape and protect themselves online. Public awareness campaigns are also key to educating communities about TFGBV, fostering greater understanding of its impacts, and promoting proactive responses.

Addressing TFGBV is not just about safeguarding victims — it's about realising a Pakistan where digital opportunities are equally available to all. By creating a digital space that is inclusive, safe, and empowering, we unlock the full potential of women's contributions to Pakistan's progress, ensuring that no one is left behind in the journey towards a just and equitable society. — Courtesy Dawn

The greatest asset

Huma Yusuf

It's not easy being a child in Pakistan. Just this past week, children across the country have endured the following: some caught polio; some were targeted in sectarian violence; millions were exposed to toxic levels of air pollution; some were dragged out of their school vans at gunpoint and kidnapped; millions had to stay away from their schools due to environmental degradation and political instability.

And that's aside from the systemic issues. Twenty-six million children are permanently out of school; 70 per cent of all 10-year-olds cannot read or understand basic texts. According to 2018 data, Pakistan has one of the highest rates of child malnutrition in the developing world, with 33pc of children underweight and 44pc stunted. Almost 800,000 are severely wasted, says Unicef. Meanwhile, climate shocks, including droughts, floods and heatwaves, are affecting Pakistani children, undermining their access to food, healthcare and education. And this challenge will be exacerbated as the number of children affected by climate crises will increase fourfold by 2050.

This is the baseline for Pakistani children in a world that is not going to be kind to them over the coming decades, as made clear in The Future of Childhood in a Changing World, a new Unicef report.

We cannot ignore this demographic. By the 2050s, Pakistan will be among the four countries that is home to one-third of the world's children, along with India, China and Nigeria. We will have 129m children, comprising 32.9pc of the population (around 5.5pc of the global child population). In-

deed, Pakistan is one of the few countries in the world where the percentage of children in the population remains stable — rather than reduces — over the coming decades.

There will be some differences in the state of childhood over the next quarter century, however. The report captures these in the form of 'megatrends' set to define childhood through the 2050s: demographic transitions, climate and environmental crises, and the growing prevalence of frontier technologies.

Here's what this means for us: more Pakistani children will live in urban settings, which bring different pressures ranging from heatwaves to severe inequality (for example, the report points out that urban children in the poorest quintile are twice as likely to die before they turn five than children in the richest quintile). More children will also migrate (internally or abroad), and so endure the challenges of displacement and dislocation, including issues ranging from food insecurity to family disruption. And more will be the victim of environmental hazards. The severe toll of this over the coming years is best understood by considering a contemporary — and currently horribly relevant — data point: that air pollution is the second leading risk factor for death in children younger than five years.

Much of the report focuses on the potentially transformative role of new technologies: "Connectivity and digital skills, when used correctly in learning environments, could equip millions for future jobs, boosting economies and breaking generational cycles of inequality. AI and neurotechnology could drive transformations in education and

healthcare." But the report is quick to recognise that technological advances and resulting advantages will not be evenly spread. Today, over 95pc of people in high-income countries have an internet connection, compared to 26pc in low-income countries. Poor investment in digital infrastructure, lack of funding, and growing obsessions with limiting internet permissions means that this digital gap will not be addressed anytime soon, and may in fact worsen.

Pakistan is not currently on a trajectory to reap the benefits of neurotechnologies or artificial intelligence. Instead, our youth will be subject to their pitfalls — surveillance, exploitation, manipulation and discrimination. The spread of AI will only worsen the digital divide experienced by young Pakistanis, particularly those who are already marginalised on the basis of language, ethnicity or gender.

Some may remember how at the turn of the century Pakistan was in a thrall to fantasies about how the country would reap its demographic dividend. Two decades in, we know that the predicament of our youth will be dire — much as described at the outset of this piece, possibly worse — unless significant additional investment is made in education, healthcare, job creation, climate resilience and adaptation, digital literacy and infrastructure, and maternal and infant health.

Instead of prioritising these, our state is squandering its resources on quashing political opposition and stifling free speech. In the name of national security, we are forgetting to secure the nation's greatest asset and treasure — its children. — Courtesy Dawn

Sindh CM reviews city projects, seeks date-wise completion deadlines

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presiding over a review meeting of three important projects of the city - Karimabad Underpass, Korangi Causeway Bridge and Malir Expressway directed the local government department to submit him a date completion plan.

"Why is this ordinate delay being faced in completing the projects when the allocated funds have been released well in time?" he questioned the local government

department. He directed them to submit to him date wise completion plan for the three projects.

The meeting was held at CM House on Monday and was attended by Minister Local Govt Saeed Ghani, Mayor Karachi Muratza Wahab, PSCM Agha Wasif, Commissioner Karachi Hassan Naqvi, Secretary Local Govt Khalid Hyder Shah, Projects PDs Niaz Soomro, Zulfiqar Abro, Member P&D Sikandar.

The Karimabad Underpass project has

been initiated by the Sindh government through KDA.

During the briefing, the CM was told that the underpass is a Rs3.8 billion project.

The length of the underpass is 1080 meters of which 300 meters have been completed. Out of 212 precast Girders, 151 have been completed and overall the physical progress of the project is 35 per cent.

The chief minister directed the local government department to provide a proper and

effective drainage system to the underpass so that rainwater may not accumulate in it.

To a question, CM Shah was told that a Roundabout in front of Meena Bazaar and Bazaar-e-Faisla was being developed to regulate the traffic movement.

The chief minister directed Minister Local Government Saeed Ghani and Mayor Karachi to expedite the construction work, which was causing problems in the flow of traffic.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan in a group photo with delegation of Ulama Mashaikh led by Pir Nazim Hussain Shah at Governor House.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah reviews progress on key Karachi projects: Karimabad Underpass, Korangi Causeway Bridge and Malir Expressway, at CM House in Karachi.

Azma Bokhari says: Police officer martyred, 70 others injured by 'Tehreek-e-Fasad'

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Information Minister Azma Bokhari has condemned actions of "Tehreek-e-Fasad", accusing the group of martyring a police officer and severely injuring 70 other officers.

At a press conference at the DGPR, she said, "Bushra Bibi, this is not a jungle where you can act like a 'Sultana Daku' to free your husband." Azma Bokhari said that Bushra Bibi was inciting Pashtuns to attack the state, leading armed mobs, and adding a religious veneer to their aggression with chants of "Allah-ho-Akbar". She criticized her for posing as a guardian of Islamic values

while lacking even basic knowledge, such as properly reciting "Durood Sharif". Azma Bokhari asserted that the PTI and its armed factions were seeking casualties to advance their disruptive political agenda. "Life continues as normal across Punjab. Not even a bird has stirred here," she said and emphasized that commercial and social activities remain uninterrupted in the province.

Azma Bokhari condemned continued violence by "Tehreek-e-Fasad" on the second day of unrest, which included torching police vehicles and attacking officers.



LAHORE: Provincial Information Minister, Azma Bokhari addressing a press conference in the Provincial Capital.

Groundbreaking initiative announced to combat air pollution in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb announced a groundbreaking initiative under Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's leadership to combat air pollution in Punjab.

As part of this effort, 30 advanced air quality monitors are being installed across various cities in the province, with Lahore's monitoring capacity increasing to eight units. The new monitors in Lahore are strategically placed at THQ Kahna, Jiya Bhagga Police Station, Shahdara Teaching Hospital, Punjab University, and Wildlife Park, Raiwind. Other cities benefiting from this initiative include Rawalpindi (3 monitors),

Faisalabad, Sheikhpura, and Sialkot (1 monitor each), as well as Multan, Gujranwala, and Bahawalpur (2 monitors each). Sargodha (2 monitors) and Dera Ghazi Khan (1 monitor) are expected to activate their systems by the end of this month. These devices are linked to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) central control room for real-time monitoring. The Senior Minister highlighted that the collected air quality data will be integrated with the global Air Quality Index (AQI) system, providing accurate and reliable information to the public and researchers. This system is designed to facilitate timely actions against pollution.



