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Quetta

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Quetta suicide attack claims 27 lives, leaves over 50 injured

Commissioner Quetta confirms LEAs personnel among killed in Railway Station blast; Acting President, PM, political leaders strongly condemn blast, BLA claims responsibility

Independent Report

QUETTA: As many as 27 people - mostly passengers - were killed and over 50 others were injured in a suicide explosion at Quetta's railway station, on Monday morning.

According to the preliminary reports, the explosion took place at the platform of Quetta railway station which usually witnesses a significant number of people, resulting in the high death toll so far.

While police and rescue personnel reached the site of the blast, emergency was imposed in the Civil Sandeman Provincial Headquarter Hospital, with additional doctors

and support staff called in. The Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat confirmed that the explosion was suicidal in nature.

Revealing that the suicide bomber entered the station with luggage, the commissioner said that it was difficult to stop a person whose intention was to carry out a suicide attack.

The Commissioner urged the people to donate blood due to blood shortage.

The official further confirmed that law enforcement agencies' (LEAs) personnel were among those martyred in the attack for which a banned organisation has claimed responsibility.

The Jaffer Express was scheduled to depart for Peshawar at 9am, according to railway officials.

Officials informed that with several of the injured in critical condition, the death toll from the blast may rise.

Earlier, while talking to the media, Senior Superintendent Police (SSP) Operations Quetta Muhammad Baloch that the explosion seemed to be a suicide blast.

"The blast took place inside the railway station when the Peshawar-bound express was about to leave for its destination," said the police officer.

The blast, which also



QUETTA: A view of site after a bomb explosion occurred at Railway Station

COAS says

Fight against terrorism requires steadfast support of all Pakistanis

Independent Report

RAWALPINDI: Namaz-e-Janaza for the Shuhada, who embraced martyrdom in a suicide blast targeting innocent citizens and passengers at Quetta Railway Station, was offered in Quetta Garrison today.

The funeral was attended by General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Federal Minister of Interior, Governor and Chief Minister Balochistan, Provincial Ministers and a large number of military and civilian officials.

Following the fu-

neral, COAS visited CMH Quetta and met with the injured of the tragic incident.

COAS highlighted that terrorism will never be tolerated and reaffirmed nation's resolve and commitment towards eradicating the menace. COAS emphasized that this mission will be pursued with full national resolve and collective determination. He underscored that the fight against terrorism requires the steadfast support of all Pakistanis, along with the efforts of the military and civil institutions, to secure a peaceful and prosperous future for the country.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi enquiring about health of injured of Quetta Railway Station suicide bomb blast

Terrorism act continuation of targeting innocent people: CM strongly condemns Railway Station blast; vows to continue crackdown against terrorists

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti has strongly condemned the terrorism attack at the Quetta Railway Station that claimed lives of several passengers and left many others injured.

In a condemnation statement issued here soon after the blast at Quetta Railway Station, the Chief Minister contacted with the high administrative high ups and ordered speedy inquiry into the terrorism act.

He said that the terrorism incident is condemnable and is the continuation of targeting the innocent people.

He said that the terrorists are now targeting innocent people, labourers, children and women in the province. However, he said that those targeting innocent people don't deserve any clemency. These elements don't deserve to be called human being rather they have fallen from insanity, and they are just beasts.

The Chief Minister said that we got to the terrorist elements involved in several incidents of terrorism, as crackdown against them is continued in the province. The terrorists involved in the incidents of terrorism have also been apprehended, he added.

He pledged that we would surely reach out to those involved in the Railway Station blast.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photograph with the 51st Common Training Programme batch of probationary officers of the Information Service of Pakistan at the Prime Minister's Office, joined by Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar and Federal Secretary Ms. Anam Jan.

Sarfaraz Bugti & Mohsin Naqvi visit Civil Hospital: Government to give befitting response to terrorists, maintains Chief Minister

Federal Interior Minister assures wholehearted support to provincial government to end terrorism in Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti and Federal Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi visited the Sandeman Provincial Headquarter Hospital Quetta on Saturday evening.

During the visit, they

tioned adding that the government would give befitting response to the terrorists. The Chief Minister on the occasion questioned that why the human rights institutions are not speaking on such incidents.

He said that the whole



met those injured in the terrorism incident of Quetta Railway Station and inquired about their health.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister said that we are considering the situation of law and order in the province. He said that the steps are also being taken to improve the law and order situation.

He said that we have apprehended the accused of Musakhail incident. While on the other hand, we have stopped the incident of terrorism in Turbat, he men-

tion would have to fight together against the terrorism as after all, for how long, the bloodshed would remain continued in the province.

The Minister Interior said that the federal government is fully supporting the province. He mentioned that we have arrested four to five suicide bombers during last one week. He said that at the moment, the circumstances are not quite normal. The terrorists are using suicide bombers now, he added.

GoB strongly condemns blast at Quetta Railway Station: Spokesman

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has strongly condemned the incident of terrorism occurred at Quetta Railway Station on Saturday morning.

While speaking to the media persons at Civil Hospital along with the Provincial Minister Health, Bakht Muhammad Kakar and Minister Finance, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani, the spokesman said that we have responded quickly to the incident of terrorism.

He said that as per the initial reports submitted by the security agencies to the provincial government, the blast seems suicide. However, more evidences are being collected in this regard, the spokesman of provincial government maintained.

To a query, the spokesman said that there was no specific security threat, however, there was a general threat in Quetta city.

Earlier, in his statement issued here soon after the blast, the spokesman said that the report of incident has been sought from the concerned quarters.

He said that the bomb disposal squad is collecting evidences of the blast from spot.

PM, Governor Sindh call Governor Balochistan; discuss about tragic Railway Station explosion

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Governor Singh Kamran Khan Tesori called Governor Balochistan, Jaffer Khan Mandokhail on Saturday afternoon.

The Prime Minister and Governor Sindh talked about the tragic blast took place at the Quetta Railway Station on Saturday morning.

They condemned the heinous terrorism act in which the precious lives of innocent people were lost and several others got injured.

The Prime Minister expressed deep grief and

condolence with the bereaved families of those martyred in the blast. He assured to take speedy and strict action against the elements involved in the terror attack. He said that we equally share the grief with the bereaved families.

Similarly, the Governor Singh also expressed solidarity and sympathy with the bereaved families.

He said that the people of Sindh share the grief with the bereaved families of martyrs.

The Prime Minister and Governor Singh also prayed for the departed souls besides praying for speedy recovery of the injured.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani and Hajji Ali Madad Jattak being briefed by district administration about detail of Railway Station suicide bomb blast

Provincial Ministers visit Quetta Railway Station, Civil Sandeman Hospital

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Ministers Mir Ali Madad Jatak, Bakht Muhammad Kakar, and Mir Shoaib Nausherwani visited the Railway Station and Trauma Center, Civil Sandeman Hospital here on Saturday.

During the visit to Quetta Railway Station, the Provincial Ministers inspected the site of suicide blast. They reviewed the damages caused due to the blast at the Quetta Railway Station.

They were also briefed about the act of terrorism by the senior police and administrative officers.

Meanwhile, during the visit to Sandeman Hospi-

tal, the Provincial Ministers inquired about the health of those injured in the blast.

Speaking on the occasion, Provincial Ministers said that the government is providing every possible medical treatment facilities to the injured persons.

They said that the incident of terrorism is sorrowful.

The Minister Ali Madad Jatak said that the preachers of lawlessness are targeting the innocent people who want to create instability in the province.

He said that the masses, police, law enforcement agencies and armed forces have rendered great sacrifices for ending terrorism in the province.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photograph with the 51st Common Training Programme batch of probationary officers of the Information Service of Pakistan at the Prime Minister's Office, joined by Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar and Federal Secretary Ms. Anam Jan.

United States Mission condemns blast at Quetta railway station

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD (INP) - The United States Mission in Pakistan condemned the recent blast at Quetta railway station, expressing deep sorrow over the attack.

On Saturday, the US Embassy conveyed its condolences to the victims and their families, denouncing the act of violence. "We extend our sympathies to those affected by this tragedy," the statement read.

The US Mission reaffirmed its commitment to support Pakistan in countering terrorism, underscoring the need to protect civilians and military personnel from such attacks. "We stand with Pakistan in efforts to prevent terrorism and ensure the safety of all," the embassy declared.

No room of terror acts in peaceful Quetta: Governor

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has condemned the tragic incident of terrorism in strongest words.

In a condemnation statement issued here on Saturday, the Governor Balochistan expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives in the tragic bomb blast occurred at the railway Station.

The Governor said that there is no room of such terrorism acts in the peaceful city of Quetta.

He directed to the law enforcement agencies to take quick action against those involved in the incident of terrorism in Balochistan.

The criminals involved

in the incident of terrorism must be arrested and brought to justice, adding the Governor directed further.

He also directed to mobilize all resources for prevention of such incidents of terrorism in future.

Meanwhile, the Governor expressed sympathy and heartfelt condolence with the bereaved families of those martyred in the bomb blast.

He also expressed solidarity with the bereaved families and prayed that may Allah Almighty give them enough strength and patience to them to bear the tragic loss.

He also directed to the concerned aghorities to provide best medical treatment to those injured in the tragic bomb blast.

PTI founder brought back terrorists who are attacking now: Information Minister

LAHORE (Online): Information Minister Attaulah Tarar has said PTI founder brought back the terrorists and these people are now attacking.

"I condemn blast at Quetta Railway station. We will stamp out terrorism. PTI founder brought back Taliban. Today these people are attacking. PTI founder brought back terrorists. No political leader or political party is bigger than Pakistan. We showed broadmindedness to all political parties. We are striving to eliminate terrorism from the country, he said this while talking to newsmen after visiting Mazar-

e-Iqbal in Lahore on Saturday.

He held following Allama Iqbal's philosophy of self-reliance by whole Muslim Ummah is need of the hour.

He said present government is implementing the vision of Allama Iqbal's philosophy of self-reliance by empowering youth.

The Federal Minister said that country's economy has improved due to successful measures taken by the incumbent government.

Attaulah Tarar said that Pakistan's relations with other countries have improved due to the

Iqbal Day observed

ISLAMABAD (Online):

The 147th birth anniversary of national poet, Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal WAS observed with national fervour Saturday.

The Philosopher poet known as Poet of the East, Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal was born in Sialkot on November 9, 1877.

He awakened the Muslims of the Subcontinent through his universal poetry and political acumen by presenting idea of the creation of Pakistan through his historic address at Allahabad in 1930.

Allama Iqbal's address gave a clear direction and separate identity to Muslims of the Sub-Continent to achieve Pakistan.

Radio Pakistan presented special programmes in connection with Iqbal Day to highlight poetry and thoughts of Allama Iqbal.

It was public holiday Saturday.

Condemns escalating terrorism Achakzai calls for Pashtoon unity at Loralai Jirga

Independent Report

LORALAI: The Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PMAP) has inaugurated a two-day public peace jirga in Loralai, under the leadership of Nawab Ayaz Khan Jogeza. Hosted by PMAP's Loralai division and organized by



Abdul Rahim Ziaratwal, the jirga commenced with a strong opening address by PMAP Chairman and opposition alliance leader of Tehreek-e-Tahafuz-e-Ain Pakistan, Mahmood Khan Achakzai.

riorist attacks nationwide, with Pashtuns often bearing the brunt of the violence.

Expressing disappointment over Parliament's inaction, he criticized state institutions for their lack of

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Nation pays tribute to Allama Iqbal's enduring legacy, timeless poetry

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistani nation is enthusiastically paying highest homages to Poet-Philosopher Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal on his 147th birth anniversary on Saturday.

The social media platforms are also filled with heartfelt tributes paid to his timeless poetry while celebrating his birth anniversary and the enduring legacy of his visionary thinking.

Pakistanis from all walks of life are paying homage to Iqbal's remarkable contributions. His poetry, infused spiritual and philosophical insights amongst the masses, continues to captivate readers worldwide, said a report aired by PTV news channel.

Born on November 9,

1877, in Sialkot, Iqbal's life was marked by academic excellence, literary genius and political activism.

"Dr. Iqbal's poetry inspires me to strive for excellence and serve my nation," said a student while sharing post in Whatsapp group added.

"Iqbal's vision for a separate homeland is a reminder of our responsibility to build a better Pakistan," another youngster Ali Hassan from NUST University on Facebook group.

"His words have taught me the importance of self-respect, dignity, and national pride," Amna Ahmed, LUMS added.

"Iqbal's vision for a separate homeland is a testament to his prophetic insight," Ifkhar Arif, poet

and scholar added. "Iqbal's philosophy of 'Khudi' (self-respect) remains relevant today," a political analyst mentioned.

"His dream of a separate homeland continues to inspire Pakistanis worldwide," Justice (ret) Nasira Javed Iqbal, Iqbal's granddaughter said.

"Iqbal's poetry inspired my music, connecting me to my roots," Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, singer also said in his post.

"His words painted vivid images, influencing my art," Sadequain Naqvi, artist said while sharing a picture on Instagram added.

His poetry bridged the gap between East and West, showcasing Islamic values, said a teacher in his post on Twitter.

Acting president accords approval to appointment of members of FST

ISLAMABAD (Online): Acting president Yousuf Raza Gillani has accorded approval to the appointment of members of Federal Service Tribunal (FST).

Advocate Bahlol Khattak, retired district and sessions judge Chaudhry Abdul Qayyum and advocate chaudhry Muhammad Akram Khaksar have been appointed as judicial member federal service tribunal.

Acting president also gave approval to the appointment of Sarwat Tahira Habib and Nadim Arshid Kiyani as executive members.



QUETTA: Medical treatment being given to injured of Quetta Railway Station bomb blast

PTI set to form grand opposition alliance: Asad

SWABI (INP): A few hours before the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) public rally in one of its strongholds Swabi, former NA speaker Asad Qaiser said the PTI would hold a huge gathering and form a grand alliance with the opposition.

Speaking to media at the venue of rally, the former NA speaker said that Swabi's rally would be the first public reaction against recent legislation, adding that the government had turned the parliament into a rubber stamp.

"Vandalism and arrests in the PTI's Quetta rally are really condemnable. Ours is a registered party with a strong opposition in three provincial assemblies. We will never accept

this fascist government as 250 million people of Pakistan are the ones who will decide the future of this country," he emphasized.

Speaking about recent victory of Donald Trump in the US presidential election, Qaiser said that Trump won election through a democratic process unlike Pakistan where an unabated series of human rights violation had been going on for a long time.