LAHORE: Members of Women in Struggle for Empowerment (WISE) are holding rally to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, at Lahore press club.

Five cops among seven injured in Tank

PESHAWAR (APP): An attack on a police picket in Tank district left at least seven people including five policemen injured, police informed on Monday.

The miscreants attacked Gul Imam police checkpoint with heavy arms, leaving seven people injured. The injured included five policemen and two drivers of the poultry-carrying vehicles.

The injured were shifted to Tank hospital from where two of the injured were referred to Dera Ismail Khan in critical condition.

Large police force reached the area soon after the incident and started a search operation to nab the involved.

Four killed, two injured in Bahawalpur tanker accident

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Four persons including three children were killed and two others sustained injuries in a tanker accident that hit a house near Pull Sadiqabad area of Bahawalpur district, TV channels quoting police reported on Monday.

According to initial reports, a rashly-driven tanker hit a house located near Pull Sadiqabad area of Bahawalpur district.

As a result, three children and a driver of the water tanker died on the spot. The two other persons were also injured in the same incident.

Locals and Police rushed to the site and started shifting the dead and injured to nearby hospital.

Smog, fog expected in parts of Punjab & Sindh: PMD

ISLAMABAD (APP): Smog and fog are likely to persist in isolated plain areas of Punjab and upper Sindh during the morning and night, as per the latest forecast from the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD).

The synoptic situation indicated that continental air was prevailing across most parts of the country, maintaining a pattern of cold and dry weather.

CM Punjab says: Govt committed to safeguarding women's rights

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said that the protection of women is a top priority for the Punjab government, which remains fully committed to safeguarding their rights and ensuring their well-being.

In her message on International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women being celebrated on Monday, the CM said the honor of mothers, sisters and daughters is a part of our social traditions and religious values. "Women are my red line, violence or cruelty against them is absolutely not tolerable" she said.

The CM said that Islam gave orders to give women complete respect and rights, adding that the honor and respect of women, including

daughters and sisters, is the Sunnah of our beloved Holy Prophet (PBUH). In the Holy Quran and Sunnah, it is not only forbidden to raise hand on women but also to be gentle towards them.

The chief minister said that those who commit violence against women are cowards and criminals and they will be dealt with an iron hand, adding that Punjab has the honor of establishing a virtual women's police station for the first time. She said women in trouble can file complaints with the virtual police station. She underscored that women can get immediate police help in an emergency by pressing the panic button.

CM Maryam Nawaz said that the police helpline for women is also fully functional, adding that a violence-free

Governor briefed on relief activities in Kurram

PESHAWAR (APP): Chairman of the Red Crescent Merged Districts, Imran Wazir, has prepared an initial report on the damages and the required assistance.

According to the preliminary report from the Red Crescent, 250 families from Bagan and 175 families from Alizai have been displaced due to the conflict. According to Chairman PRCS Malik Habib Orakzai, 915 TDPs have been provided with food and drinking water over the past two days.

Following the Governor's instructions, a delegation from the Red Crescent Merged Districts

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HYDERABAD: Sindh Prisons Minister, Ali Hassan Zardari interacts with prisoners during his surprise visit at Central Jail to review the facilities in the jail, in Hyderabad.

Intention to weak country not unacceptable, unbearable & intolerable: Nasir Shah

SUKKUR (APP): Provincial Minister for Energy, Planning and Development, Syed Nasir Hussain Shah has said that political parties organize demonstrations to record their protests.

Since PTI has already recorded their protest, they should now return home, he said adding that if their intention is to weaken the country, it is unacceptable, unbearable and intolerable.

He said that Pakistan comes first; if Pakistan exists, then we exist. He said that the Pakistan Peoples Party supports peaceful protests, but the PTI's track record is worse. He stated this while talking to the media during the ceremony of the first OGDCL National Case Writing Competition at IBA University Sukkur on Monday.

Syed Nasir Hussain Shah said that people were

misled through social media, they didn't do any work. When PTI was in government, their performance was such that 23 by-elections were held, they lost 19 of them, but they were successful in creating false narratives, he added. The Minister said that the Jewish lobby strongly supported them and they were previously against America, but now they have sat with them, he said.

Shah said that when the results of the last general elections came and PTI's numbers were higher, the Pakistan Peoples Party supported them and invited them to form a government, but their stubbornness persisted.

On the issue of the new canals, he said that Pakistan Peoples Party is a national party, and they won't compromise on anything related to Sindh.

Punjab Governor says: Islam teaches us lesson of peace and security

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that the visit of the Belarus delegation to Pakistan is welcome for the country's economy. The visit will promote bilateral cooperation between the two countries in various sectors, including trade. He said this while meeting a delegation of Ulama Mashaikh led by Pir Nazim Hussain Shah at the Governor House Lahore today.

Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that the high-level delegation of Belarus has come to Pakistan for economic improvement and unfortunately the

capital is once again under attack. He said that the call for protest by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf at this time is tantamount to anti-nationalism. Governor Punjab said that the PTI is demanded to avoid the politics of sit-ins and sit at the negotiating table, which is the country's improvement. He said that whenever there is improvement in the country's economy and other sectors, PTI sometimes attacks the federation under the guise of sit-ins and sometimes protests. Punjab Governor said that Bushra Bibi has made a statement against the country that has supported Pakistan in

every difficult time. He said that I ask Bushra Bibi not to attack the country's security for politics. Punjab Governor said that Saudi Arabia has always considered Pakistan its second home and Saudi Arabia's role in rescheduling a loan of Rs 3 trillion is important.

Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan further said that the Ulama Mashaikh have always played a full role for the security of the country. He said that the religion of Islam teaches us the lesson of peace and security. Punjab Governor said that terrorism in the country is a big obstacle to peace and security.

People are not with so called revolutionists: Saiful Malook

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League (N) Lahore President Saiful Malook Khokhar said on Monday that people had completely rejected so called revolutionists and those spreading chaos.

In a statement issued here on Monday, he said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf was using people for their personal motives.

Saiful Malook Khokhar said that now people were well aware of the real face of PTI.

He said that with the grace of Allah Almighty country was moving in right direction.

Whenever leaders from foreign countries arrive in Pakistan with an aim of making an investment, PTI gives call for sit-ins and protests", he added.



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister, Maryam Nawaz Sharif exchanging views with Dr. Emma Fan, Country Director of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Pakistan during meeting held in Lahore.

All set to launch 'Suthra Punjab' Program on 3 Dec

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab government is set to launch a new, standardized and sustainable solid waste management system under the "Maryam Nawaz ka Punjab, Sathra Punjab" programme. The event will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif scheduled to be held on December 3, 2024.

Preparations for the event were finalized in a meeting chaired by the Provincial Minister for Local Government, Secretary Local Government Shakil Ahmad Mian and the CEOs of waste management companies for their tireless efforts to bring the Chief Minister's vision to fruition.

thoroughly reviewed, and necessary directives were issued. LWMC CEO Babar Sahib Din provided a briefing on the event's logistics.

Minister Zeeshan Rafiq expressed pride in being part of this unique public-private partnership project. He said the government was committed to fulfilling the responsibility entrusted by the Chief Minister to provide the public with essential services. He also extended congratulations to Secretary Local Government Shakil Ahmad Mian and the CEOs of waste management companies for their tireless efforts to bring the Chief Minister's vision to fruition.