"We are about to form a grand opposition alliance for which we are in contact with all opposition parties. We will take them along in our movement against the fascist government which has been involved in oppression of the people," he concluded.

India's aggression in Junagarh violated international law 77 years ago: Report

ISLAMABAD (INP) – November 9 is observed as a Black Day for Junagarh, marking the date in 1947 when Indian forces unlawfully landed in the Muslim-ruled state and forcibly occupied it, in clear violation of international law.

An analytical report released by Kashmir Media Service on the occasion of this fateful day underscores that India's occupation of Junagarh was an act of blatant aggression. Despite the passage of 77 years, India continues to hold the region illegally.

The report emphasizes that Pakistan has a legitimate claim to the Junagarh

state, based on the Instrument of Accession signed by Nawab Mahabat Khan, the then ruler of Junagarh, on September 15, 1947. This agreement reflected the region's natural and ideological alignment with Pakistan.

Highlighting the vision of Pakistan's founding father, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the report reaffirms that Junagarh was always meant to be part of Pakistan. It stresses that only the people of Junagarh have the right to determine their political future.

The report further points out that India's ille-

gal occupation extends not only to Junagarh but also to Jammu and Kashmir, both of which remain unresolved international disputes. It calls on the global community, including the United Nations, to play a proactive role in addressing these issues and facilitating the liberation of both Junagarh and Kashmir from Indian occupation.

Pakistan remains steadfast in its commitment to securing the rightful freedom of these regions, the report concludes, emphasizing that justice for Junagarh and Kashmir is a matter of international importance and urgent action.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of United Arab Emirates Hamad Obaid Al-Zaabi, giving winning trophy of 5K Marathon winner, title "Run through the Sand of Times" in connection with UAE's National Day, at Diplomatic Enclave, in the Federal Capital

Adventure enthusiasts exhibit talent at Ascend Athletics' rock climbing event

ISLAMABAD (APP): A large number of young adventure lovers assembled at Jasmine Corner, Pir Sohawa, Islamabad on Saturday and showcased their talent at a thrilling rock climbing event.

The event was organized by Ascend Athletics, a US-based NGO focused on empowering Pakistani women through adventure sports.

The event highlighted the spirit of youth and celebrated the transformative power of outdoor sports, drawing participants from across the capital, Skardu, Gilgit-Baltistan and other areas.

The event, held against the scenic backdrop of Islamabad's hills, celebrated both the thrill of rock climbing and the powerful impact of sports on women empowerment.

Under the direction of master trainer Emily Cavanagh, participants faced various climbing challenges, pushing their limits and gaining confidence with every step. Emily led the event with the support of

dedicated instructors Fareena and Kaneez Fatima, both experienced climbers who are helping to inspire a new generation of women adventurers in Pakistan.

Fareena, reflecting on the event, shared, "It's incredibly fulfilling to watch these young women challenge themselves and overcome fears. Rock climbing teaches resilience, and seeing these climbers realize their own strength is the best part of this work."

Kaneez Fatima said, "This isn't just a sport; it's a way for young women to see the world differently. Climbing empowers them to believe in themselves and to push past societal limits that may have been placed on them. I'm proud to be part of this journey with Ascend."

Teenage two-time national rock climbing champion Faryal, who also attempted the rock shared her experiences, saying, "Rock climbing changed my life, giving me confidence and strength I never knew I had. I hope my journey

shows young girls that they, too, can excel in any field they choose. It's not easy, but the rewards are worth every effort."

Karrar Haidri, Secretary of the Alpine Club of Pakistan, who was also present commended Ascend Athletics for promoting adventure sports among women. "This event is crucial in paving the way for women to explore new paths in Pakistan's sports culture. It not only promotes physical strength but also builds mental resilience," he said.

Ascend Athletics has been making significant strides in Gilgit-Baltistan and Skardu for the last two years by fostering confidence and independence among young women through adventure sports.

Emily Cavanagh emphasized Ascend's broader vision, saying, "Our aim is to help women realize their potential, on and off the mountain. The strength they build here will carry forward into every area of their lives."

Solution to challenges faced by Muslim Ummah lies in Iqbal's thoughts: Rubina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson Benazir Islam Support Program (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Saturday said that the solution to the challenges faced by the Muslim Ummah lies in Allama Iqbal's thoughts.

In her special message on Iqbal Day, the chairperson BISP said that the youth should take the country to new heights of progress with a constructive mindset.

Rubina Khalid paid tribute to the Poet of East, Allama Muhammad Iqbal on his 147th birth anniversary.

She stated, "Through his inspiring poetry, Allama Iqbal awakened the Muslim Ummah from a deep slumber."

"Iqbal's dream was of a Pakistan that would be a cradle of peace, political tolerance, and brotherhood," she added. "Allama Iqbal

played a vital role in introducing the Muslim youth to the sacrifices, greatness, and legacy of their ancestors," Senator Rubina Khalid noted.

"The dream of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent under the dynamic leadership of Quaid-e-Azam was nothing less than a blessing," she remarked. She highlighted that Iqbal urged the youth to learn from the glorious past of Muslims and to achieve new milestones in knowledge and research.

"Allama Iqbal always emphasized unity among Muslims," she stated. "There was no place for prejudice or extremism in Allama Iqbal's poetry and thoughts," she noted.

"On this day, let us pledge to work tirelessly towards achieving Iqbal's vision for Pakistan," Senator Rubina Khalid said.

Mehdicondemns Quetta blast

KARACHI (APP): Special Assistant to the Chief Minister and General Secretary Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Sindh Senator Waqar Mehdi has strongly condemned Quetta suicide blast that claimed previous lives of innocent people.

In his statement, Senator Mehdi declared that targeting innocent civilians and law enforcement personnel reflects the utmost cowardice and brutality, emphasizing that those responsible for shedding innocent blood in Quetta stand as enemies of both the people of Balochistan and their progress.

Tirmizi congratulates Pakistan team on win against India in Arab Classic Dubai-2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Pakistan to the United Arab Emirates Faisal Niaz Tirmizi on Saturday extended heartfelt congratulations to the Pakistani baseball team for their remarkable victory over India with a score of 12-0 in the ongoing Arab Classic Dubai-2024. "Ambassador Tirmizi applauded the players' exemplary passion, commitment, and teamwork displayed on the field. He also commended the team management for their dedication

in preparing the team for success," a press release said. The thrilling match took place at the Baseball United Ballpark at the Sevens, Dubai, drawing an enthusiastic crowd and highlighting Pakistan's presence in the sport of baseball.

The ambassador conveyed his best wishes to the team for their continued success in the tournament, reinforcing the mission's support for the players representing Pakistan on a global stage.



DUBAI: Ambassador of Pakistan to the United Arab Emirates Faisal Niaz Tirmizi in a group photo with Pakistani baseball team after their victory over India with a score of 12-0 in the ongoing Arab Classic Dubai-2024

Quetta suicide attack claims 27 lives....

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damaged the platform's roof, was heard far and wide in various areas of the city.

The spokesman of Balochistan government Shahid Rind had earlier revealed that nearly 40 people were injured in the blast — of which 10 were in critical condition.

According to him, the Chief Minister Sarfaraz Bugti has summoned an emergency meeting regarding the province's law and order situation and will shortly arrive back home after cancelling his foreign visit.

Meanwhile, the counter-terrorism department (CTD) issued a preliminary report of the incident, saying that the nature of the blast was suicide attack.

"The suicide bomber blew himself while being among the passengers. The body parts of the bomber will be sent to the forensic lab for testing," said the officials.

They added that they will take help from the National Database and Registration Authority (Nadra) to identify the attacker.

According to the officials, the bomber had a bag which contained 8 to 10 kg of explosive materials.

Quetta Commissioner Hamza Shaqqaat Saturday strongly condemned the recent incident at Quetta Railway Station, confirming it was a suicide bombing and

urged citizens to come forward to donate blood for helping the precious lives of those injured in the attack.

In an interview with a private news channel, he said Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfaraz Bugti has strictly ordered to contact the top administrative authorities and investigate the incident. "The suicide bomber entered Quetta Railway Station with luggage, avoiding the walk-through security check-point and instead using an open entrance," he mentioned.

Shafqaat urged the people to donate blood due to blood shortage. He further confirmed that law enforcement agencies' s (LEAs) personnel were among those martyred in the attack for which a banned organization has claimed responsibility.

Meanwhile Balochistan Liberation Army has claimed responsibility of blast at Railway station Quetta.

The law enforcement agencies have started searching the accused. Investigation has also been started on involvement of India in the blast.

Blast has taken place at Quetta railway station and at least 24 people have been killed while 50 have been injured.

Acting President Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday strongly

condemned a blast near Quetta Railway Station.

The acting president and prime minister prayed for the eternal peace of the departed souls and for the bereaved families to bear the losses with fortitude.

The acting president expressed his deep grief over loss of precious lives. President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

He said that terrorists were the enemies of humanity who targeted innocent people and reiterated the resolve of taking all possible measures to efface terrorism.

The prime minister reiterated that terrorists inflicting harm on the lives and properties of innocent people would have to pay the heavy price, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The government and security forces were fully active to eliminate terrorism, he added.

The prime minister sought an inquiry report from Balochistan government over the incident.

The acting president and the prime minister also directed for provision of treatment to injured on property basis.

Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Saturday strongly condemned the Quetta Railway Station blast that claimed several innocent lives and injured dozens.

He expressed heartfelt

condolences to the affected families and prayed for the swift recovery of the injured.

He said this cowardly attack would not weaken the nation's resolve for development and peace, rather strengthen its determination to eradicate terrorism.

"The entire nation stands united against terrorism," the minister said, assuring that the government would conduct a thorough investigation and bring those responsible to justice.

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh on Saturday strongly condemns the blast at Quetta railway station in which several people lost precious lives.

In a condemnation statement, the minister expressed the grief and sorrow with the bereaved families to bear this irreparable loss.

He emphasized that the federal and Balochistan governments were jointly providing all possible assistance to the injured.

He said that this tragic incident on the occasion of Iqbal Day had further clarified the agenda of the enemies of the country while the morale of the law enforcement agencies was high.

Qaiser Sheikh said that the valiant armed forces were eliminating the terrorists' activities to ensure peace and maintain law & order situation in the country.

Achakzai calls for Pashtoon...

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accountability to the public. According to Achakzai, citizens endure increased restrictions on political and civil liberties under the guise of security after each incident, leaving Pashtuns with no alternative but to strengthen their unity and develop strategic plans through jirgas.

Achakzai pointed to frequent killings of coal mine workers, truck arson, and extortion demands occurring within sight of security forces. Despite such incidents, security agencies and government officials limit their response to routine condemnations, a stance he finds inadequate.

Achakzai voiced concern that security forces fail to prevent large-scale attacks even when present in the area, raising questions about the effectiveness of intelligence agencies. Stressing that Pashtuns are peaceful and bear no enmity towards other groups, Achakzai asserted that their struggle centers on preserving their resources, strategic autonomy, and rightful ownership of their homeland.

The PMAP also announced upcoming peace jirgas across Zhob and Quetta divisions, aiming to unify Pashtuns and address the ongoing security challenges.

Pak Inter Boards Girls Cricket, Tennis Championship 2024 Inaugurated at BISE Peshawar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The much-anticipated "Pakistan Inter Boards Girls Cricket and Tennis Championship 2024" was officially inaugurated on Saturday at the BISE Peshawar Sports Complex.

The event, set to run for four days, will culminate in a grand finale on November 13, 2024, with the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) scheduled to grace the closing ceremony.

Executive Director of the Inter Boards Coordination Commission (IBCC), Dr. Ghulam Ali Mallah was the esteemed chief guest at the opening ceremony.

His presence marked the beginning of this competition, which brings together teams from all regions of Pakistan to compete in cricket and tennis. The championship aims to foster sportsmanship and promote physical education among young female athletes across the country.

In his welcome address, "Prof. Nasrullah Khan Yousafzai", Chairman of BISE Peshawar, extended a warm welcome to the participants and guests. He commended the efforts of the IBCC for their continued support in promoting sports at the inter-board level.

Prof. Yousafzai highlighted that the event pro-

vides a platform for female students to engage in sports, which is essential for their overall development. He also stated that BISE Peshawar has recently built a state-of-the-art gymnasium to encourage students to participate in a variety of sports.

Additionally, Prof. Yousafzai assured the participants that BISE Peshawar will be providing full accommodation and meals for all players throughout the championship.

"We are proud to host the players from across Pakistan and ensure that their stay is comfortable. All expenses related to food and accommodation will be borne by BISE Peshawar," he stated, emphasizing the institution's commitment to supporting the participants and fostering a positive environment for the competition.

Secretary of the Inter Boards Sports Committee (IBSC) and an officer at the Federal Board, Fouzia took the opportunity to announce that the IBSC has finalized a comprehensive sports calendar for the year. She revealed that a total of 26 sports competitions will be held across the country, with a major Sports Gala to be hosted by IBCC and IBSC in Islamabad in December 2024.

Dr. Mallah, in his keynote speech, praised the students, their families, and coaches for their dedication and hard work. He emphasized that sports play an integral role in a student's life, complementing academics by enhancing skills, boosting confidence, and promoting holistic development.

"Sports are as essential as academics," Dr. Mallah stated, adding that the ability to face challenges, manage stress, and develop life skills through sports is invaluable for students.

He further reaffirmed the IBCC's commitment to providing more opportunities for students to participate in sports and announced the upcoming hosting of the national sports gala in December 2024 in Islamabad, made possible with the collaboration of member boards and the IBSC.

The "Pakistan Inter Boards Girls Cricket and Tennis Championship" will feature matches across various categories, with the finals and the closing ceremony scheduled for November 13. The event is expected to be a major milestone in empowering young female athletes in Pakistan, giving them the platform to showcase their talents and foster a spirit of healthy competition.

Naqvi calls for national unity, revival of Iqbal's vision

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a commemorative message on the birth anniversary of the renowned poet and philosopher, Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi emphasized the enduring relevance of Iqbal's philosophy for Pakistan's progress and unity.

Highlighting Iqbal's significant role in inspiring a vision for an independent homeland, Naqvi underscored how this idea was ultimately brought to fruition under the leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

"Allama Iqbal presented the idea of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent, and Quaid-e-Azam transformed this vision into reality," Naqvi remarked, noting the profound impact of Iqbal's poetry in mobilizing Muslims for independence. Naqvi paid tribute to Iqbal's work, which he said awakened a sense of unity, self-respect, and resilience among Muslims of the time. Iqbal's emphasis on "Khudi" (selfhood), Naqvi

explained, was a philosophy that empowered individuals to shape their own destinies, a principle that he urged Pakistanis to embrace today.