LHC acquits murder convict after 7 years

LAHORE (APP): A Lahore High Court (LHC) division bench on Monday acquitted a condemned prisoner in a murder case after seven years in prison.

The bench, comprising Justice Shehram Sarwar Chaudhry and Justice Tariq Saleem Sheikh, passed the orders while allowing an appeal filed by the convict, Muhammad Dilawar, against the death sentence by trial court in the case.

The defence counsel argued before the court that the trial court had failed to properly assess the facts and handed down the death sentence to his client despite clear

inconsistencies in the statements of the witnesses. He submitted that both Muhammad Dilawar and Sabir were nominated in the case, but the trial court had already acquitted Sabir due to discrepancies in witness statements. He pleaded with the court to set aside the death sentence and acquit his client. However, the prosecution argued that the trial court had awarded the death sentence on merit and pleaded with the court to dismiss the appeal.

After hearing detailed arguments from both parties, the bench allowed the appeal and acquitted Muhammad Dilawar.



KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit, Excise Taxation and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon addresses to media persons during press conference, in Karachi.

Tanveer for promoting industrial, agricultural trade ties with Belarus

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain here on Monday highlighted the importance of expanding bilateral trade relations with Belarus specially in the industrial and agricultural sectors.

The minister stressed the need to explore ways and means to increase the industrial cooperation between the two countries in diverse fields.

During a meeting with Belarusian delegation, which was led by Minister for Industries Aliaksandr Yafimua, Rana Tanveer said Pakistan has considerable export potential with Belarus for items like inflatable footballs, articles of bedding and similar stuffed items, sports and outdoor games equipment, footwear, rubber, plastic and metal products, said a news release.

During the meeting, both sides reaffirmed their

commitment to advancing the partnership between Pakistan and Belarus in multifaceted areas.

Highlighting the trade potential, Minister Yafimua shared that Belarus imports goods worth \$17.2 billion annually, noting that Pakistan's current share in this trade is not reflective of its true export potential.

He said that Pakistani products will be given space in the Belarusian market. He identified key products that Pakistan could export to Belarus, including inflatable footballs, bedding items, sports and outdoor equipment, footwear, and rubber, plastic, and metal goods.

Rana Tanveer discussed cooperation in the field of agricultural machinery and tractor manufacturing plants, following which the delegation showed keen interest in the production

of agricultural machinery and establishing tractor plants besides technology transfer under Joint Ventures (JVs).

The minister extended invitation to the Belarusian counterpart to start a pilot project on agricultural productivity enhancement in Pakistan.

Similarly, he said M/s Millat Group dealing with agricultural machinery wanted a JV for manufacturing agricultural equipments in Pakistan.

During the meeting, both sides also deliberated on the prospects of Belarusian investment and JVs in the area of electric vehicles (EVs).

Rana Tanveer said that around thirty-one companies have issued manufacturing licenses by the Engineering Development Board (EDB) enabling them to produce two/three-wheeler EVs in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan and Belarusian Minister Alexey Kushnarenko witness the signing of 8 MoUs/Agreements at the Pakistan-Belarus Business Forum 2024.

Marble City reflects govt's commitment to sustainable industrial uplift: CM Murad

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that Marble City Karachi reflects the Sindh government's commitment to sustainable industrial development, economic growth, and job creation, signalling a brighter future for the province's marble and granite sector.

This he said while presiding over a joint meeting of the Sindh Investment Department, its subsidiary organisation - Sindh Economic Zones Management Company (SEZMC) and private

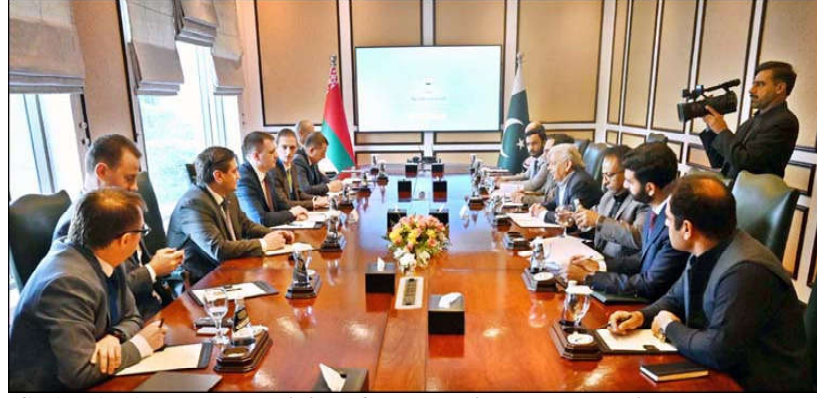
partners - Kainatt Enterprises & Hassan Constructions.

The meeting and signing ceremony were held at CM House and were attended by CM Special Assistant Qasim Naveed, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Secretary to CM Raheem Shaikh, Secretary Industries Yaseen Shar, Secretary Investment Khuram Shahzad, CEO Sindh Economic Zone Authority (SEZA) Zeerat Shafiqat, Azeem Uqaili, and others.

Private partners - Asim Siddiqui, Churchill

Shafiqat and others also attended the meeting.

In a major step towards industrial and economic growth, the Sindh government has signed a concession agreement for Marble City Karachi, a state-of-the-art industrial zone designed to revolutionise marble and granite production, the CM said and added that the project, managed by the Sindh Economic Zones Management Company (SEZMC), is strategically located in Karachi, Pakistan's primary trade and industrial hub.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain meeting with Minister of Industry Belarus, Aliaksandr Yafimau.

CM Punjab, ADB official discuss development projects

LAHORE (APP): Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif met with Country Director for Pakistan Resident Mission of Asian Development Bank, Dr. Emma Xiaoqin Fan, to discuss ongoing development projects, strengthening of the economy, providing cooperation for improving basic infrastructure along with enhancing cooperation in agriculture, health, education, environmental cooperation and digital development.

Matters pertaining to the 'Jalalpur Irrigation Project' and 'Clean Energy' came under discussion. Country Director Asian Development Bank Dr. Emma Xiaoqin Fan, appreciated steps being taken by the Punjab government for women empowerment and other public welfare initiatives.

The Chief Minister appreciated financial and technical support of Asian Development Bank in various projects of Punjab. She said, "ADB's is playing a pivotal role in prosperity of the people and restoration of the national economy."

She added, "The Punjab government is moving forward under a comprehensive plan to attain socio-economic development. Collaboration with the Asian Development Bank will further strengthen development objectives in Punjab."

Dr. Emma Xiaoqin Fan said, "Asian Development Bank is keen to further expand its cooperation with Pakistan, especially Punjab. Punjab's climate policy will prove to be beneficial for the environment and national economy."

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Five ships namely, Apollon D, Han Ren, OM Singapore, Amir Gas and Alba Gas scheduled to load/offload, Containers, Rice, Palm oil and LPG, berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Liquid Terminal, and Oil Terminal respectively during last 24 hours.

Meanwhile four more ships, America, Chemroad Wing, Hafnia Precision, and Hafnia Eagle carrying Containers, Chemicals and Gas oil also arrived at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim during the same period. Nine ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, Aqua 1 and Singapore Bulker left the port on Monday morning and three more ships, Amir Gas, OM Singapore and Apollon-D are expected to sail on today afternoon.

Rupee remains unchanged against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Rupee on Monday remained unchanged against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs277.75.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.30 and Rs 278.80 respectively.