In his message, Naqvi called upon the nation to revisit Iqbal's teachings to tackle modern challenges with a renewed sense of collective strength. "No one else will shape our destiny; we must do it ourselves, as this is the path to success," he stressed.

Drawing from Iqbal's ideas, Naqvi emphasized that every challenge Pakistan faces can be met with unity and resolve.

He reiterated Iqbal's vision for a self-sufficient, unified Muslim community and urged Pakistanis to draw inspiration from this in overcoming national issues.

Naqvi also highlighted the philosopher's influence on the youth, recognizing him as a mentor whose ideas could guide and empower future generations. "Allama Iqbal holds the status of a spiritual guide and mentor for the youth," he stated, emphasizing the

potential of Iqbal's message to inspire young Pakistanis to contribute toward national progress.

Concluding his message, Naqvi called for a national commitment to Iqbal's philosophy of "Khudi" as a foundation for a prosperous Pakistan.

He noted that there has never been a greater need to understand and apply Iqbal's ideas, urging the nation to set aside differences and work toward a unified and prosperous future. He called upon Pakistanis to "make Iqbal's teachings our guiding light" and to use this occasion to recommit to the values that Iqbal championed.

The interior minister's message has resonated widely as people across Pakistan remember Iqbal's legacy on this national holiday, known as Iqbal Day. Events, seminars, and poetry recitations are being held in various cities to honor Iqbal's contributions to the nation, with officials, scholars, and citizens reflecting on how Iqbal's vision continues to inspire Pakistan's journey.



ISLAMABAD: High Commission Malaysia Azhar Bin Mazlan inaugurates Shaheen Sports League Organised by Al Khidmat Foundation on Iqbal Day at Sports Complex.

Ashrafi demands swift action against perpetrators of Quetta blast, pledges support to govt

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Pakistan Ulama Council Hafiz Tahir Ashrafi vehemently denounced the devastating terrorist attack in Quetta, which claimed multiple lives and left many injured.

He pledged his council's unwavering support and full coordination with the government to tackle the crisis.

In an exclusive interview with PTV News, Hafiz Tahir Ashrafi has unequivocally condemned the Quetta blast, extending his heartfelt support to the government and offering prayers for the victims. He urged the state to take

decisive action against elements spreading unrest in the region and urge all able-bodied Ulama and Madaris students to come forward and donate blood to save precious lives.

Ashrafi alleged that an external agenda is behind the recent incidents, highlighting the need for a comprehensive response to address the root causes of the issue.

He highlighted the importance of revising policies to prevent the exploitation of Pakistan's goodwill and ensure the country's efforts to support Afghanistan are not misused.

He reaffirmed the Pakistani nation's unwavering support for its army in the fight against terrorism. "The Pakistani Ulama Council stands shoulder to shoulder with the Pakistani Army to combat these terrorists and we will emerge victorious soon," he declared.

He underscored the unity and determination with Pakistan's religious leaders and military in countering terrorism and promoting regional stability. He deemed such attacks shameful and inhuman, emphasizing the need for swift action against those responsible.

Over 137,000 laptops distributed to empower Sindh, Balochistan youth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Over 137,000 laptops have been distributed to youth in Sindh and Balochistan under the Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme (PMLS) since 2013, promoting skills development, education, digital inclusion, and youth empowerment in the regions.

Official sources told APP that, a total of 107,034 laptops have been distributed in Sindh and 30,513 in Balochistan since 2013.

Providing details of the laptop distribution in Sindh for the year 2023-24, he stated that 16,939 laptops were given to university students across the province on a merit-based system under the scheme.

He further broke down the distribution, mentioning that a total of 94 laptops were given in

Tharparkar (Mithi), 242 in Umerkot, and 97 in Kashmore.

Balochistan's share in the Prime Minister Laptop Scheme was notably increased under the Prime Minister's directives, rising from 6% to 14% for 2022-2023, and further raised to 18% in the upcoming phase.

In 2023-24 alone, a total of 12,663 laptops were distributed across various districts of Balochistan, including 1,486 in Kech, 354 in Nushki, and 55 in Chagai.

The Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme (PMLS), launched in 2013 by Nawaz Sharif, focuses on youth development and empowerment through education, employment, engagement, and environment. It is implemented under these core pillars.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of United Arab Emirates Hamad Obaid Al-Zaabi, and others stands on starting point of Marathon, title "Run through the Sand of Times" at Diplomatic Enclave, in the Federal Capital.

"Apni Chhat Apna Ghar" brings hope to Punjab's homeless, Senator Talal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-N Senator Talal Chaudhry Saturday lauded Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's pioneering initiatives, particularly the groundbreaking 'Apni Chhat Apna Ghar' ambitious project which aims to provide affordable housing to low-income families, exemplifying Maryam Nawaz Sharif's dedication to addressing Punjab's homeless population.

In an interview with PTV news channel, Senator Talal Chaudhry has expressed his admiration for the "Apni Chhat Apna Ghar" program.

This project aims to transform the lives of low-income families, offering them a chance to own their own homes and improve

their living standards, he added. The Apni Chhat Apna Ghar project is a testament to her dedication to improving the lives of low-income families and empowering them to become homeowners, he added.

The Apni Chhat Apna Ghar project is designed to be transparent and free from political affiliations, he mentioned.

The project operates through three distinct models, including state land utilization, low-cost housing development and interest-free loans for house construction, he added.

The loan application process has been simplified, requiring applicants to submit only their CNIC and property documents, with loans disbursed purely on merit, he highlighted.

Punjab govt takes serious measures regarding smog: Raja

ISLAMABAD (APP): Punjab Environment Protection Secretary, Raja Jahangir Anwar, on Saturday said that the provincial government has rolled out a series of emergency initiatives aimed at protecting public safety and reducing smog levels.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that steps were taken, including the temporary closure of major highways, including sections of the motorway, due to zero visibility, along with restrictions on schools, universities, offices, and public parks.

He said that the government is enforcing strict measures against sources of pollution, including industrial emissions, crop burning, and vehicular smoke. "Our foremost priority is safeguarding public health, especially for vulnerable groups like children, the elderly, and those with respiratory issues," he stated.

Pakistan Mountain Festival to begin on November 27

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 14th annual Pakistan Mountain Festival, the world's largest event highlighting mountain conservation, culture, and community, is set to begin on November 27. Organized by Development Communications Network (Devcom-Pakistan), this two-week festival celebrates Pakistan's majestic mountain regions and the communities that call them home, including the Karakoram, Himalayas, and Hindu Kush ranges. The festival will kick off with a live painting session by students at the Punjab Arts Council, where young artists will portray their visions of mountain heritage.

Pakistan, Korea to begin joint excavation of Mankiala Stupa

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Korea have begun a joint excavation of the Mankiala Stupa in collaboration with the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Islamabad and Korean Official Development Assistance (ODA).

According to the PTV News, joint team of experts from Pakistan and Korea has started the three-month long excavation of the Mankiala Stupa.

A team comprising two specialists from the Korean Heritage Association (KHA) and six Archaeology students from Quaid-

i-Azam University (QAU) is actively involved, with the students expected to become key figures in Pakistan's archaeological future. This pilot project, based on an agreement between Pakistan and Korea, emphasizes capacity-building and aims to unearth the hidden lower structures of the Stupa.

The data gathered will support the preservation of the site, while new technology like drones, GNSS, and Total Station tools will strengthen Pakistan's expertise in heritage conservation.

AJK President to address Mirpur District Bar Association on Monday

ISLAMABAD (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry will address the District Bar Association as the guest of honor on Monday, November 11, during his two-day visit beginning Sunday, November 10.

Following his address, he will also attend a luncheon hosted in honor of Qamar Abbas, Chairman of Overseas Pakistan Foundation (OPF) at a local hotel, according to a press release.



ISLAMABAD: Adventure lovers participating in rock climbing at Jasmeen Corner Pir Sohawa, organised by Athletics Ascend, a US NGO.

IG Islamabad reviews crime prevention efforts in federal capital

ISLAMABAD (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi chaired a meeting at the Central Police Office (CPO) on Saturday to review the law and order situation and take preventive measures against crimes. A police spokesperson told APP that the IG reviewed the overall crime situation and crime prevention measures in the federal capital. He issued necessary instructions to the police officers regarding the arrest of suspects in robbery, murder, street crime and other cases, as well as obtaining evidence for ongoing investigations.

IG Rizvi also issued orders to senior police officers to pay special attention to serious crimes, street

crime, and crime hotspots. IG emphasized that protecting the lives, property, and honor of citizens in Islamabad is the highest priority for the Islamabad Police. All police officers should ensure effective patrolling of the city and counter criminal elements, IG Rizvi added. IG Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi along with SSP Operations and Director Legal reviewed the performance of city zone officers. IG issued orders to the police officers to take systematic action using all resources to secure the lives and property of the citizens. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Syed Ali Raza, DIG Security Muhammad Jawad Tariq, SSP Operations Muhammad Arslan Shah Zaib.

Nine outlaws held; weapons, drugs recovered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police apprehended nine outlaws involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession on Saturday.

A public relation officer told APP that the, ICT Police Aabpara, Industrial Area, Shams Colony, Noon and Koral police stations teams took legal action against accused involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons.

The police teams also arrested six accused namely Zeeshan, Yousaf, Aamir Khan, Ander Gul, Muhammad Ishaq and Said Nawaz and recovered four liquor bottles, 420 gram hashish and four pistols with ammunition from their possession, he added.

UAE Ambassador Al-Zaabi Pledges support for Smog relief efforts in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of United Arab Emirates to Pakistan Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Saleem Al-Zaabi Saturday expressed his country's readiness to cooperate with Pakistan in sharing artificial rain technology to combat smog issues.

In an interview with PTV, Al-Zaabi emphasized the UAE's commitment to supporting Pakistan's environmental efforts, adding that the collaboration between the UAE and Pakistan in sharing artificial rain

technology could be a significant step forward in addressing environment challenges.

"The innovative approach of artificial rain can be a vital tool in the fight against smog, bringing cleaner air to affected communities," he said, adding, "Building on our past successes, the UAE is once again extending an offer to Pakistan to utilize our advanced artificial rain technology to combat smog."

Ambassador Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Saleem Al-Zaabi

stated. "In previous years, we successfully deployed our specialized helicopters equipped with artificial rain capabilities to help mitigate smog in Pakistan," he mentioned.

"This year, we are reaffirming our commitment to supporting our brotherly country in addressing this critical environmental issue and we look forward to collaborating with Pakistani authorities to bring relief to affected communities through this innovative solution," he concluded.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the State of Palestine Dr. Zuhair Hamdallah Dar Zaid exchanging views with Palestinian Students during Shaheen Sports League Organised by Al Khidmat Foundation on Iqbal Day at Sports Complex.

Pak Teachers Forum holds annual event 'Empowering Educators, Shaping Future'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Teachers Forum (PTF) held its annual event Friday evening, themed "Empowering Educators, Shaping the Future," a gathering that underscored the critical role of educators in shaping Pakistan's future.

The event was graced by Chief Guest, Federal Secretary of Education, Muhammad Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, and Honourable Guest, Chairperson of the Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Authority (PIERA), Dr. Zia Batool.

In his address, Federal Secretary Muhammad Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani emphasized the importance of a collaborative approach, urging private sector involvement to tackle educational challenges, especially for out-of-school children. He highlighted the government's commitment to inclusive education and praised PTF's initiatives that align with national educational goals.

The event commenced with Atif Abbas,

Central General Secretary of the Pakistan Teachers Forum, presenting the Annual Report for 2023-24.

The report highlighted PTF's milestones, achievements, and the dedication of educators nationwide to creating inclusive and quality learning environments.

Senator Fawzia Arshad, Chairperson of the Pakistan Teachers Forum, presented an innovative Education Policy designed to address the evolving needs of Pakistan's education sector.

Senator Arshad highlighted the policy's focus on professional development for teachers, the integration of modern teaching techniques, and resources for underserved regions.

Chairperson Dr. Zia Batool of PIERA introduced the Education and Vocational Program (EVP), a significant initiative aimed at reintegrating out-of-school children into formal education. This program addresses a longstanding gap, promising impactful interventions for communities in need.



ISLAMABAD: People visiting the stalls at Behbud Art and Craft Bazar 9-10 November at Pak-China Friendship center.

VC AIOU urges youth to adopt Iqbal's philosophy of 'selfhood'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Vice Chancellor Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood has urged the youth to embody Iqbal's philosophy of "selfhood" to achieve confidence, resilience, and a spirit of leadership.

Talking to APP on the eve of Allama Muhammad Iqbal's Birth Anniversary being remembered on Saturday, VC AIOU said that Iqbal's philosophy, centered on self-empowerment, strength, and societal harmony, is essential for building an ethical, peaceful society based on mutual respect and compassion.

While paying tribute to Sir Allama Iqbal, he encouraged young people to integrate Iqbal's teachings into their lives. "Iqbal's poetry and philosophy offering guidance not only to Muslims but to all humanity. His message is as relevant today as it was in his era" he mentioned.

In its commitment to Iqbal's vision, AIOU has laid a strong foundation for

fostering knowledge and understanding of Iqbal's work, encouraging students to explore the thoughts of this universal philosopher who aspired to create a morally upright society grounded in Islamic values and human dignity.

To a question, he informed that Allama Iqbal Open University has established the 'Iqbal Gallery,' a significant cultural space honoring the legacy of renowned poet-philosopher Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal.

Dr. Nasir Mahmood said this gallery serves as a testament to the university's commitment to promoting Iqbal's thought and philosophy among the youth. "We are proud to be associated with the name of Iqbal, our national poet and a mammoth in knowledge and wisdom," Dr. Mahmood remarked.

Furthermore, Dr. Mahmood highlighted that the Iqbal Gallery houses over 3,288 volumes, including rare books, journals, sketches, paintings, stamps, and photographs.



ISLAMABAD: Worker busy in lifting containers on Faizabad junction.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent
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Wake-up call

The United Nations Human Rights Committee has sent a clear message to the government: it must work to bring the country's laws in line with international human rights standards. The committee's findings, released after its latest review of Pakistan's compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, paint a distressing picture of the state of human rights in the country.

The gravest concerns raised by the committee revolve around the use of military courts to prosecute civilians. This practice not only violates the right to a fair trial, as the committee noted, but also represents a troubling expansion of the establishment's jurisdiction into the civilian sphere. The committee rightly urged Pakistan to abrogate such jurisdiction over civilians. The committee's other findings are equally worrying. It noted the absence of broad, transparent consultations on judicial independence reforms, especially related to the 26th Amendment. Concerns were also raised about the intimidation and harassment of judges and prosecutors, especially in sensitive cases. The authorities' ability to access and retain personal data without proper oversight was another observation. Such unchecked surveillance is a serious affront to privacy rights and must be remedied with strong privacy laws, as recommended by the rights body. Furthermore, the committee noted the continued use of enforced disappearances, as well as threats and attacks against journalists and human rights defenders. It has demanded immediate action against such violations.

Another critical area discussed in the review is the death penalty. The committee stressed that although some limitations have been introduced, Pakistan's continued use of capital punishment, even for non-violent offences requires reconsideration. Its call for a moratorium on executions is especially relevant given concerns about age determination and juvenile justice. The committee also highlighted severe detention conditions and the prevalence of torture, urging Pakistan to take stronger measures to prevent abuse in custody. The rights of children were stressed, with recommendations to end forced conversions and marriages of minority girls. While the committee acknowledged some positive legislative developments, such as laws addressing gender-based violence and protecting transgender persons, it is clear that much more needs to be done. This cannot be a cosmetic exercise. True reform requires meaningful, transparent consultations with all stakeholders — judges, prosecutors, lawyers, civil society — to ensure the independence and integrity of key institutions. Pakistan must heed this wake-up call and embark on a concerted effort to bring its laws and practices in line with its international human rights obligations. Failure to do so will not only undermine Pakistan's global standing, but more importantly, will deprive its citizens of the rights and freedoms they are entitled to under the ICCPR and the country's own Constitution.

Ghazan Jamal

It has now been more than five years since the Federally Administered Tribal Areas were merged into KP.

The reason the five-year mark is significant is because the government's plans used to justify the merger, most notably, the August 2016 Report of the Committee on Fata Reforms, headed by Sartaj Aziz, recommended a five-year transition period. During this transition, a number of necessary "complementary objectives and prerequisites" were to be fulfilled before the merger could be truly achieved. To quote the aforementioned report, it was important to envision the "mainstreaming of Fata as a process and not an end in itself".

The moral and ethical debate around having a committee with no member belonging to ex-Fata to deliberate over the future status of the people of that area or the legality around the committee's proposal to merge Fata with KP notwithstanding, it is beyond the scope of this article to assess the arguments for and against the merger it-

self. At this point, it is important to look at what has actually transpired; therefore, I focus on the key commitments that were supposed to occur during this transition period.

As per the report itself, the highest priority (after the restoration of peace) was the rehabilitation of the tribal people. Up until recently, relative peace had been achieved in most of the merged areas. However, the rehabilitation process is a different story. For all practical purposes, large swaths of ex-Fata still remain displaced even though the target date for repatriation was set for the end of 2016.

A meagre Rs400,000 was set as the compensation amount for destroyed homes — inadequate for cleaning up the debris let alone undertaking any sort of reconstruction. The programme was discontinued in 2023 even though many are still waiting to receive compensation. The KP government estimates an additional Rs60 billion would be needed to complete the process.

Given the local population's financial constraints and lack of govern-

ment support, many tribes like the Mehsuds in Waziristan and Mamozai in Orakzai remain displaced. As for compensation for destroyed shops, promised in the report, except for a couple of towns in North Waziristan district, shops were excluded from the compensation programme. This led to many bazaars that were once commercial hubs and centres of livelihood still looking like desolate wastelands.

Perhaps the biggest impediment to the successful mainstreaming of ex-Fata and its development has been the lack of funding. In addition to the existing Rs21bn annual development programme pre-merger, ex-Fata was to receive a three per cent share in the NFC divisible pool. Contrary to what some might believe, this share was based on the population and area metrics of Fata, similar to the share being determined for the provinces. It was not an additional favour.

However, to date, this amount has not been given by the provinces or the federal government. This was supposed to be Fata's

'Marshall Plan'. Instead, the regions formerly comprising Fata, continue to be robbed of this fundamental right.

Among other things, there were also promises of doubling quota seats in universities and health institutions across the country and an additional 20,000 jobs in the police (Levies). In addition, the jurisdictional extension of the high court and Supreme Court, the introduction of the 'Tribal Areas Riway Act' based on the region's customary law for civil and criminal cases, development of urban centres as engines of growth, GIS-based land settlement and the withdrawal of security forces from Fata in five years were all promised.

However, instead of the doubling of quota seats, attempts have been made by some other provinces to abolish even the existing quota seats for ex-Fata students.

Notably, in 2021, the Punjab government's attempt was only blocked after the intervention of the then Punjab governor Chaudhry Sarwar on the request of ex-Fata parlia-

mentarians after months of rioting by students.

Meanwhile in KP, ex-Fata students are still barred from competing on open merit seats and the same low number of quota seats remains. In the local police, let alone fulfilling the promise of creating 20,000 new vacancies, many existing spots in ex-Fata, vacated by retired personnel, remain unfilled. The Tribal Areas Riway Act never saw the light of day, while land settlement and the development of urban centres remain abstract ideas at best. The recent worsening security situation in ex-Fata has meant that the footprint of the security forces is on the rise, and there is no indication of a withdrawal as envisaged by the committee.

What the merger has achieved though is reducing the representation of members from ex-Fata in the National Assembly from 12 to six and abolishing the eight Senate seats held by Fata residents. While KP's administrative and judicial systems struggle to establish a set-up in ex-Fata, the old system has been dis-

mantled, creating a vacuum that has further disrupted daily life for residents. On top of that, electricity meterisation is meticulously being pursued and various federal and provincial taxes are being extended.

While residents of ex-Fata are still yearning for the state to fulfil its promises, the real tragedy is that the committee's recommendations were never given any legal backing, meaning that these promises will likely remain just words on the piece of paper they were written on.

Contrary to what the merger was supposed to achieve, it has only increased the ex-Fata population's sense of abandonment, desperation and resentment towards the state. With the region once again on the brink of being overwhelmed by militancy, there is an urgent need for key stakeholders to come together to chalk out a new development pathway for the area. However, this time it is imperative that the people of ex-Fata are involved in this process in a decision-making capacity.

Broken promises

A ten-point agenda for COP29

Sherry Rehman

As countries begin preparing for COP29, all states are looking to enhance their NDC (Nationally Determined Contributions) ambitions and report on progress at Baku in November.

Developing countries, however, are also focusing on the event as an opportunity to leverage what is billed as the Finance COP, for seeking higher resourcing commitments for their resilience and mitigation agendas. Assessments on the Loss and Damage Fund progress will also be on the agenda, while revised targets for New Collective Quantified Goals will be set, to potentially scale up the level of financing countries can access through green financing channels.

Since 2022, when Pakistan led the Global South at COP27 in Sharm-el-Sheikh after its catastrophic flooding, seeking a new bar for funding small emitters that face disproportionate losses has become a global norm. At the heart of this Loss and Damage discourse is the rising call for climate justice, yet two years down the line the newly constituted Fund struggles for

both funding and leadership.

While the scale of need rises exponentially at the global level into trillions of dollars, green funding remains both projected and hard to access, it also sits at embarrassing levels of capitalisation by many donor countries. The Loss and Damage Fund, for instance, is only pledged-funded at \$770 million, while countries like Pakistan alone are at a needs assessment of \$30 billion from the last catastrophe in 2022. For building resilience by 2030, Pakistan will need \$348 billion according to the World Bank.

Pledges will once again be the cornerstone of negotiations and outcomes. Since this an 'Enabling Action' COP, the focus will be on NDCs and financing. Countries will be asked to present ambitious, comprehensive and robust NDCs, National Adaptation Plans and Biennial Transparency Reports. At this point, about 75 per cent of states have set net-zero targets, which account for 98 per cent of global GDP and 88 per cent of GHG emissions, yet global emissions are rising by over 10 per

cent even for a deadline of 2030, which is really going to be the decisive decade for many developing countries on the frontlines of climate change.

Globally, the funding shortfall for climate action remains staggering. The data is patchy and likely under-represented. UN estimates suggest that \$125 trillion is required to be spent globally to reach net zero emissions by 2050. For climate adaptation, which is possibly the only way for developing countries to survive the decade, the scale and importance is often ignored by the developed countries as a priority.

At current levels, with global warming going up instead of down, the world will need to spend a maximum of \$340 billion per year by 2030, reaching \$565 billion by 2050. Just for perspective, the UNFCCC's Standing Committee on Finance's first report on the financial needs of countries says that \$6.8 trillion is required by 78 developing countries alone to meet their financing needs to fulfil their NDCs.

Given that Pakistan is on the frontlines of climate impacts, instead of business as usual, Pakistan

must insist on asking what the big emitters have done to lower their emissions. The facts are stark, with the UN warning of a catastrophic 3.0 C rise, very far from the 1.5 C above industrial levels as agreed at the Paris Conference in 2016. While Pakistan's National Adaptation Plan may need extensive coordination and financing to enable impacts across a mountain to delta environment especially at local levels, the surge in warming is not in any small emitter's control.

There is also no confusion about how Pakistan's mega-flooding was triggered, according to the World Weather Attribution Group, which says it was clearly climate-linked. The human cost has been incalculable, but so has the financial.

A UN study also suggests that Pakistan will have the highest projected GDP loss from climate change in the South Asia and South-west Asian regions, reaching 9.1 annually under worst-case scenarios. Given this context of deficits, Pakistan should not have to scale up its Nationally Determined Contributions, because of an unrealistically high ambition set in 2021,

which aimed to reduce GHGs by 50 per cent by 2030. The goal was to cut emissions nationally by 15 per cent through own resources, and an additional 35 per cent of reductions conditional on international support, both financial and technical.

So what should Pakistan be seeking this time, from a Conference of Parties which has now become globally the most important forum for multilateral negotiations? With 106 heads of state showing up, the heat and light generated by just the media will be unprecedented. First, the call for climate justice must not be allowed to drown in the cacophony of 'practical solutions' that are often impractical, piecemeal and circular. Green funding must not be inaccessible or offered on such a small scale that it is usable only for pilot projects.

Second, redefined limits for NCOG must not be sidestepped in jargon that delays funding in long, projectised, competitive bidding for countries like Pakistan seeking urgent interventions in the resilience and climate space. The regular overseas development

aid disbursed by developed countries must not be disguised as green finance in the absence of a definition for 'climate financing'.

Third, Loss and Damage leadership must be urged to speed up its accreditations and criteria for funding, let alone capitalisation and disbursement for extreme events. It cannot become another body where funds disappear in a long projectisation process, with neither the agility or speed that countries face today. When disaster strikes, Pakistan has to repurpose all development, social and climate financing for humanitarian responses. Nothing is left to build 'resilience' infrastructure, which typically costs four times as much as regular infrastructure, but remains a strong investment per dollar for future impacts.

Fourth, debt cannot become the acceptable new normal in climate financing, especially for economies already impacted by exogenous shocks as well as high commercial and development debt.

The real issues

Bisma Tirmizi

There is nothing complicated about Donald Trump's win as much of the mainstream media would like the world to believe. If you live in America you know the truth, and if you watch TikTok anywhere in the world, you know the truth and more.

While the liberals have a tantrum and try to complicate the reasons behind why the Americans chose to paint their country Red this time, and in essence decided to cosy up to the Draconian Blond, the reality is easy to decipher for first-time voters, seasoned baby boomers and all generations in between.

It was as simple and down to earth as 'roti, kapra aur makan'.

Election 2024 is a clear indication that after all is said and done, after all the soap opera, the theatrical and manufactured issues, dramatic hyperbole, staged debates, and woke issues that need no oxygen or air time, politics is still about only the real issues.

One may choose to hate Trump for his crassness or his politics, but he ran on what matters to an average American — no foreign wars, no inflation, no crime, no illegal immigration and the impact on a household. In contrast, Kamala Harris ran on feelings, vague abstract vibes, oxygenating fears, a high horse with a Hollywood saddle, constant virtue signalling, appearances on SNL, and a zero-sum issue-driven campaign. Being uncharismatic didn't help. She lacked authenticity and charisma and the Democrats' overall message was focused on vilifying Trump and the Republican voter. That backfired.

She clearly chose not to separate from her boss on most agendas. Plus the

constantly invoked moral high ground — 'We are better than the Republicans' — did not work when tens of thousands of unarmed people were being obliterated in a genocide on her watch. And endorsements from the likes of warmonger Dick Cheney, which should have caused revulsion, were worn like a badge of honour. Bizarre!

Flashback 2020: Biden picked a losing vice-president in order to ensure he would do eight years. Her campaign had zero momentum from the get-go and a late arrival left no runway time for the campaign to take flight. She is no Barack Obama. And while Obama's politics may not be ideal, his persona was absolutely dynamic.

It seemed Harris only ran on the abortion issue, and despite her calls from the pulpit, the country figured out that Trump is not really pro-life, as the Democratic rhetoric would like them to believe. Trump ran an intelligent campaign and perceptively pulled ahead of the Democratic rhetoric by clearly rejecting a countrywide abortion ban.

She beat the drum on 'cry wolf', when the wolf wasn't really there. The wolf wasn't interested in eating the sheep.

Another sensitive issue that Harris championed was the gender choice for minors — an issue that did not sit too well at the ballot box regardless of what the pundits or the extreme left wing might have had the campaign believe. The Red sweep clearly told the Democrats that if a child can't get a tattoo before the age of 18 without parental presence, then something as consequential, life-altering and monumental as gender change has to be off the table.

And here we are today and America has made its choice. It chose to let a felon into the White House, and as a friend (who hails from occupied Kashmir, and has faced persecution) said, "America decided it did not want undocumented immigrants no matter how persecuted they feel in their country of birth. Misogyny does not bother the majority, hate speech and dangerous rhetoric isn't that bad, reproductive rights for women aren't that big of a deal after all, and the list goes on."

But nothing, and I mean nothing, compares to normalising a yearlong genocide. Liberals worked overtime to make a fascist sound normal to the people who do not agree with what has been going on this past year. They thought we could focus on safe abortions instead.

He might turn out to be just like his predecessors and continue America's Middle East policy, but he won't feed the world lies about it. Those who did not vote for Kamala or simply abstained as an act of defiance or for the lack of a better choice, you have my respect.

Cue the Muslims in the US who chose to make their voice heard.