The price of Euro decreased by Rs 1.08 to close at Rs 290.27 against the last day's closing of Rs 291.35, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs 1.79, whereas a decrease of 55 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 348.81 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 349.36.

The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal remained stagnant to close at Rs 75.62 and Rs 73.97 respectively.

PQG, ILMA university sign MoU to enhance talent pool in Islamic finance industry

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pak-Qatar Group (PQG), Pakistan's premier and pioneer Islamic financial services group, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ILMA University, marking a significant step towards enhancing the talent pool in the Islamic finance industry.

The partnership aims to address Pakistan's capacity constraints in Islamic finance and Takaful by leveraging ILMA University's pool of professionals with expertise in business and

technology said a news release issued here on Monday.

This collaboration will enable Pak-Qatar Family Takaful Limited to enhance its service quality by inducting skilled talent from ILMA University across relevant fields. Kamran Ali Khan, Head of Human Resources and Training at Pak-Qatar Group expressed enthusiasm about the collaboration: "We are pleased to access ILMA University's pool of talented individuals with expert knowledge in business and technology."

Gold prices dip Rs.4,300 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of 24 karat per tola gold decreased further by Rs 4,300 and was sold at Rs 278,400 on Monday against its sale at Rs 182,700, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also went down by Rs.3,657 to Rs.238,683 from Rs. 242,370 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold decreased to Rs 218,793 from Rs 222,172.

The price of per tola gold declined by Rs 50 to Rs 3,400 whereas that of ten gram silver went down by Rs 42.87 to Rs 2,914.95.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah along with others witness the signing ceremony of the Concession agreement between Sindh Government and private partners Kainatt Enterprises and Hassan Constructions for the development of Marble City, at CM House in Karachi.

PSX witnesses bullish trend, gains 281 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Monday, gaining 281.55 points more points, a positive change of 0.29 percent, closing at 98,079.78 points as compared to 97,798.23 points on the last trading day.

A total of 640,258,528 shares were traded during the day as compared to 1,249,092,089 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 25.623 billion

against Rs.45,475 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 460 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 220 of them recorded gains and 185 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 55 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Hascol Petrol with 64,823,622 shares at Rs 12.35 per share, Cnergycio PK with 48,065,578 shares at Rs 4.71 per share and Fauji Foods Limited with 40,919,425 shares at Rs.12.26 per share.

SNGLPL disconnects 186 connections

LAHORE (APP): A crackdown against illegal gas usage continues as the Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGLPL) disconnected 186 connections in various regions, including Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and Islamabad.

In addition to the disconnections, a fine of Rs 7 million was imposed on people.

Finance Minister stresses Reforms in DAC to promote transparency, good governance

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Monday visited the office of the Auditor-General of Pakistan (AGP) where he expressed his appreciation for the work being done by the DAGP, the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) of Pakistan, stressing the importance of reforms in ensuring transparency and accountability in government finances.

The Finance Minister took keen interest in the professional work carried out by the Department of the Auditor-General of Pakistan and emphasized upon reforms in the paradigm of Department Accounts Committee, making the Principal Accounting Officers pay heed to the audit recommendations timely for promotion of transparency and good governance.

Director General (Policy), office of the Auditor-General of Pakistan gave a detailed presentation on the working of Department of

the Auditor-General of Pakistan covering its mandate and scope, interaction with the stakeholders, the internal governance and integrity mechanism and the impact of audit activity on strengthening the internal controls, stabilization of economy and benefits for the citizens.

He was apprised about the audit reports which are professionally written and contain audit recommendations, are based on independently and apolitically executed audit programs to assist the parliament and provincial legislatures in promoting transparency, accountability and good governance.

To make auditing a collaborative exercise, all PAOs, CSOs and even the general public were approached for their inputs for next year Audit Plans.

The finance minister was apprised about the challenges being faced by Department in managing the huge multiple tasks as enshrined in the Constitution.



QUETTA: A vendor arranging and displaying oranges on handcart to attract the customers at Double Road.

PBF welcomes Belarus President with hopes for flourishing bilateral trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) warmly welcomed the President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko expressing hope that this high-level visit will mark the beginning of a new era in bilateral trade and economic cooperation between the two nations.

The visit is expected to bring forth significant opportunities for strengthening trade ties, particularly in the agricultural, manufacturing, and technology sectors.

Talking to APP on Monday, President of PBF, Khawaja Mehboob ur Rehman, emphasized the importance of the upcoming agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) that are set to be signed in Islamabad, particularly in the area of the tractor industry.

He also highlighted that the establishment of a tractor manufacturing facility in Pakistan would greatly benefit the country's farming

community by providing them with access to advanced agricultural technology, thereby improving productivity and efficiency in the sector.

"The development of the tractor industry in Pakistan, in collaboration with Belarus, is a step towards modernizing our agricultural sector. This will not only support our farmers but also strengthen the overall economy," said Khawaja Mehboob ur Rehman.

He stressed the need for direct flight connectivity between Islamabad and Minsk to facilitate business exchanges, tourism, and trade. "Direct flights between our capitals would help in building stronger trade links and foster greater people-to-people connections," he added.

Chief Organiser of PBF, Ahmad Jawad said Pakistan's exports to Belarus were valued at just US\$343.46 thousand in 2023, according to the United Nations COMTRADE database.



LAHORE: A group photo of members of Lahore Chamber of Commerce after re counting of votes in the Provincial Capital.

145 more properties sealed for illegal commercial use

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Development Authority (LDA) intensified its crackdown on illegal commercial buildings and defaulters of commercial property fees, sealing more than 145 properties in various areas of the city on Monday.

The operation which is being carried out on a daily basis follows the directives of LDA Director General Tahir Farooq. The LDA teams conducted operations in several areas, including New Muslim

Town, Shadman, Sabzazar, Gulberg, Garden Town and UET Society.

In New Muslim Town and Shadman, more than 35 properties were sealed due to illegal commercial use and non-payment of commercial fees. Similarly, 28 properties in Sabzazar were sealed for the same reasons. In UET Society, 45 properties were sealed for illegal commercial use, while 37 properties in Gulberg and Garden Town faced similar actions.

Economy showed significant improvements, fiscal surplus recorded at Rs.1.8 trillion

ISLAMABAD (APP): Advisor to Finance Minister on Economic and Financial Reforms, Khuram Schehzad said on Monday that country's economy has made remarkable improvement as indicated by economic indicators, including fiscal balance that swung into a surplus of Rs1.8 trillion in the first quarter.

The advisor, while addressing media here, said the country's fiscal deficit has been transformed into a 1.5% surplus, a significant improvement

from last year's around 1% deficit during the same period. This achievement marks the first fiscal surplus in 24 years, the advisor added.

Shehzad attributed the turnaround to effective management of revenues and expenditures, saying that in the first quarter, the fiscal balance was in surplus, with revenues increasing and expenditures being controlled.

The advisor also highlighted the improvement in the current account balance during

July-October of the current fiscal year, which has turned into a surplus of around \$218 billion during the first four months of the current fiscal year.

Khuram said exports have shown an 8% increase, reaching \$13 billion in the July-October period, up from \$12 billion during the same period last year.

He said, the primary surplus has also witnessed noticeable improvement in first quarter as compared to last year, adding the primary surplus was recorded at 2.6 percent.

Iran's Khamenei calls for death sentence for Israeli leaders

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: The supreme leader of Iran, which backs the Hamas and Hezbollah militants fighting Israel in Gaza and Lebanon, said on Monday that death sentences should be issued for Israeli leaders, not arrest warrants. Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was commenting on a decision by the International Criminal Court to issue arrest warrants on Thursday for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, his former defence chief and a Hamas leader, Ibrahim Al-Masri.