While in 2016 there was a feeling of deep depression at Trump winning, this time it was all about making sure that Harris lost. America voted, and it voted for a better life by tuning out the noise.

And while the mainstream media looks for more rhetoric as to why Trump won, the answer is simple; real issues always trump vague feelings. Period.

Quality learning

Nazir A. Jozegai

Balochistan has consistently found itself at the bottom of the development pyramid. Most surveys show that the province ranks lowest in education in both access and standard. While the recent District Education Performance Index (DEPIx) reports disparities in inputs, expectations remain impractical. The latter demands that Sherani and Awaran be on a par with the ones from Islamabad and Lahore.

In the list of critical factors for human capital development, inclusive education is paramount. But inclusion is impossible without equity, particularly in countries where development is polarised. Hence, underdeveloped regions deserve more investment from developed territories. According to Unicef, the rate of Balochistan's out-of-school children (OOSC) is 47 per cent, Punjab's is 14pc, KP's 24pc and Sindh's 15pc. Pakistan Education Statistics 2021-22 reveal that only 23pc of Balochistan's primary schools have access to potable water, 39pc have a boundary wall and a mere 15pc have electricity.

Balochistan also receives the most minor slice of the NFC award, which makes bridging the gulf between learners and schooling unachievable. Equality demands equal distribution of resources; it also requires recognition of heightened deprivation with the allocation of a generous 3:1 share for the hungry. Thus Balochistan's education sector is in dire need of an equitable share in the financial pool. An abominably inequitable educational management is also reflected in DEPIx. However, let's analyse

whether DEPIx addresses educational disparities adequately. It seems to lack deeper insights and comprehensive measures for educational progress, quality pedagogy, learning and assessment methods.

Firstly, the sustainability and effectiveness of a longer tenure, as suggested for education secretaries, is questionable. The culture of transfers of subordinate officials and principals, along with their leadership capital, is linked to district indexing. Similarly, the quality parameters in the index measure dropout and school participation — issues related to access — partially.

DEPIx assesses digital technology availability in schools as ICT in education, whereas empirical evidence contradicts this view. According to recent research, technological tools in Pakistani schools are mostly unused because their usage is discouraged by school administrations. Therefore, the presence of ICT in academic facilities cannot be seen as an integral part of education. It would be more beneficial to integrate ICT into classrooms, assessment methods, teachers' professional development and school management.

There is no doubt about the importance of data for appropriate educational supervision, decision-making, formulating policies and planning. However, relevance, validity and reliability are central factors for any valuable database. There is a need for accurate and modern measures for quality learning; first-hand information that captures the contextual realities as well as maintains objectivity in its analysis is a prerequisite. Otherwise, the result can have a disproportionate impact on the planning, implemen-

tion and evaluation of educational outcomes, particularly in terms of access, learning and educational governance.

Our collective approach towards dealing with education-related issues, such as OOSC, without taking the broader educational ecology into account is flawed. This educational ecology includes the cultural, socioeconomic and sociological landscape, and solutions to OOSC do not reside in effective educational management alone because socioeconomic and sociopolitical well-being is the real remedy.

The higher OOSC rates in some parts of the country too cannot be attributed solely to effective educational management and parental awareness about the importance of education. It is also an outcome of their economic security through better job opportunities and social mobility. Balochistan, as the least developed society in the country, has child labour and parental financial incapacity to enrol children in schools.

In addition to reliable data, an intersectoral approach to data collection, analysis and its integration in policies is essential. For instance, the integration of BISP with schooling under the Benazir Taleemi Wazaif is a good step. A comprehensive social security net and economic growth will go a long way in resolving the OOSC issue. But the absence of quality is a far more severe concern, which demands looking beyond conventional educational research, planning and development. The long-standing need for bottom-up planning should be addressed urgently. There must be true devolution of power not just to the provinces but also to the districts and schools.

Sindh governor, CM vehemently condemn Quetta terrorist explosion

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori and Sindh Chief Minister (CM) Syed Murad Ali Shah have vehemently condemned a terrorist blast in Quetta railway station on Saturday.

In their separate communiques, they expressed their deep sorrow and grief over the

loss of precious lives in the explosion.

The governor and CM said expressed their heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families of the deceased.

They termed the explosion as a cowardly act of terrorism.

They also prayed for the recovery of the injured persons.



KARACHI: Inspector General of Sindh Police Ghulam Nabi Memon addressing a press conference at CPO office in Provincial Capital.

Azma accuses PTI of seeking 'NRO', misusing public funds

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has accused the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of organising protests and rallies with the sole aim of securing an 'NRO' (reprieve) for their leader, currently imprisoned in Adiala Jail.

In a statement issued on Saturday, she asserted, "The purpose of PTI's protests and rallies is only to get an NRO for the prisoner in Adiala Jail, which will never be granted."

Criticising PTI's tactics, she remarked, "Those who once sought freedom from America are now dying for 'Trump's slavery'." She alleged that the imprisoned PTI leader "is always ready to beg from anyone for personal gains."

The minister went on to dismiss the impact of PTI's recent rallies, claiming that the gathering of crowds in Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa would not affect the government. "Whether they hold a rally in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or bring thousands of people for one or five thousand rupees, it makes no difference to us," she stated.

Azma further alleged that the Swabi rally was attended only by municipal staff, rescue workers, and police personnel in plainclothes, with attendance marked for all government employees at the rally site.

She also accused the PTI of misusing federal funds intended for welfare of KP people, claiming the funds were diverted to support protests and rallies instead. She mentioned that KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Ghandapur distributed thousand-rupee notes among recently released party workers, sparking dissatisfaction over the allegedly low payments.

LG minister highlights completion of Planning Support System in 10 districts

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Local Governments Zeeshan Rafiq announced on Saturday that the Project Management Unit (PMU) had successfully completed the Planning Support System (PSS) in 10 districts, with plans to extend the project to 32 districts in near future.

Speaking at an event at Royal Palm Club on World Town Planning Day on Saturday, he explained that the PSS project enables effective monitoring of development and planning across districts through GPS technology, enhancing transparency and efficiency in public

projects.

The minister praised Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif for her role in initiating efforts to improve urban and rural facilities, noting that this was the first time serious efforts were being made to strengthen the local government system. "For the first time under the leadership of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, steps are being taken to provide facilities in cities and villages," he said. He added that the PSS project was crucial for managing urban planning effectively, addressing issues like unregulated housing developments.



LAHORE: Commander Central Punjab Pakistan Navy Rear Admiral Azhar Mehmood reviewing the Guard during Change of Guard Ceremony at Mausoleum of Allama Iqbal.

Kundi condemns Quetta blast; directs PPP workers to donate blood for injured

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Saturday strongly condemned the bomb blast at Quetta Railway Station, describing it as a cowardly and heinous act by anti-Pakistan forces.

In his statement, Governor Kundi expressed his deep sorrow over the loss of innocent lives in the attack, calling it a tragic incident that has caused immense grief to the nation. "The martyrdom of innocent passengers in the Quetta railway station bombing is heartbreaking and a significant cause of distress for all Pakistanis," he said.

The governor also extended his prayers for the swift recovery of the injured, emphasizing that the entire nation shares in the pain of those affected. "We are praying for the speedy recovery of the wounded, and our hearts are with the victims and their families during this difficult time," Kundi added.

Kundi further urged members of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) to actively participate in helping the victims by donating blood, as many of the injured require urgent medical care. "I call on all PPP workers to come forward and donate blood for the injured."



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan offering Fatiha during his visit to Mazar-e-Iqbal on the occasion of Iqbal Day.

CM pays tribute to Allama Iqbal's legacy on Iqbal Day

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, in her Iqbal Day message, paid homage to the contributions of the poet-philosopher Allama Muhammad Iqbal (RA), whose intellectual and poetic works inspired the creation of Pakistan.

The chief minister said that Iqbal's vision continues to hold immense value for the country's progress and unity.

CM Maryam Nawaz described Iqbal's message for the new generation as one of self-awareness, stressing the importance of introducing young minds to Iqbal's thoughts and ideals.

"It is essential to enlighten our youth with Iqbal's thoughts," she said, adding that Iqbal's masterpieces, **Shikwa** and **Jawab-e-Shikwa**, remain timeless contributions to literature in both Urdu and Persian. She expressed her desire for 'Kalam-e-Iqbal' to become a more prominent part of Pakistan's educational curriculum to instill national pride and character. The chief minister noted, "On Iqbal Day, we pledge to adopt the thoughts of the Poet of the East to elevate Pakistan." She highlighted that devotion to Iqbal's teachings is the best way

to honor his legacy. Reflecting on Iqbal's role, she said, "Allama Iqbal's poetry infused a high sense of character and unity within the Muslims of the subcontinent, transforming them into a dynamic and awakened nation."

She expressed her personal admiration for Iqbal's verses, particularly his message of compassion, quoting her favorite lines, "May my work be supporting the poor, loving the sick and the weak." She also shared a prayer for the younger generation: "My God, save me from evil... Be a good guide."

Three crushed to death in road accident

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): Three motorcyclists were crushed to death in a collision between a loaded rickshaw near at Adda 2-R Sultan colony road in premises of Sanwan police station on Saturday.

According to police sources, Saleem, Waris and Talib were going to their workplace on motorcycle when all of a sudden motorcycle was collided with a speeding loaded rickshaw.

Resultantly, they fell down and died on the spot when a speeding tractor trolley crushed them under its wheels.

Rescue officials reached the spot, shifted the bodies to Rural Health Centre Sanwan.

Further investigation was underway.

First meeting of steering committee on 'Dhee Rani' programme held

LAHORE (APP): The first meeting of the steering committee, formed under the leadership of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif for the 'Dhee Rani' program was held on Saturday.

The meeting was chaired by Punjab Minister for Social Welfare and Baitul-Mal Sohail Shaukat Butt, via Zoom link. Political Advisor to the Chief Minister Zeeshan Malik, attended the meeting as a special participant. Secretary of Social Welfare Javed Mehmood Akhtar and Social Welfare Director General Sikandar Zeeshan were also present. Commissioners from various divisions joined the

meeting through zoom.

The Social Welfare DG provided a detailed briefing on the 'Dhee Rani' program to the members and updated Provincial Minister Sohail Shaukat Butt and Special Assistant Zeeshan Malik on the progress of the programme.

It was stated in the meeting that the programme was open to underprivileged, orphaned, and physically disabled women, whose parents are also disabled and who are between the ages of 18 and 40. Additionally, the web portal for the 'Dhee Rani' project has been developed and is now operational, allowing applicants to submit their applications online.



HYDERABAD: Chairman Sindh Tarraqi Passand Party Dr Qadir Magasi addressing a sit-in protest against proposed construction of a Canal on River Indus, organized by Sindh Tarraqi Passand Party at Hattri bypass.

Notorious dacoit held after encounter with police

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): A notorious dacoit was shot injured by the firing of his own accomplices after encounter with police near Mouza Ghalwan in premises of Alipur city police station on Saturday. According to police sources, a police team was taking an arrested accused Fazal Hussain to a place for recovery when three unidentified armed outlaws started firing on the police party to get their fellow released from police custody. The police also retaliated in self-defense and the exchange of fire continued for 15 minutes. After the firing, the police found accused 'Fazal Hussain' injured by the firing.

MoU inked for collaboration towards digitalization of home based workers in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed for collaboration between Krafers and Pakistan Hoslamand Khawateen Network to synergize efforts towards digitization, financial literacy and onboarding of home based workers, Micro & small enterprises.

According to a press release issued here both the organizations agreed to work cohesively to engage home based workers and MSEs (Micro and Small Enterprises) for digital onboarding and inclusion to catalyze entrepreneurship.

Moreover the two skill based entities will jointly undertake a

registration campaign in Hazara division starting from December 2024 to register over five thousand home based workers in Haripur, Abbottabad and Manshra Districts of KP. Speaking on the occasion, Zahid Ali Shah, CEO Krafers said digital financial inclusion plays a significant role in empowering women-led businesses, particularly in developing regions, where traditional financial systems often marginalize women entrepreneurs by limiting outreach.

Besides registration of home based workers and MSEs for Digital onboarding, Krafers plans to hold orientation sessions and startup challenges.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafiq addressing a ceremony on the eve of World Town Planning Day at Royal Palm Club.

KP governor calls for Civil-Military agreement, women empowerment, peace

LAHORE (APP): Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Faisal Karim Kundi emphasized the need for a civil-military agreement in Pakistan to ensure national progress.

Addressing a session at Kinnaird College for Women University on Saturday, Governor Kundi outlined his priorities, highlighting women's empowerment, youth engagement and promoting a positive image of KP as essential to the province's development.

He urged a shift in Pakistan's foreign policy to safeguard against becoming a target for external agendas, emphasizing, "We cannot change our neighbors."

He underscored the importance of providing women in KP with enhanced employment opportunities, especially for those who face challenges despite holding advanced degrees.

He noted plans to offer women IT resources

and partnerships with institutions to create sustainable job options. In his address, he directed universities to implement at least 3 percent female representation in their senate and syndicate committees and praised Kinnaird College as a model, expressing his desire to establish a similar institution in KP. Governor Kundi also voiced concerns over administrative and security challenges affecting KP's educational institutions.

He highlighted the absence of permanent vice-chancellors at many universities and announced scholarship initiatives for students from FATA, Hafiz-e-Quran, transgender individuals, minorities and people with disabilities. Referring to the Army Public School attack, he spoke on KP's struggle with terrorism and the closures of several schools in the southern districts due to instability.

Regarding the banned

organization Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM), he called for collaboration within constitutional limits and discouraged divisive rhetoric, saying, "Those who speak of 'Law Bar Pashtun' should consider that leaders in Islamabad do not establish homes in Afghanistan." Kundi emphasized KP's cultural richness, noting its 22,000 tourism sites, though he acknowledged the challenges foreign tourists face due to NOC requirements.

He expressed his commitment to boosting tourism and announced the start of cultural seminars at the Governor House, Peshawar including recent events celebrating Allama Iqbal and Khushal Khan Khattak.

Highlighting resource allocation issues, Governor Kundi criticized KP's inadequate access to its own gas and electricity resources, despite being the largest producer.



PESHAWAR: Activists and supporters of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) are holding protest rally as they are moving towards Swabi to participate in PTI public gathering meeting against the establishment of the Federal Constitutional Court and proposed constitutional amendments and demanding to release PTI Chairman, Imran Khan, in Peshawar.

New polio case reported in KP, raising the toll of infection to 10

PESHAWAR (APP): A new case of polio virus infection has been reported in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Saturday, raising the toll of crippling disease to 10 in the region during current year.

According to an official of Emergency Operation Center (EOC) KP, a 28 months old boy in Behram union council of Darazbanda Tehsil of D.I.Khan district has been diagnosed infected with polio virus.

This is the third case of polio infection in D.I.Khan district and 48th in the country in 2024.

According to break up of polio cases during current year, 23 have been reported in Baluchistan, 13 from Sindh, 10 from KP and one each from Punjab and Islamabad.

While in KP, three cases are reported in D.I.Khan, two each from Lakki Marwat and Kohat, and one each from Mohmand, Tank and Nowshera districts.

Primary school teachers call off strike as demands accepted

PESHAWAR (APP): Following successful negotiations with the representative of the provincial government, the primary school teachers called off their strike on the fifth day here on Saturday.

President All Primary Teachers Association (APTA), Aziz Ullah Khan told media persons that primary schools across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will reopen on Monday, 11th November. He said the government has accepted all our demands and constituted a committee that will address the issues of teachers' upgradation and other demands within a period of one month.

From the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government side, MNA Arbab Sher Ali held a successful dialogue with the representatives of protesting teachers.

According to the outcome of the dialogue the induction pay scale of the primary teachers will be

upgraded from scale 12 to 14 while the primary head teachers' scale will be upgraded from 15 to scale 16. During negotiations, it was also agreed upon that for induction in scale 14, the required qualification of the candidate will be BA or BSC. According to the Secretary Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the teachers' upgradation will cost a sum of Rs 11 billion to the provincial government. The Finance Department had earlier estimated an amount of Rs 34 billion for liabilities including the teachers' pension.

He assured that the provincial government will also issue the regularization orders of some 13000 teachers of the province.

Besides, he said 3000 teachers from seven districts will be promoted and for approval of the CP Fund, an approval from the provincial cabinet would soon be acquired.

11 dead, 1584 injured in 1432 RTCs in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): At least eleven persons were killed and 1584 injured in 1432 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. According to a spokesperson, out of these, 745 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 839 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by rescue medical teams thus reducing the burden of hospitals.

Furthermore, the analysis showed those 862 drivers, 63 underage drivers, 182 pedestrians and 551 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes. The statistics show that 254 RTCs were reported in Lahore which affected 282 persons placing the provincial capital at top of the list followed by Faisalabad 113 with 124 victims and at third Gujranwala with 92 RTCs and 88 victims. According to the data 1307 motorbikes, 89 auto-rickshaws, 126 motorcars, 28 vans, 21 passenger buses, 44 truck and 138 other types of auto vehicles.



KARACHI: A policeman checks a train at a railway station in Provincial Capital. Pakistan placed security forces on high alert at railway stations, airports and embassies after a bomb explosion at Quetta city railway station.

Punjab CM lists science, technology as pillars of progress

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif highlighted the role of science and technology as the foundation of a peaceful and prosperous society in her message for the International Week of Science and Peace, on Saturday.

Emphasizing that "the secret of development lies in science and technology," she underscored the government's commitment to advancing Punjab through digital innovation. CM Maryam Nawaz

introduced the upcoming Nawaz Sharif IT City as a transformative hub for youth development, noting that the project will host international IT institutions and campuses from renowned universities, providing unprecedented opportunities for young Pakistanis. "Nawaz Sharif IT City will be a land of opportunities for the development of youth," she said, adding that this initiative will bridge the gap between local talent and the global job market.

FAO backs sustainable farming to strengthen food security in Pakistan: Country Rep

ISLAMABAD (APP): As Pakistan faces mounting challenges in food security, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is stepping up to support local governments with initiatives focused on sustainable agriculture.

FAO Country Representative Florence Rolle in an exclusive interview with APP said, through a range of programs, FAO aims to boost productivity, improve nutrition, and build resilient food systems that offer

Pakistanis not only sufficient calories but also healthier diets.

FAO's strategy for supporting Pakistan is built around sustainable agricultural practices that address core food security issues and promote better nutrition. Elaborating her organization's various programmes initiated in Pakistan, she said FAO is enhancing local agriculture by promoting eco-friendly practices that build resilience while improving soil, water management, and biodiversity. These practices increase crop

yields and ensure the longevity of Pakistan's agricultural productivity, she added.

She said that small-scale farmers play a key role in Pakistan's food production, adding that FAO's initiatives provide these farmers with resources, training, and knowledge to adopt sustainable methods that protect the environment and boost their productivity.

Florence said FAO emphasizes food production that meets not only caloric needs but also

nutritional requirements. By encouraging a diverse crop range, FAO supports the availability of nutrient-rich foods, essential for healthy, balanced diets.

To a question about food safety standards, she said ensuring food safety is vital and FAO collaborates with local governments to develop food safety standards and practices, offering technical assistance on everything from good farming practices to safe post-harvest handling, ensuring food remains safe for consumers.



LAHORE: Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan inaugurates 8th Pakistan Industrial Expo.



QUETTA: Advisor to CM for Industries and Commerce Mir Ali Hassan Zehri inaugurates industry established in Bostan Industrial Estates.

Pakistan launches 'Climaventures': A \$50m push for climate innovation, investment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan took a significant step toward climate resilience and innovation with the launch of Climaventures, a pioneering initiative led by the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP).

Unveiled in Islamabad, this groundbreaking \$50 million project is designed to attract private investment in climate ventures, marking the first of its kind in Pakistan.

The event drew a diverse audience, including government officials, foreign dignitaries, and key figures from organizations like the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the World Bank.

Together with local investors, National Incubation Centers (NICs), and climate entrepreneurs, attendees underscored the program's collaborative approach to tackling Pakistan's pressing climate challenges.

With a core \$25 million funding commitment from the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Climaventures aims to address Pakistan's funding gaps for sustainable solutions by offering technical guidance, grants, and equity for climate-focused startups.

In his remarks, NRSP CEO Dr. Rashid Bajwa highlighted the initiative's potential to significantly reduce risks for climate startups, enhancing their chances of success and

capacity for impact.

Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, praised Climaventures' "groundbreaking approach" via a video address, calling it "pivotal for enhancing our capital landscape." He emphasized how such investments lay the groundwork for both innovation and private sector mobilization in climate efforts.

Development Director of the British High Commission, Jo Moir lauded Climaventures as an essential milestone for channeling international climate finance into Pakistan, stressing the importance of private sector support to bridge the country's climate finance gap.

TEVTA, UMT sign 3-year collaboration agreement to promote skill development

LAHORE (APP): A three-year collaboration agreement was signed between the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) and the University of Management and Technology (UMT) Lahore on Saturday to advance skill development initiatives in Punjab.

The signing ceremony, held at UMT, was attended by Provincial Minister of Industry and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain as the chief guest.

Under the agreement, TEVTA and UMT would jointly organize training workshops and events, with a focus on mutual exchange of expertise in various trades and technologies. The UMT will conduct short-term courses to enhance the capacity of TEVTA's teaching staff, while TEVTA students will have opportunities to participate in UMT-led workshops, seminars, and conferences. Both institutions will also

collaborate on research, publications, and exchange of academic resources. To facilitate these initiatives, focal persons will be appointed and a joint working group will be formed.

Minister Chaudhry Shafay Hussain lauded the partnership, calling it a "welcome step" toward enhancing the quality of technical education. He emphasized the importance of bridging academia and industry to ensure employment for skilled workers, noting that trained personnel will be prepared to meet industry demands both locally and globally, helping generate foreign exchange. He added that TEVTA labs and courses are being upgraded, with support from the Asian Development Bank, to establish centers of excellence. Highlighting the need to promote e-commerce, the minister also promised discussions with the federal government to address internet service improvements.

Secretary Agriculture orders strict action over stubble burning

MULTAN (APP): Department of Agriculture Punjab Ifikhar Ali Sahoo has said that the harvest season for rice is currently underway across the Punjab province, with strict enforcement measures being implemented against farmers engaging in stubble burning. Under the Punjab Agriculture Department's directives, efforts to curb rice stubble burning have intensified. So far, 1,289 cases of stubble burning have been reported, covering an area of approximately 1,700 acres across Punjab. To address these violations, 196 FIRs have been filed, and fines exceeding Rs 15 million have been levied against those responsible. Secretary Agriculture said in a statement issued here on Saturday. He highlighted that the Punjab Agriculture

Department has established 22 Anti-Smoke Squads to monitor and guide farmers on sustainable practices adding that eleven of these squads were stationed along the motorway to ensure greater compliance.

In a proactive effort to reduce stubble burning, the Punjab government, under the Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's Smog Control Program, was providing 5,000 super seeders at a 60% subsidy, with a total investment of Rs five billion, he added.

The secretary agriculture maintained that 1,000 super seeders have been distributed so far and daily use of these machines covers thousands of acres. Farmers were not only utilizing these super seeders for their own fields but were also renting them out.

Rana reviews SME development strategy

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain Saturday made a review of the proposed action plan to be prepared by the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) as per vision of the prime minister of Pakistan.

The meeting, held in this regard here at SMEDA premises, was also attended by Secretary Industries and Production Saif Anjum and senior management team of SMEDA. Socrat Aman Rana, CEO SMEDA, gave a detailed presentation on this occasion to apprise the

minister about interventions required to be made at government level for providing SMEs with necessary support for easy and enhanced financing, marketing, technology upgradation, subcontracting and women entrepreneurship development.

Besides highlighting the features of the subject presentation, he said that Provincial Working Groups set up under the National SME Policy-2021 were already in action to lay down the provincial SME Development Strategies. He told that SMEDA, in collaboration with ITC.



ISLAMABAD: Traditional hand-made caps of GB attracts the visitors at Behbud Art and Craft Bazar.

Food Authority's 8-day campaign against sale of substandard meat continues

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety and Halal Food Authority has commenced an eight-day crackdown on the sale of substandard meat across the province.

Under the directive of Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur and Food Minister Zahir Shah Toru, the campaign which started on November 8, will continue until November 15, targeting meat shops and slaughterhouses in multiple cities.

Giving details, the spokesperson for the Food Authority said that special inspection teams, led by Assistant Directors of Food, have been formed to inspect meat quality, halal certification, and storage standards adding that inspections are underway at various districts in KP.

Teams are conducting inspections along key routes to verify compliance with food safety SOPs and to prevent

the sale of harmful or low-quality meat.

On the first day of the campaign, the spokesperson informed that food safety teams confiscated a significant quantity of substandard meat, including 800 kg in Peshawar, 40 kg in Mardan, 8 kg in Haripur, and 50 kg in Hangu.

Heavy fines were imposed on several violators, and one shop was sealed. Follow-up inspections are also planned to reinforce the campaign's impact.

Director General of the Food Authority Wasif Saeed, reiterated the authority's commitment to ensuring safe food for the public, emphasizing that similar initiatives will continue in the future.

Secretary for Food Department, Saqib Raza Aslam, added that these efforts aim to raise food quality standards and eliminate substandard products from the market.

Governor Punjab inaugurates 8th Pakistan Industrial Expo

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan inaugurated the 8th Pakistan Industrial Expo 2024 organized by University of Sargodha and Everest International Expo at Expo Center Lahore.

Talking to the media on this occasion, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that China is a close friend of Pakistan in every forum in terms of trade.

He said that Pakistan has always had close and deep relations with China. He said that the people of both countries also value the relations between the two countries. He termed

the 8th Pakistan Industrial Exhibition as a great success in terms of trade and education sector and said that the steps taken to link industry and education by the Vice Chancellor University of Sargodha and his team are highly commendable.

Governor Punjab said that the government is providing rich opportunities to Chinese companies in Pakistan in every forum and now with the grace of Allah, economic activities have been restored in the whole country. Governor Punjab said that the arrival

of more than 100 Chinese companies in Pakistan is a sign of full confidence and peace in the country and this confidence is increasing with time.

He also specially appreciated the efforts of Vice Chancellor University of Education, Professor Dr. Akif Anwar and Vice Chancellor University of Lahore, Professor Dr. Muhammad Ali Shah.

On this occasion Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan along with Vice Chancellor University of Sargodha Professor Dr. Qaiser Abbas visited the various stalls set up in the 8th Pakistan Industrial Exhibition.

No change in gold prices

LAHORE (APP): Gold prices in Pakistan witnessed no change on Saturday in line with stability in international market.

According to local Sarafa Association, the price of per tola 24-karat gold remained steady at Rs. 278,800 whereas the 10-gram was traded at Rs. 239,026 without any change.

Furthermore, no change was observed in bullion rates in international market as per ounce was traded at \$2,683, the association said.

Silver prices in Pakistan also recorded no change as per tola and 10-gram were traded at Rs. 3,300 and Rs. 2,829.21 in local market.

FCCI president says: Comprehensive strategy imperative to exploit \$100m tourism potential

FAISALABAD (APP): Pakistan should formulate a comprehensive strategy to exploit the \$100 million potential of inbound tourism, said Rehan Naseem Bharara, President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI).

Addressing a meeting of the FCCI Standing Committee on International Tourism & Liaison with Hajj & Umrah, he said that Pakistan has a large number of religious holy sites and shrines of the followers of Sikhs, Buddhism and other religions. "Followers of these religions visit Pakistan for their spiritual satisfaction. We can

enhance their numbers by renovating these sites and by providing the intended pilgrims best possible boarding, lodging and transport facilities in addition to ensuring easily accessible air connectivity", he added.

He said that tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy but we failed to exploit its potential.

He stressed the need to identify all such sites in collaboration with the local communities and travel agents so that all tourism related sub-sectors could serve them professionally to earn hundred million dollars per annum.



ISLAMABAD: A large number of women visiting the Behbud Art and Craft Bazar 9-10 November at PAK CHINA Friendship center.

InfraZamin Pakistan partners with SBP, PBA and PIDG to host seminar on green financing

Independent Report
KARACHI: InfraZamin Pakistan, Pakistan's premier credit enhancement guarantor, in collaboration with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Pakistan Banks' Association (PBA), and

Ministry of Finance, CEOs, and investment heads from leading commercial banks in Pakistan, to discuss the potential of green financing, particularly green bonds, to accelerate sustainable economic

measures, SBP has introduced refinancing schemes for renewable energy, whereby financing of Rs. 94.7 billion has been disbursed by end June 2024. The scheme has provided financing to more than 4,500 renewable

energy projects, having a cumulative energy generation capacity of almost 2,061 MW. Whereas, under the indirect measures, the SBP aims to improve the capacity of the regulated entities to support uptake of green financing and enhance their resilience.



the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) hosted a seminar titled Enabling Green Financing and Green Bonds via Credit Enhancement Solutions today at a local hotel. The high-profile event brought together top officials from the State Bank of Pakistan

growth in the country through support from the private sector.