"They issued an arrest warrant, that's not enough... Death sentence

must be issued for these criminal leaders", Khamenei said, referring to the Israeli leaders.

In their decision, the ICC judges said there were reasonable grounds to believe Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant were criminally responsible for acts including murder, persecution and starvation as a weapon of war as part of a "widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population of Gaza".

The decision was met with outrage in Israel, which called it shameful and absurd.

Gaza residents expressed hope it would help end the violence and bring

those responsible for war crimes to justice.

Israel has rejected the jurisdiction of the Hague-based court and denies war crimes in Gaza.

The warrant for a Hamas leader, Ibrahim Al-Masri, lists charges of mass killings during the Oct. 7, 2023, attacks on Israel that triggered the war on the long-blockaded Palestinian enclave, and also charges of rape and the taking of hostages.

Israel has said it killed Masri, also known as Mohammed Deif, in an airstrike in July but Hamas has neither confirmed nor denied this.



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, co-leaders Lars Klingbeil and Saskia Esken walk to attend a press conference to announce Scholz as the officially nominated candidate for the upcoming general elections after a Social Democratic Party (SPD) board meeting in Berlin, Germany.

Trump's mass deportation plan could end up hurting economic growth

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: President-elect Donald Trump's headline immigration proposals—including a controversial mass deportation plan—could prove economically damaging, analysts say, with US sectors that rely heavily on foreign workers like agriculture and construction especially hard hit.

US authorities estimate that there are around 11 million unauthorised people living in the United States, the vast majority of whom come from Mexico.

Around 8.3m unauthorised people were in the labour force in 2022, according to a recent estimate from the Pew Research Center. That was equivalent to just under five per cent of the overall

workforce.

"Today our cities are flooded with illegal aliens," Trump said on the campaign trail earlier this year, adding: "Americans are being squeezed out of the labour force and their jobs are taken."

The reality, however, is more complex; many of the sectors that could be the hardest-hit have long struggled to attract US workers. "The construction and agriculture industries would lose at least one in eight workers, while in hospitality, about one in 14 workers would be deported due to their undocumented status," the non-profit American Immigration Council (AIC) said in a recent report on Trump's deportation plans.

Three Muslims killed in India amid Mughal-era mosque 'survey'

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Three Muslim men were killed as protesters opposing the survey of the Mughal-era Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal in Uttar Pradesh clashed with the police on Sunday, The Wire reported.

It quoted local Muslims as alleging that the three men were killed in police firing. But the administration claimed that they were killed in cross-firing between the members of the mob, which attacked the police with stones from three sides and fired bullets at them.

A senior government official claimed that the police only lobbed teargas and used plastic bullets to disperse the protesters and evacuate the survey team from the area after the crowd rained stones at them.

Russia reportedly captures a Briton fighting for Ukraine as Russian troops advance

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Russia's military captured a British national fighting with Ukrainian troops who have occupied part of Russia's Kursk region, according to reports Monday, as Moscow began daylight drone attacks on civilian areas of Ukraine and its ground forces accelerated gains along parts of the front line.

The Briton was identified by state news agency Tass and other media as James Scott Rhys Anderson. Tass quoted him as saying that he had served as a signalman in the British army for four years and then joined the International Legion of Ukraine, formed early on in Russia's nearly 3-year-old war against its neighbor.

On the battlefield, Ukrainian forces are straining to hold at bay a push by Russia's bigger army at places in the eastern Donetsk region. Russian forces recently have gained ground at "a significantly quicker rate" than they did in the whole of last year, according to the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington think tank. The Russians have detected and are exploiting weaknesses in the Ukrainian defenses, it said in an analysis late Sunday. The war surpassed 1,000 days last week, and the milestone coincided with a significant escalation in hostilities.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's air force said Russia is adapting its drone tactics, as it fired 145 Shahed drones at Ukraine.



Police detain a supporter of India's main opposition Congress party during a protest against Indian billionaire Gautam Adani, in New Delhi, India.

Wildlife monitoring tech used to harass, spy on women in India

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Camera traps, drones and other technology for monitoring wildlife like tigers and elephants are being used to intimidate, harass and even spy on women in India, researchers said on Monday.

In one particularly egregious example, a photo of an autistic woman relieving herself in the forest was shared by local men on social media, prompting villagers to destroy nearby camera traps. Trishant Simlai, a researcher at the UK's Cambridge University, spent 14 months interviewing some 270 people who live near the Corbett Tiger Reserve in northern India.



Civil defense members and people work at a damaged site in the aftermath of Israeli strikes, amid the ongoing hostilities between Hezbollah and Israeli forces, in Beirut's Basta neighbourhood, Lebanon.

Iran to hold nuclear talks with three European powers

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Iran said that it would hold nuclear talks in the coming days with the three European countries that initiated a UN Security Council resolution against it adopted by the UN's atomic watchdog.

Foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said the meeting of the deputy foreign ministers of Iran, France, Germany and the United Kingdom would take place on Friday.

"A range of regional and international issues and topics, including the issues of Palestine and Lebanon, as well as the nuclear issue, will be discussed," the

spokesman said in a foreign ministry statement.

Baghaei described the upcoming meeting as a continuation of talks held with the countries in September on the sidelines of the annual session of the UN General Assembly in New York. Japan's Kyodo news agency, which first reported that the meeting would take place on Friday in Geneva, said Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian's government was seeking a solution to the nuclear impasse ahead of the inauguration in January of US president-elect Donald Trump.

Taiwan reports Chinese balloon, first time in six months

Monitoring Desk
TAIPEI: Taiwan's defence ministry on Monday reported that a Chinese balloon had been detected over the sea to Taiwan's north, the first time since April it has reported such an incident in what Taipei views as part of a pattern of harassment by Beijing.

Taiwan, which China claims as its own territory, complained that in the weeks leading up to its presidential election in January Chinese balloon activity took place at an "unprecedented scale".

It described the incidents as part of a Chinese pressure campaign - so-called grey-zone warfare designed to exhaust a foe using irregular tactics without open combat.

Taiwan strongly objects to China's sovereignty claims and says only the island's people can decide their future.

The ministry, in its regular morning update on Chinese military activities over the previous 24 hours, said the single balloon was detected at 6:21 p.m. (10:21 GMT) on Sunday 60 nautical miles (111 km) to the north of Taiwan's Keelung port.

It then vanished some two hours later, having flown at an altitude of 33,000 ft (10,000 metres), but without crossing Taiwan itself.

Israeli ambassador to US says Hezbollah ceasefire deal could come 'within days'

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: The Israeli ambassador to Washington says that a cease-fire deal to end fighting between Israel and the Lebanon-based Hezbollah could be reached "within days".

Ambassador Mike Herzog told Israeli Army Radio on Monday that there remained "points to finalize" and that any deal required agreement from the government. But he said "we are close to a deal" and that "it can happen within days."

Among the issues that remain is an Israeli demand to reserve the right to act should Hezbollah violate its obligations under the emerging deal. The deal seeks to push Hezbollah and Israeli troops out of southern Lebanon. Israel accuses Hezbollah of not adhering to a U.N. resolution that ended the 2006 war between the sides that made similar provisions, and Israel has concerns that Hezbollah could stage a Hamas-style cross-border attack from southern Lebanon.



Opposition and the ruling coalition deputies brawl as tensions rose over Novi Sad's fatal train station roof collapse, during a session in the Serbian parliament hall in Belgrade, Serbia.