The seminar featured notable speakers including Jameel Ahmed, Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, Muneer Kamal, CEO of Pakistan Banks' Association, Maheem Rahman, CEO of

InfraZamin Pakistan, and Philip Skinner, Head of the Middle East, North Africa, and Pakistan at GuarantCo, and Origination Lead for Nature at PIDG Expressing his views at the occasion, Jameel Ahmed, Governor, State Bank of Pakistan

measures, SBP has introduced refinancing schemes for renewable energy, whereby financing of Rs. 94.7 billion has been disbursed by end June 2024. The scheme has provided financing to more than 4,500 renewable

Chinese wisdom in carbon finance shared for closer South-South cooperation

BEIJING (APP): China experience and resource in climate change finance and investment were shared with 21 officials and professionals from 13 countries including Pakistan, Indonesia, Brazil, Laos, Cambodia and Honduras at the Belt and Road Capacity-building Seminar on Financing Mechanisms and Carbon Finance.

The seminar hosted by the Department of Climate Change of the Chinese Ministry of Ecology and Environment was just concluded in Guangzhou, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Saturday.

"In accordance with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and Paris Agreement, developed countries should provide financial, technical and other support to developing countries to help them address climate change. However, developed countries have not delivered on their

commitments of providing \$100 billion annually in climate finance for developing countries.

Against this background, holding a seminar themed by climate finance is of great significance, representing the concrete action by China for South-South cooperation in tackling climate change," said Chen Zhihua, Deputy Director, National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation.

The seminar featured lectures and field teaching on climate change, artificial intelligence, energy transition and carbon neutrality, low-altitude economy and smart transportation, carbon market development, green finance and carbon finance, etc. According to Chen Zhihua, up to now, China has signed 53 memorandums of understanding on South-South cooperation on climate change with 42 developing countries.

Trump win prompts EU leaders to tackle 'urgent' reform agenda

Monitoring Desk
BUDAPEST: Reforming Europe's economy is all the more urgent following Donald Trump's US election win, warned the author of a blockbuster report, Mario Draghi, ahead of talks with EU leaders in Budapest on tackling the challenge. Although Europe's public reaction to the Republican's return has been cautious, officials are on full alert over the implications for the EU economy if he delivers on his threats and slaps higher tariffs. Ex-European Central Bank head Draghi was tasked last year with preparing the economic report that EU chief Ursula von der Leyen will use to steer her next five years in office. Published in September, the sweeping document raised the alarm over Europe's failure to keep up with the United States, pointing to the EU's low productivity and economic slowdown. "The recom-

mendations in this report are already urgent, given the economic situation we are in today. They have become even more urgent after the US elections," Draghi said. The former Italian prime minister rejected a wholly pessimistic take on Trump's return. "There is no doubt that the Trump presidency will make a big difference in the relations between the United States and Europe. Not necessarily all in a negative sense, but certainly we must take note," Draghi said. With Germany mired in political turmoil, divergent national interests and bitter disagreements over how to face the challenges ahead, there is no guarantee that the EU will be able to step up. But Draghi has warned that failure to heed his recommendations would lead to the bloc's "slow agony" of decline. Arriving for Friday's summit, EU chief Charles Michel said Draghi's report

formed an "excellent basis" for talks and that "everything is on the table," especially financing. The report's big takeaway is that Europe must invest up to 800 billion euros (\$863 billion) more a year to avoid falling further behind the United States. But there is a lot in the 400-page tome for the leaders to digest before lunch. Besides his call for more investment to improve economic output, Draghi controversially called for common borrowing - an idea torpedoed by Germany - as well as reforming the EU's approach to competition policy to encourage big spending. In a draft declaration, the leaders stress "the pressing need for decisive action" and back Draghi's proposals to deepen the single market, build the capital markets union that would better mobilise private capital as well as a trade policy that defends Europe's interests.



North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un inspecting a training base of the Korean People's Army's special operations forces in the western region, at an undisclosed location in North Korea.

New Israeli law could send attackers' relatives to Gaza

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Israel's parliament passed legislation on Thursday that could see relatives of people accused of "terror" attacks expelled from the country, possibly to the conflict-stricken Gaza Strip, prompting concern from Arab minority rights activists. The legislation authorises the interior minister to deport first-degree relatives for up to 20 years "if they knew in advance of plans to carry out terror attacks but did not do everything possible to prevent the attacks". Far-right politicians

have been pushing for this legislation for years believing it will deter Palestinian citizens of Israel and residents of annexed east Jerusalem from carrying out attacks against Israelis. Adalah, an advocacy group for Arab minority rights in Israel, called the new law "a dangerous escalation in Israel's legislative crackdown on Palestinian rights, framed under the guise of counterterrorism". "These measures enable the state to collectively punish Palestinians by authorising the deportation of entire families," it said in a statement.

France mulling new sanctions on Israeli settlers, minister says in West Bank

Monitoring Desk
RAMALLAH: France is mulling new sanctions on those enabling the expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, regarded as illegal under international law, Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said on a visit to the territory on Thursday. "France has been a driving force to establish the first sanction regime at the European level targeting individuals or entities, either actors or accomplices of settlement activities", Barrot said after talks with Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas in Ramallah. "This regime has been activated two times already and we're working on a third batch of sanctions targeting these activities that again are illegal with respect to international law." Barrot renewed France's commitment to a two-state solution to the

Israeli-Palestinian conflict and warned settlement activities "threaten the political perspective that can ensure durable peace for Israel and Palestine". Before meeting Abbas, Barrot visited the adjacent town of Al-Bireh, where Israeli settlers set fire to 20 cars on Monday, damaging a nearby building. After speaking with residents and local officials at the scene, Barrot noted that the attack took place in a part of the West Bank where the Palestinians were supposed to enjoy both civil and security control under the Oslo Accords of the 1990s. "These attacks from extremist and violent settlers are not only completely inexcusable, not only contrary to international law, but they weaken the perspective of a two-state solution," Barrot said.



A person is detained by the police as supporters of Maccabi Tel Aviv demonstrate in Amsterdam.



Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, shakes hands with Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban, next to European Council chief Charles Michel, after a press conference at the end of an informal meeting of European Union leaders in Budapest.

United Nations warily awaits Donald Trump's return to power

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations has been planning for the possible return of Donald Trump and the cuts to US funding and engagement with world body that are likely to come with his second term as president.

There was a sense of "dèjà vu and some trepidation" at the 193-member world body, said one senior Asian diplomat, as Republican Trump won Tuesday's US election over Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris. "There is also some hope that a transactional

administration will engage the UN on some areas even if it were to defund some dossiers. After all, what bigger and better global stage is there than the United Nations?" said the diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity. A US retreat at the UN could open the door for China, which has been building its influence in global diplomacy. Trump has offered few specifics about foreign policy in his second term but supporters say the force of his personality and his "peace through strength" approach will help bend foreign leaders to his will.

Afghan women not barred from speaking to each other: morality ministry

Monitoring Desk
KABUL: Women in Afghanistan are not forbidden from speaking to each other, the Taliban government's morality ministry told AFP on Saturday, denying recent media reports of a ban. Afghan media based outside the country and international outlets have in recent weeks reported a ban on women hearing other women's voices, based on an audio recording of the head of the Ministry for the

Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice (PVPV). Mohammad Khalid Hanafi, about rules of prayer. PVPV spokesperson Saiful Islam Khyber said the reports were "brainless" and "illogical", in a voice recording confirmed by AFP. "A woman can talk to another woman, women need to interact with one another in society, women do have their needs," he said.



Joint secretary of India's Ministry of External Affairs, J.P. Singh, meets with acting Afghanistan defence minister of Taliban Molvi Muhammad Yaqoob Mujahid.

Malaysia's troubled ex-PM ordered to pay \$300,000 to politician over defamatory remarks

Monitoring Desk
KUALA LUMPUR: A Malaysian court on Friday ordered former Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin to pay more than \$300,000 to another politician in a defamation case, adding to the opposition leader's legal troubles. Muhyiddin, who was premier for 17 months between 2020 and 2021, is also charged with sedition for allegedly insulting a former king and is accused of corruption and money laundering in separate cases.

He denies wrongdoing. The Kuala Lumpur High Court ordered Muhyiddin to pay 1.35 million ringgit (\$308,078) in damages for defamatory remarks against former Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng in a series of Facebook posts in March 2023, news agency Bernama reported. The court also ordered Muhyiddin to retract the statements and issued an injunction preventing him from repeating the claims.

Dutch authorities scramble to protect Israeli football fans after clashes

Monitoring Desk
AMSTERDAM: Five people were hospitalised and 62 arrested after unprecedented violence, centered around supporters of an Israeli football club, erupted in the Dutch capital following a fixture against home team Ajax. The clashes, which have been dubbed "anti-Semitic attacks" by Dutch PM Dick Schoof, were reportedly provoked by fans of Maccabi Tel Aviv, the club that lost Thursday's match 5-0. Footage from the stadium during the game also showed Maccabi fans jeering and whistling during a minute's silence for those

killed in floods in Valencia. According to BBC News, videos posted to social media sites showed Maccabi Tel Aviv fans chanting racist slogans about Arabs and Palestine, as well as climbing on a building to tear down a Palestinian flag on display. The outlet quoted social media users as saying the videos were from before the attacks on Israelis. A fan who attended the game with Ajax said Maccabi Tel Aviv supporters were seen on the Amsterdam metro "going up and down the carriages three or four times looking for a fight".

Fourth Muslim elected to Congress

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Late-fab Simon has made history as the fourth Muslim American elected to the US Congress, winning California's 12th district seat in the Nov 5 elections. An announcement on Friday confirmed her victory, adding to the growing representation of Muslims in American political life. Simon joins Representatives André Carson of Indiana, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan, and Ilhan Omar of Minnesota.

Afghanistan fails to enforce ban on opium cultivation

Monitoring Desk
KABUL: The Afghan government miserably failed to enforce ban on the cultivation of opium. The opium cultivation witnessed an increase of 19% despite the already imposed ban in the Taliban regime. According to insiders, the increase in the cultivation of opium shows weak administration of Taliban in Afghanistan. The continuous increase in the cultivation of opium was seen in the northeast region due to the absence of a robust policy.

North Korea jams GPS signals, affecting ships, aircraft in South

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea staged GPS jamming attacks and Saturday, adding several vessels and dozens of civilian aircraft were experiencing "some operational disruptions". The military warned ships and aircraft operating in the Yellow Sea to beware of such attacks. "We strongly urge North Korea to immediately cease its GPS provocations and warn that it will be held responsible for any subsequent issues arising from this," they said in the statement.

Relations between the two Koreas are at one of their lowest points in years, with the North launching a flurry of ballistic missiles in violation of UN sanctions.

Pentagon chief says he has not changed position on Guantanamo Bay plea deals

Monitoring Desk
MIAMI: US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said on Thursday he still believed he should be the one to decide the fate of plea deals for the man accused of masterminding the Sept. 11 attacks and two accomplices held at the US military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Earlier this year Austin rescinded plea deals that the Pentagon had entered into with the trio, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. This week a US military judge ruled that Austin had acted too late on revoking the plea deals and they were still valid, a US official said.

Austin did not say whether he would formally appeal the decision by the judge but said his views had not changed on the issue. "What I told you (a few months ago) was that this is a very important issue, and I thought at that point in time it was important enough that I should be the person that

Israel to collect soccer fans from Amsterdam after apparent antisemitic attacks

Monitoring Desk
AMSTERDAM: Israel was sending two commercial planes to the Netherlands on Friday to repatriate hundreds of Israeli soccer fans after overnight attacks in the streets of Amsterdam that officials described as antisemitic. Videos on social media showed riot police intervening in clashes, with some attackers shouting anti-Israeli slurs. Amsterdam Mayor Femke Halsema said Maccabi Tel Aviv supporters were "attacked, abused and pelted with fireworks" and that riot police intervened to protect them and escort them to hotels. At least five people were treated in hospital, she said. Security measures were increased in the city, where hundreds gathered on Thursday to remember

Kristallnacht, the Nazi pogrom against Jews across Germany on Nov. 9-10, 1938. Antisemitic incidents have surged in the Netherlands since Israel launched its assault on Gaza after the attacks on Israel by the Palestinian Hamas group on Oct. 7, 2023, with many Jewish organisations and schools reporting threats and hate mail. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said the order to send planes was taken after "a very violent incident" targeting Israeli citizens after the match between Maccabi and Ajax Amsterdam, traditionally identified as a Jewish club. "This is a serious incident, a warning sign for any country that wishes to uphold the values of freedom," it said.

China summons Philippine ambassador over new maritime laws

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: China summoned the Philippines' ambassador to express its objection to two new laws in the Southeast Asian nation asserting maritime rights and sovereignty over disputed areas of the South China Sea, its foreign ministry said. China made "solemn representations" to the ambassador shortly after Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. signed the Maritime Zones Act and the Archipelagic Sea Lanes Act into law to strengthen his country's maritime claims and bolster its territorial integrity. The Maritime Zones law "illegally includes most of China's Huangyan Island and Nansha Islands and related maritime areas in the Philippines' maritime zones," Beijing's foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said, using the Chinese names for Scarborough Shoal and the Spratly Islands respectively. Beijing has rejected a 2016 ruling by The Hague-based Permanent Court of Arbitration which said its expansive maritime claims over the South China Sea

had no legal basis, in a case that was brought by Manila. The United States, a Philippine ally, backs the court's ruling. Marcos said the two laws he signed, which define maritime entitlements and set designated sea lanes and air routes, were a demonstration of commitment to uphold the international rules-based order, and protect Manila's rights to exploit resources peacefully in its exclusive economic zone (EEZ). "Our people, especially our fisher folk, should be able to pursue their livelihood free from uncertainty and harassment," Marcos said. "We must be able to harness mineral and energy resources in our sea bed." But Beijing said the laws were a "serious infringement" of its claims over the contested areas. "China urges the Philippine side to effectively respect China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests, to immediately stop taking any unilateral actions that may lead to the widening of the dispute and complicate the situation," Mao said.