EU offers Morocco 200 million euros in quake reconstruction aid

Monitoring Desk
RABAT: The European Union plans to offer Morocco 200 million euros (\$210 million) to help with post-earthquake reconstruction. EU commissioner for neighbourhood and enlargement Oliver Varhelyi said on Monday, as the two parties navigate judicial headwinds.

The 6.8 magnitude quake, Morocco's deadliest since 1960, struck on Sept 8, 2023, killing more than 2,900 people and damaging vital infrastructure. Morocco said it would invest in a post-earthquake reconstruction plan that includes the upgrade of infrastructure in five years.

The EU will increase its total quake reconstruction aid to Morocco to 1 billion euros. Varhelyi told a press conference in Rabat following talks with foreign minister Nasser Bourita.

Morocco was a "reliable" partner, receiving 5.2 billion euros in EU investments over the last five years, he said.

Maximum term demanded in French rape trial for husband who drugged wife

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: French prosecutors said on Monday they were seeking the maximum 20-year jail term for the man charged with enlisting dozens of strangers to rape his heavily-sedated wife, in a trial that has shaken France.

Dominique Pelicot has since September been in the dock in the southern city of Avignon with 49 other men for organising the rapes and sexual abuse of his now ex-wife Gisele Pelicot. One man is being tried in absentia. The case has shocked a France still working through its version of the #MeToo movement, with a prosecutor telling the court that the trial needed to herald a fundamental change in relations between men and women.

"Twenty years is a lot because it is 20 years of a life... But it is both a lot and too little. Too little in view of the seriousness of the acts that were committed and repeated," prosecutor Laure Chabaud said, outlining the case against Pelicot. Pelicot has himself said he wants to go to prison for plying Gisele with anti-anxiety drugs regularly from July 2011 to October 2020, leaving her exposed to abuse by strangers recruited online. Pelicot documented the crimes extensively in photos and videos later discovered by police.

Indian parliament disrupted over Adani bribery charges

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India's parliament was suspended on Monday after disruption by lawmakers demanding a discussion of bribery allegations against the Adani Group, while major partner TotalEnergies halted investments into the ports-to-power conglomerate.

The Indian business group's billionaire chairman, Gautam Adani, and seven other people were last week charged by US authorities with agreeing to pay around \$265 million in bribes to Indian government officials.

The charges related to alleged payments to obtain contracts that could yield \$2 billion of profit over 20 years, as well as to develop India's largest solar power project.

The charges also included making misleading statements to the public despite being made aware of the US investigation in 2023. The Adani Group has said the accusations as well as those levelled by the US Securities and Exchange Commission in a parallel civil case are baseless and that it will seek "all possible legal recourse". But the crisis continued to hurt the group founded by Adani, 62, one of the world's richest people.

Russia will not intimidate us with cyberthreats, UK minister tells NATO

Monitoring Desk
BUCHAREST: A hard-right critic of NATO who has praised Russia is set to face a centre-right opposition leader in a presidential election run-off in Romania that could undermine its pro-Western stance after a shock outcome in the first-round vote. Independent hard-right politician Calin Georgescu, 62, won 22.94% of votes in Sunday's voting, the electoral authority said. Centre-right contender Elena Lasconi, leader of the opposition Save Romania Union, lay second with 19.18%.

following the result but would remain in the role of prime minister until a parliamentary election scheduled on Dec. 1.

The candidate of the centre-right Liberals, Ciolacu's coalition partners, also failed to secure a place in the election run-off, which will be on Dec. 8.

Campaigning focused largely on the soaring cost of living in Romania, which is a member of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance and has the EU's biggest share of people at risk of poverty.

"I have voted for the wronged, the humiliated, those who feel they do not matter in this world," Georgescu said on Sunday. "Today, the vote is a prayer for the nation."

NATO and Ukraine to hold emergency talks after Russia's attack with new hypersonic missile

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: NATO and Ukraine will hold emergency talks Tuesday after Russia attacked a central city with an experimental, hypersonic ballistic missile that escalated the nearly 33-month-old war.

Officials said the missile that hit Dnipro had reached a speed of Mach 11 and carried six nonnuclear warheads each releasing six submunitions.

The conflict is "entering a decisive phase," Poland's Prime Minister Donald Tusk said Friday, and "taking on very dramatic dimensions."

Ukraine's parliament canceled a session as security was tightened following Thursday's Russian strike on a military facility in the city of Dnipro.

In a stark warning to the West, President Vladimir Putin said in a nationally televised speech that the attack with the intermediate-range Oreshnik missile was in retaliation for Kyiv's use of U.S. and British longer-range missiles capable of striking deeper into Russian territory. Putin said Western air defense systems would be powerless to stop the new missile.

Ukrainian military of-

Testing the missile will continue, "including in combat, depending on the situation and the character of security threats created for Russia," Putin said, noting there is "a stockpile of such systems ready for use." Putin said that while it isn't an intercontinental missile, it's so powerful that the use of several of them fitted with conventional warheads in one attack could be as devastating as a strike with strategic—or nuclear—weapons. Gen. Sergei Karakayev, head of Russia's Strategic Missile Forces, said the Oreshnik could reach targets across Europe and be fitted with nuclear or conventional warheads, echoing Putin's claim that even with conventional warheads.

In world's largest refugee camps, Rohingya mobilise to fight in Myanmar

Monitoring Desk
COX'S BAZAR: One day in July, Rafiq slipped out of the world's largest refugee settlement in southern Bangladesh and crossed the border into Myanmar on a small boat. His destination: a ruinous civil war in a nation that he had fled in 2017.

Thousands of Rohingya insurgents, like 32-year-old Rafiq, have emerged from camps housing over a million refugees in Cox's Bazar, where militant recruitment and violence have surged this year, according to four people familiar with the conflict and two internal aid agency reports seen by Reuters.

"We need to fight to take back our lands," said Rafiq, a lean and bearded man in a Muslim prayer cap who spent weeks fighting in Myanmar before re-

turning after he was shot in the leg. "There is no other way." The Rohingya, a mainly Muslim group that is the world's largest stateless population, started fleeing in droves to Bangladesh in 2016 to escape what the United Nations has called a genocide at the hands of Buddhist-majority Myanmar's military.

A long-running rebellion in Myanmar has gained ground since the military staged a coup in 2021. It involves a complex array of armed groups - with Rohingya fighters now entering the fray. Many have joined groups loosely allied with their former military persecutors to fight the Arakan Army ethnic militia that has seized much of the western Myanmar state of Rakhine, from which many Rohingya fled.

New Zealand citizen poisoned by tainted alcohol in Laos returns home

Monitoring Desk
LAOS: A New Zealand citizen poisoned after drinking contaminated alcohol in a popular tourist town in Laos has returned home, authorities said on Monday, as Laos pledged to prosecute those responsible for the incident which has killed six tourists.

"The New Zealand Embassy in Bangkok has been providing assistance to one New Zealander who we believe to have been poisoned with methanol in Laos. They have now departed Laos and returned home," a New Zealand foreign ministry spokesperson said by email, without providing further details on the person.

passing of our daughter's life not lead to change to protect others," Jones told reporters outside the hospital in Bangkok where his daughter had been transferred after falling sick.

A GoFundMe campaign has been launched to help the families of Jones and her 19-year-old friend Holly Bowles, to cover the cost of bringing them home, and support initiatives and awareness campaigns. The campaign has raised about \$179,000 (\$117,100) as of Monday morning.

Australia Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said his government is working closely with the Thai and Laos governments and has offered the assistance of the Australian Federal Police for the investigation.

Two Danes, two Australians, a Briton and an American have died from methanol poisoning after visiting Vang Vieng, an idyllic town that is popular with foreign backpackers.