Indian diplomat meets Taliban ministers, ex-president Karzai

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: In what is said to be the first such meeting, a senior Indian government functionary held talks officially with the acting Taliban defence minister of Afghanistan, The Wire said on Friday. It said the meeting took place between the joint secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs, J.P. Singh, who is in charge of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran desk, and acting defence minister of Taliban Molvi Muhammad Yaqoob Mujahid. According to the report, the meeting took place in Kabul on Nov 5. Mr Singh also met Taliban acting foreign minister Amir Khan Muttaqi and former Afghan president Hamid Karzai, a report by Times of India notes.

Indonesian volcano spews ash 10 km high, thousands evacuate

Monitoring Desk
JAKARTA: Indonesia's Mount Lewotobi Laki-laki erupted several times on Friday, belching volcanic ash that rose up to 10 km (32,800 ft) into the sky, officials said, following a big eruption on Sunday night that killed nine people. The eruption on the island of Flores in the province of East Nusa Tenggara has damaged more than 2,000 houses and caused thousands to evacuate.

Ahsan Iqbal urges nation to embrace Allama Iqbal's vision for progress

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal has called upon the nation to follow the teachings of philosopher-poet Allama Muhammad Iqbal (RA) by actively incorporating his vision into Pakistan's development agenda.

Speaking at an Iqbal Day seminar titled "The Journey of National Development: In the Light of Iqbal's Vision", organised by the Punjab University's Department of Urdu Language and Literature here on Saturday, Ahsan stressed that observing Iqbal Day with holidays alone is not sufficient. Instead, he urged educational institutions to conduct regular discussions on Iqbal's ideology to inspire progress and strengthen Pakistan's independence.

Ahsan Iqbal highlighted the current chal-

lenges facing the Muslim world and questioned why two billion Muslims worldwide appear less influential than smaller nations. He attributed this disparity to a lack of advancement in science and technology, stressing that Iqbal's vision champions education and intellectual pursuit as cornerstones of societal progress.

Recalling his studies at a prominent U.S. university, Ahsan noted that America's status as a 'superpower' stems from its dedication to knowledge and innovation, with research facilities open 24/7. Calling upon the authorities concerned to adopt a similar approach, investing in education and research to build a robust intellectual foundation.

Reflecting on Iqbal's teachings, he stressed the concept of 'Khudi' (self-belief) and a sense of pur-

pose as fundamental principles for Pakistan's youth, noting that "self-belief is our starting point" for progress.

He challenged the youth to think beyond basic survival and to aspire toward national development goals. The minister also warned of a "civilisational crisis" facing the Muslim world, calling for character-building, integrity, and unity to meet these challenges head-on.

He stressed that Pakistan's journey to economic empowerment is essential for achieving a prominent international status.

"Today, economy is the primary source of a nation's strength. A strong economy means a strong nation," he remarked, underlining the need for unity to strengthen Pakistan against internal and external adversities.



LAHORE: Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives for Pakistan, Ahsan Iqbal addresses a seminar on Iqbal Day at Raazi Hall New Campus Punjab University.

Putin extends condolences to Pakistan following Quetta terror attack

ISLAMABAD (APP): Russian President Vladimir Putin on Saturday conveyed his condolences to President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif following a devastating terrorist attack at the Quetta Railway Station. In a letter, President Putin expressed deep sorrow over the tragedy, which claimed the lives of several civilians, including women and children, and left many others injured. He strongly condemned the "barbaric crime," calling for justice for those responsible. He underscored Russia's solidarity with Pakistan in the fight against terrorism, reaffirming Russia's commitment to close cooperation with Pakistani authorities in combating extremism and protecting citizens from violent acts.

"We are determined to continue close cooperation with our Pakistani partners

against all forms and manifestations of terrorism," Putin wrote. He expressed Russia's determination to assist in the fight against such heinous crimes and hoped that the masterminds behind the attack would be appropriately punished.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister of Malaysia Anwar Ibrahim conveyed his heartfelt condolence and sympathies over the incident. "On behalf of Malaysia, I extend our deepest condolences to the people of Pakistan, who mourn this senseless and devastating loss," the Malaysian PM wrote on X. He emphasized these acts of utter ruthlessness and violence, targeting both civilians and security personnel, were stark reminders of the relentless threats posed by extremism and ideological rigidity-forces that undermine progress.



QUETTA: Sardar Iqbal Khilji meeting with Director General Public Relations Balochistan Muhammad Noor Khetran.

Ambassador Rizwan Sheikh highlights Pakistan's priorities to boost cooperation with US

WASHINGTON (APP): The Pakistan government's priorities to enhance bilateral cooperation with the United States in trade and investment, higher education, health, science and technology, climate change, and regional stability were highlighted by Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh at an event in Berkeley, California, on Thursday.

The event, held at the Department of Ethnic Studies, University of California, was attended by faculty members and students, provided a platform for an open dialogue on the evolving relationship between Pakistan and the United States, with focus on the role of the Pakistani-American community in shaping the bilateral ties, according to a press release of the Pakistani embassy.

In his remarks, Ambassador Sheikh underscored the strategic nature of the relationship in historical context and shared interests of both nations to promote peace and development.

He also stressed the pivotal role of the Pakistani diaspora in strengthening these ties, particularly through active engagement with American institutions, policymakers, media, and the corporate sector.

The Ambassador also emphasized the vital role of the Pakistani-American community in enhancing people-to-people connections and promoting educational, economic, and cultural exchanges, effectively serving as a bridge between Pakistan and the United States.



Provincial Advisor Mir Ali Hassan Zehri issuing directives for solution of people's problems during khuli kutchery in Tehsil Darejhi.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif visits the Police Service Center established for facilitation of diplomatic community.

Awais reveals 'Electricity Relief Package' for domestic, industrial consumers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Laghari on Saturday unveiled the Electricity Relief Package, under the leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, for the winter season for domestic, industrial, and commercial consumers.

Addressing the press conference on Saturday, the minister said that under the relief package, the domestic consumers would get a cheap electricity of up to Rs 26.7 per unit for their power consumption surpassing 200 units of the protected category and it would help them to save Rs11.42 to Rs 26 per unit in the three months of winter.

He said that through this package, the present government had achieved a milestone in the power sec-

tor and termed it a revolutionary step which would bring economic stability in the country. "We have initiated reforms in the power sector not only to streamline its system but to make it profitable," he added.

He emphasized that the power sector had significant role and back bone of the country's economy, adding that the government had fulfilled the promise made with the public.

Awais Laghari said the package would provide relief to the domestic consumers at same time, it would enhance the industrial activities in the country. He said the government was intended to continue the Electricity Relief Package for the national interest.

The minister said the under prime minister's dynamic vision, it was the

foremost priority to promote the economic activities and the power sector was contributing to economy at large, reiterated that the practical steps were being taken to streamline the power sector.

He further said the industrial sector will save 18-37 percent or Rs 5.27 to Rs 15.5 per unit under the package to help boost industrial production, growth and livelihoods. The commercial consumers will be given a 34-47 percent saving or Rs 13.46 to Rs 22.71 per unit subsidy in the package.

He said that NTDC had been divided into three companies such as Independent Marketing System, National Grid Company, and Infrastructure Management Company to complete the projects on their stipulated time.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Haji Ali Madad Jattak, Bakht Muhammad Kakar and Raheela Hameed Khan Durran enquiring about health of injured of Quetta Railway Station suicide bomb blast.

Speaker, Dy Speaker BA flay Railway Station blast, term against humanity

Independent Report QUETTA: The Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai and Deputy Speaker Ms. Ghazala Gola have strongly condemned the suicide blast occurred at the Quetta Railway Station.

In their separate condemnation statements issued here on Saturday, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives in the tragic explosion.

The Speaker said that the bomb blast was condemnation and against the humanity.

In his statement, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai said that his heart goes on the bereaved families of those martyred in the

blast and share grief with them.

He said that those responsible of the blast are anti-humanity and peace enemy, and they don't deserve any clemency.

He said that we are united against the elements who are attempting to destroy the human values.

The speaker stressed that let's condemn the terrorism and maintain peace in the province.

Similarly, the Deputy Speaker Ghazala Gola also condemned the terrorism incident that claimed lives of several people and left many others injured at Quetta Railway station.

She expressed sympathy with the bereaved families of the martyrs and said that we share grief with them.

India confirm they won't visit Pakistan for Champions Trophy

NEW DELHI (INP) - The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has officially informed the International Cricket Council (ICC) that its team will not travel to Pakistan to participate in the Champions Trophy 2025.

The BCCI told ICC that the Indian government had advised it against sending the team to Pakistan, ESPNcricinfo reported a day after India media reported the same decision.

The eight-team Champions Trophy is scheduled to be played at three venues in Pakistan from February to March 9 but the decision will require the ICC and the Pakistan Cricket Board to mull over other plans such as hybrid model under which India matches will be played at a neutral venue.

The leading cricket portal reported that the ICC

might be looking for a written communication from BCCI before conveying it to PCB.

On Friday, PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi said India had not officially communicated about their non-participation in the Champions Trophy 2025.

Speaking to media, Naqvi said the Indian media had been reporting for two months that their team would not be travelling to Pakistan for the tournament.

Referring to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), he said if anyone had any objections, they should convey to the PCB in writing through proper channel.

He said no discussions had taken place with the BCCI regarding the hybrid model, while insisting that "We are also not prepared for it".

Railways fully restores train operations in Quetta after bomb blast

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Railways has successfully restored full train operations in Quetta following a tragic bomb blast earlier on Saturday.

According to a spokesperson from Pakistan Railways (PR), the Jaffar express and Chaman passenger trains have resumed their routes and departed from Quetta toward their respective destinations.

The Bolan Express has also safely departed from Quetta, heading to Karachi.

The restoration of train services marks a swift response by the authorities to ensure connectivity and support for passengers despite the unfortunate incident.

Bilawal pays tributes to Allama Iqbal on birth anniversary

KARACHI (APP): Chairman of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has extended heartfelt tribute to Allama Muhammad Iqbal on the occasion of Iqbal Day, marking the 147th birth anniversary of Pakistan's national poet and visionary philosopher.

In his message, he highlighted Iqbal's timeless influence on the nation and his profound contributions toward the intellectual and ideological awakening of the Muslim community in South Asia.

"His vision provided a blueprint not only for a separate homeland but also for a moral and just society that embodies compassion, courage, and progress," stated Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. He stressed that Iqbal's teachings on self-reliance, resilience, and commitment to one's values continue to inspire millions of Pakistanis, especially the youth, to actively contribute to building a prosperous and peaceful Pakistan.

That PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari affirmed the Pakistan Peoples Party's dedication to the values of social justice, democracy,

PM visits Cascade Police Service Center

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday visited the "Cascade" Police Service Center, which was established to facilitate the diplomatic community in the diplomatic enclave.

During his visit, he commended the establishment of a modern service center equipped with advanced facilities for diplomats and foreign nationals.

The prime minister appreciated Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's initiative for the establishment of the police service center.

"Providing all possible facilities to the diplomatic community is our priority," the prime minister added.

He also praised the establishment of the Cascade Service Center in Islamabad, designed to meet international standards and

the demands of modern times.

At the service center, the diplomatic community and foreign nationals will have access to services such as issuance and renewal of driving licenses, character certificates, general police verification, reporting of lost items, tenant registration, foreigner registration, registration of domestic workers, volunteer registration, vehicle verification, and obtaining copies of FIRs.

The Inspector General of Islamabad Police briefed the Prime Minister on the facilities being provided to the diplomatic community and foreign nationals.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, as well as Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, were also present.

CM Balochistan, Interior Minister agree on taking joint steps to end terrorism

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti and Federal Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi have agreed upon taking concrete measures to end terrorism acts in the province.

Both the leaders also expressed resolve to take effective steps for prevention of the anti-state elements in the province.

They were in telephonic conversation on Saturday. The Federal Minister telephoned to the Chief Minister over the terrorism incident occurred at the Quetta Railway Station

on Saturday.

The Federal Minister strongly condemned the blast and expressed heartfelt sympathy and solidarity with the bereaved families of those lost lives in it.

Moreover, Mohsin Naqvi and Mir Sarfraz Bugti also expressed their resolve to foil nefarious designs of the terrorists.

Mohsin Naqvi said that we would go to every extreme to establish peace in the province.

In this regard, federation would extend every possible assistance to the Balochistan government, adding he pledged.

Ready to sacrifice life for Imran Khan's release, vows Gandapur

Monitoring Desk SWABI: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur has vowed to secure release of PTI founder Imran Khan, saying that they are even ready to "sacrifice their lives" for this purpose.

"Even if our lives are lost, we will not rest until the release of PTI founder," he roared at a public gathering organized by the PTI in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Swabi for the "independence of judiciary" and to demand the release of incarcerated PTI leader.

Addressing the PTI supporters, the CM said: "There is no freedom with-

out sacrifice." The chief minister said that they had to give sacrifice for "true freedom".

Referring to the decision-making bodies within the former ruling party, the firebrand chief minister said: "Only Imran Khan has the power to make decision in the party."

The chief minister said: "We are united and together we have to move forward."

Referring to the PTI's potential march on Islamabad, he said: "We will not return until the release of the PTI founder."

The CM said that they would fight but would not go back home.



QUETTA: Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nosherrwani enquiring about health of injured of Quetta Railway Station suicide bomb blast.

Meena Baloch terms Quetta blast cowardly attempt to instill fear in country

QUETTA (APP): Advisor to CM for Sports and Youth Affairs Balochistan, Meena Majeed Baloch on Saturday said that the Quetta blast was a cowardly attempt to instill fear and disrupt peace in the country.

Talking to PTV news, she has strongly condemned the Quetta blast, saying this act was an attempt to destabilize the country politically, economically and administratively. She said that the administration and all law enforcement agencies are ac-

tively combating terrorism in Balochistan.

She emphasized that the terrorist attack was aimed at innocent civilians, which is completely inhuman. The war on terror has reached the homes therefore she urged the community to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activities, she added.

Meena Baloch stated, "We will collectively confront and overcome terrorism, standing united in our commitment to eradicate all forms of violence."

PR sets up information desk at Quetta railway station after bomb blast

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Railways has established an information desk at Quetta Railway Station following a tragic bomb blast on Saturday morning, which resulted in at least 20 fatalities and injured more than 35 people.

A spokesperson for Pakistan Railways (PR) confirmed that medical and emergency response teams were immediately deployed to the station to assist affected passengers and pro-

vide urgent care.

Citizens seeking information can contact the helpline numbers 117 and 0819201214 for assistance and updates.

Pakistan Railways Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Aamir Baloch expressed deep sorrow and condolences to the families of the victims.

He emphasized the commitment of Pakistan Railways to support those impacted by the incident.