Mark Jones, father of 19-year-old Australian Bianca, urged officials in the Southeast Asian country to take strict action so that similar incidents do not repeat.

"We can't have the

"We will also examine in what way this tragic incident that have affected so many can be averted in the future," Albanese told parliament.

Laos foreign ministry said it has been "conducting investigations to find causes of the incident and to bring the perpetrators to justice in accordance with the law."

Pak-Belarus bilateral trade potential needs to be enhanced through trade diversification: Commerce Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan on Monday said the current trade volume between Pakistan and Belarus does not reflect the potential of the two countries' economic capability, and both countries need to diversify their trade with each other capitalizing on the potential of their strong sectors.

All economic sectors are open to foreign investment and priority sectors for foreign investment include energy, infrastructure, telecommunications, manufacturing, minerals, ICT, agriculture, and many more, the minister said.

Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan said this while addressing the 'Pakistan Belarus Business Forum' along with the Minister for Energy of the Republic of Belarus Mr. Aleksei Kushnarenko here and a large number of business leaders participated in the forum.

The minister said that eight B2B MoUs/Con-

tracts will be signed during the Forum that reflects the complementarity of bilateral trade and these will pave the way forward for more to happen.

He said that it is a great honour for me to co-chair the Pakistan-Belarus Business Forum with Mr Aleksei Kushnarenko, Minister of Energy, the Republic of Belarus. We also co-chaired the 7th Session of the Pakistan-Belarus Joint Ministerial Commission held on 25-26 September 2024 in Islamabad. And I feel happy to share that the majority of the decisions we took in the JMC are materializing. This would not have been possible without the support and collaboration of Mr Aleksei Kushnarenko.

Many decisions were taken and now we are seeing its practical way forward, he added.

"I see huge potential to increase trade between Pakistan and Belarus in all sectors, particularly food, Pharma, textile, leather, logistics and energy. To act-

alize this potential both sides need to work diligently to minimize tariff and non-tariff barriers along with rationalizing import requirements to offer each other meaningful market access, however, I feel that the forums and steps would help us in achieving the key milestone of growth", he said

He said "I am quite hopeful that these engagements will help us increase our trade with each other and diversify our trade baskets as well. I also hope that during the discussions and B2B meetings, both sides will dilate upon the areas of cooperation comprehensively and will come up with practical solutions to the challenges we are facing and a way forward to enhance bilateral trade, investment, and connectivity.

The minister said that the two countries' exports and trade have a major focus on surgical instruments comprising about 62% of the total exports to Belarus and imports of Belarus tractors and machinery.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan presents a souvenir to Belarusian Minister Alexey Kushnarenko during the Pakistan-Belarus Business Forum 2024, where both witnessed the signing of 8 MoUs/Agreements.

MARSEW-7 brings together insightful minds to deepen of maritime security: Naval Chief

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf has said that Maritime Security Workshop (MARSEW-7) brings together some of the most insightful minds from the government, military, academia, media and industry, with a common goal: to deepen our understanding of maritime security in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

In his message on the occasion of MARSEW-7, the Naval Chief said it is a matter of great satisfaction for me to observe the evolution of Maritime Security Workshop from its humble beginning in 2017 to an event of national significance with the organization of 7th edition of MARSEW at Pakistan Navy War College.

He said the Workshop has provided a shared platform to maritime stakeholders for raising awareness about maritime potential of Pakistan and dilate upon



logical advancements have created both opportunities and risks in the IOR. In this background, securing our maritime domain is not merely a national priority but a necessity, requiring cooperation, innovation, and vigilance, he added.

Besides security challenges in the maritime domain, our rich maritime resources offer great potential for economic prosperity. The country's economic future is inextricably linked to the sea which serves as mankind's last reservoir for sustenance, he said.

The Naval Chief said despite the fact that oceans and seas are regarded as the common heritage of mankind, claims and counter claims overseas resources are spawning friction as never witnessed before. The ongoing developments within the IOR have a direct bearing on Pakistan's maritime security.

ways and means to harness this untapped domain, said a news release issued by Directorate General Public Relations (Pakistan Navy) on Monday.

The Naval Chief said as the global maritime landscape evolves, our immediate neighborhood, the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is facing unprecedented challenges including geo-political contestation and nuclearization.

He said the growth of international trade, the rise of transnational threats and the rapid pace of techno-



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan meeting with Minister of Transport and Communications Belarus H.E. Alexey Lyakhnovich.

Direct flights to Moscow, trade corridor with Belarus, Central Asia on the agenda: Aleem

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan on Monday emphasized Pakistan's commitment to enhancing connectivity through the launch of direct flights to Moscow and Belarus, alongside the development of trade corridors linking China, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Belarus.

These priorities were shared during a joint meet-

ing with Belarusian Minister for Transport Alexei Lyakhnovich, attended by senior officials from the communication sectors of both countries, said a press release.

Speaking on the occasion, Alexei Lyakhnovich, accompanied by the President of Belarus, extended an invitation to the Federal Minister to visit Belarus, emphasizing the importance of enhancing connectivity through railways and roads.

"Cross-border trade is pivotal for strengthening the economy and promoting bilateral relations," Lyakhnovich stated, terming the visit a significant step toward fostering collaboration.

Abdul Aleem Khan welcomed the delegation comprising 68 members, including the President of Belarus and other dignitaries, noting its potential to leave a lasting positive impact on Pakistan-Belarus relations.



CAMBODIA: Senator Danesh Kumar signing Universal Peace Charter: For People and the Planet at the International Parliament for Tolerance and Peace (IPTP).

CM for running BA's affairs in accordance with rules

Independent Reporter QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has insisted that the provincial assembly be run as per its rules.

He said that the members should pose question at the time of question, and deliver speech at the time of speeches.

The Chief Minister was speaking in the session of provincial assembly here on Monday. The Deputy Speaker, Ms. Ghazala Gola was in the chair.

The Chief Minister said that there happens to be question only about the rules of assembly, not speech. He also said that other assemblies are functioning, and anyone should not make mockery of us.

On this, the member provincial assembly, Maulana Hidayatullah Rehman said that neither we are allowed to deliver speech nor raise question. He said that we are being

compelled to say that everything is fine in the province.

Later, he also pointed out that the family members of Musawwar Khan Kakar, child kidnapped from Quetta, are sitting in cold for last nine days.

He alleged that interference is being made in his and other members of the opposition in the province.

Meanwhile, the draft act of the Balochistan Employees Social Security Institution was handed over to the concerned standing committee of the assembly.

The draft act was tabled by the Provincial Minister for Health, Bakht Muhammad Kakar. The leader of Opposition, Younas Aziz Zehri suggested the House to hand over the draft act to the standing committee.

Later, the session of assembly was adjourned till 03:00 PM on November 28, 2024.

Gilani reaches Saudi Arabia on five-day visit

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, leading a delegation on Monday reached Saudi Arabia on a five-day official visit.

According to a news release, upon arrival, the delegation was warmly received by the Speaker of the Shura Council Sheikh Dr. Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al-Al-Sheikh.

"Pakistan and Saudi Arabia share historic and brotherly relations," said the Chairman of the Senate.

He expressed pride in the enduring friendship between the two nations, adding, "The bond between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia will continue to grow stronger with time."

4 cops, 3 protestors injured in Swabi

PESHAWAR (APP): At least seven people including four policemen were injured during the protest on Motorway in Swabi district.

Director Emergency, Bacha Khan Medical Complex, Dr Raziq Shah said seven injured including four policemen who sustained injuries during skirmishes that took place between protestors and police, were brought to the hospital.

He said the injured with head injuries were under treatment at Surgical Emergency Ward. The injured policemen were identified as Mustajab, Khizar Iqbal, Sadaqat and Zulqarnain.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Zahooreh Bulendi talking with Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti during Balochistan Assembly session.

Awareness drive against HIV & AIDS launched in Quetta

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan AIDS Control Program launched human immunodeficiency virus infection (HIV) and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) awareness campaign in Quetta on Monday.

Balochistan AIDS Control Program, in collaboration with Rickshaw Union and SSP Traffic Ms Shabana started an HIV/AIDS awareness campaign by putting up banners on rickshaws.

The event was inaugurated by Provincial Coordinator Dr Zulfiqar Ali Baloch and President of the Rickshaw Union Haji Tariq.

The Awareness drive was attended by Logistics Coordinator Muhammad Khan Zehri, Finance Officer Abdul Rauf Kiyazai, CEO Quetta Foundation Rozina Khilji and the Balochistan AIDS Control Program team.

In the campaign, important messages for HIV/AIDS prevention were displayed on rickshaws, which were driven around the city to spread awareness among the public. The Coordinator Muhammad Khan Zehri said that the event was a success thanks to the dedication of the team members and the cooperation of the traffic police.

Belarusian minister explores handcrafted rickshaw

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan brought a touch of Pakistani culture to the Pakistan-Belarus Business Forum 2024 by showcasing a beautifully handcrafted rickshaw.

The two-person taxi, featuring intricate designs and highlighting local craftsmanship, drew the admiration of Belarusian Energy Minister Alexey Kushnarenko.

In a lighthearted moment after the forum, Minister Kushnarenko explored the rickshaw, sitting inside to appreciate its design and comfort.

Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan, while sharing the details, highlighted the hard work and artistry behind the vehicle.

He also extended an offer to export these iconic rickshaws to Belarus, emphasizing their cultural and economic value.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Sadiq Umrani, Parliamentary Secretary Haji Barkat Ali Rind, Opposition leader Mir Younis Aziz Zehri and MPAs Zafar Agha and Khair Jan Baloch holding meeting.

Pak believes in Intl cooperation to address common challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senator Danesh Kumar on Monday said that Pakistan believed in international cooperation to address common global challenges.

Speaking at the 1st Plenary Session titled "Advancing Global Architecture of Peace, Peacebuilding, Reconciliation, and Tolerance: Synergy of Governments, Parliaments, and Civil Society" in Cambodia, he said, "Our collective efforts to promote peace and harmony hold great importance in a world divided by conflict and inequality."

Highlighting the roles of various stakeholders,

Senator Danesh Kumar noted that governments, parliaments, and civil society have distinct yet complementary responsibilities in fostering peaceful societies. Senator Danesh Kumar and Misbah Khar, Advisor to the Chairman of the Senate, are representing Pakistan at the conference, according to a news release received here on Monday. "In Pakistan, our journey toward peace and reconciliation is ongoing. Despite enormous human and economic losses due to terrorism, Pakistan remains committed to unity and understanding."

Naqvi pays tribute to martyred Constable, vows justice against violent protesters

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi expressed profound grief and paid tribute to Constable Mubashir, who was martyred while performing his duty during violent protests near Hakla.

In a heartfelt statement, the minister extended condolences and solidarity to the family of the martyred officer, acknowledging his ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. "Constable Mubashir achieved the honorable rank of martyrdom while fulfilling his responsibilities," Naqvi stated, emphasizing the bravery and dedication of the late officer.

Minister Naqvi condemned the violence, pledging swift action against those responsible. "The perpetrators of this violence will be brought to justice," he assured.

Pakistan, Belarus agree to cooperate for strengthening of justice system

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Belarus have agreed to share experiences and cooperate for betterment of law and justice system through digitalization, capacity building for prosecutors and attorneys, legal education and awareness, exchange of Bar councils/associates, International Mediation and Arbitration Center (IMAC), and Case Assignment and Management System (CAMS).

The meeting yielded significant outcomes, including an invitation extended by the Minister of Justice for Belarus to the Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Pakistan, and his team to visit Belarus, which was warmly reciprocated. The Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Pakistan, provided a comprehensive briefing on previous treaties and MOUs, laying the groundwork for future cooperation.

The Belarusian Minister elaborated on the purview and mandate of the Ministry of Justice in Belarus, highlighting the potential for a bilateral ac-

cord. The key discussion points included digitalization of the legal system, capacity building for prosecutors and attorneys, legal education and awareness, legislative drafting and international cooperation, exchange of Bar councils/associates, International Mediation and Arbitration Center (IMAC), and Case Assignment and Management System (CAMS).



QUETTA: Chairman Higher Education Commission Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Governor Balochistan says All HEIs determined to decorate new generation with ornament of education

Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that all higher educational institutions of the province are determined to decorate our new generation with the ornament of education and Higher Education Commission Islamabad has been a motive behind our achievements during the long period.

The Governor said that although the responsibilities of provinces are increased after 18th amendment, but still it is difficult to move ahead without the financial and technical assistance and guidance. He stressed that we need continuous cooperation and guidance of HEC for ridding of the complex financial and administrative issues.

The Governor was speaking to the Chairman HEC, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed,

who called on him here at the Governor House on Monday.

The Governor said that we would also have to pay attention on learning modern skills to the students besides imparting education to them in view of the modern needs of present era.

For the purpose, there is a need to make the technical and vocational institutions and start IT courses there.

He also stressed the need to make courageous decisions along with creating new resources of income for putting the public sector universities on path of self sufficiency.

He said that if the federal and provincial governments didn't make timely increase in the budget allocated for higher education, then public sector universities can face hardships.

Chaman District Education group holds vital meeting

Independent Report CHAMAN: An important meeting of the District Education Group was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Chaman, Habib Ahmed Bangulzai, at the DC Office.

The meeting was attended by ADC General Fida Baloch, AC City Muhammad Afzal, and other relevant officers, including DEO Abdul Qudoos, Deputy DEO Abdullah, EMIEMS Focal Person Jaffar Khan, and

RTSEM Coordinator Jahanzeb.

During the meeting, the DEO Male and Female presented a detailed briefing to the DC Chaman on the current situation of educational institutions in Chaman, attendance of teachers, performance, and other necessary matters.

DC Chaman, while addressing the meeting, said that all possible measures are being taken to improve the morale of the Education Department.



QUETTA: A sit-in has been held at the Provincial Assembly Chowk against the abduction of 8 years old Muhammad Masoor in Quetta.

Samina terms PTI's protest as conspiracy to push country towards chaos

QUETTA (APP): Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Human Rights, Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri termed PTI's protest as a conspiracy to push the country towards chaos once again.

In her statement issued here on Monday, she completely rejected the call of dharna and protest by PTI in Islamabad and said that PTI has once again done the crime of creating chaos in the country and inciting innocent people against the country.

She said that the nation has rejected the call of riots in the name of protest, instead of maintaining peace, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is busy attacking the federal government, which is worsening the law and order situation.

The Senator said that PTI led KP government value their leadership more than human lives. Every protest of Tehreek-e-Insaf takes place under a well-thought-out plan precisely when it happens on the arrival of a friendly head of state, she said.



QUETTA: MPA Zamrak Khan Achakzai, Asghar Tareen, Nasrullah Zarey, Rasheed Nasir Ahmed Jan, Abdul Rahim Kakar, Haji Bashit, Malik Malang, Mir Yasin Mengal, Akhtar Kakar, Amanullah Mehtarzai, Gul Khil, Munir Kakar, Ghulam Nabi and others attending meeting of Dharna Committee for recovery of Musawir Kakar.