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TAUNSA BARRAGE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif presses the button to open gates for flow of water from Indus River into Kachhi Canal.

Next phase of Kachhi canal be completed with "Shahbaz Speed": Attempts being made to weaken Pakistan on linguistic basis, says Chief Minister

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has stated that the attempts are being made to weaken the country on the linguistic basis.

He asserted that the terrorists have no nation or tribe, they are just terrorists. He said that Balochistan has left behind than other provinces. However, the incumbent government is endeavouring to bring before.

He stressed that the next phase of Kachhi canal should be completed with "Shahbaz speed" so as irrigate 700,000 to 800,000 acres of land of the province.

The Chief Minister stated so while addressing the inauguration ceremony

of the Kachhi canal project in Taunsa, on Friday.

It may be mentioned here that the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was the chief guest at the ceremony.

The Chief Minister said that Punjab is the land which has given space to all people living in Pakistan including Balochs. He said that the people from all over the country do business, farming and get education in Punjab. He said that he is thankful to the people and government of Punjab. He said that Pakistan is like a bouquet, the people, who are hatching conspiracy against it and are killing Punjabi brothers, are anti state and enemies.

He said that any Baloch has not killed any

Punjabi rather the terrorists martyred the innocent Pakistanis.

He also said that there is no nationality or tribe of terrorists. He said that we are moving towards a stronger Pakistan.

The Chief Minister said that although, Balochistan has left behind than other provinces, but it would move ahead because of the efforts of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. He pointed out that Kachhi canal project has been continued for 2002, however, it couldn't be completed yet.

He said that the province has no need of the line canal. But the provincial government can't afford its repair time and again.



TAUNSA BARRAGE: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti addressing inaugural ceremony of restoration project of Kachhi Canal.

Seven terrorists killed in Balochistan, KP operations

Security forces kill 4 terrorists in 3 separate engagements in Balochistan; 3 khwarij in IBO in Bannu

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Security Forces on Friday killed four terrorists in three separate engagements in Balochistan.

"An intelligence based operation was conducted in Awaran District on reported presence of terrorists. During the conduct of operation, after intense fire exchange, two terrorists were successfully neutralized; both high value targets identified as Niaz @ Ghuman and Zareef @ Shah Jahan," said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release.

In another operation in Dera Bugti District, own troops, while conducting an intelligence based operation, killed another terrorist.

"The killed terrorists were involved in numerous terrorist activities against security forces as well as the innocent civilians and were highly wanted by the law enforcement agencies," it said.

Imran defends Bushra Bibi's remarks, dismisses claims of Saudi involvement in his ouster

RAWALPINDI (INP): Former prime minister Imran Khan has come to the defence of his wife, Bushra Bibi, after her comments allegedly implicating Saudi Arabia in his government's ouster sparked backlash.

Khan claimed that Bushra's words were "taken out of context" to create unnecessary controversy around Pakistan's "brotherly" relationship with Saudi Arabia.

Khan further highlighted Saudi Arabia's support during a 2022 OIC foreign ministers' summit in Islamabad, which he said demonstrated the Kingdom's loyalty to Pakistan.

He reiterated that his wife is not involved in politics, and her message to the nation merely echoed his words in anticipation of the November 24 protest.

He described the event as a day to "break free from slavery," framing it as a pivotal moment for Pakistanis to choose between "the yoke of submission" or "the crown of freedom."

In closing, Khan doubled down on his assertion that his government's downfall was orchestrated by former army chief General Bajwa, whom he accused of preventing investigations into the alleged conspiracy.

PM constitutes committee to resolve PPP's concerns

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday constituted a committee to ensure cooperation in political and other matters, and to resolve the issues between Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). The members of the committee include Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar, and Minister for Economic Affairs Ahmad Khan Cheema.

Other members include Minister of State for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Engineer Amir Muqam, Prime Minister's Advisor Rana Sanaullah, Speaker of the Punjab Assembly Malik Ahmad Khan, Senior Minister of Punjab Marriyum Aurangzeb, Khawaja Saad Rafique, Jaffer Khan Mandokhel, and Bashir Ahmed Memon.

According to a press release issued by the PM Office, the prime minister has tasked the committee with the responsibility of political cooperation and resolving issues after detailed consultations with the Pakistan Peoples Party.

The committee will engage in discussions with the members designated by the Pakistan Peoples Party to determine the future course of action.

Saudi Arabia is our closest ally: Venom against Saudi Arabia unforgivable crime; nation to break such hand: PM

Premier warns propaganda against Saudi Arabia harms national interest, urging strong opposition to such actions; Says personal and political agendas behind PTI's statements; Kachhi Canal to open doors of prosperity to Balochistan people

TAUNSA (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday, recounting Saudi Arabia's unconditional financial and diplomatic support to Pakistan, warned that any venom-spitting against such a brotherly country was an unforgivable crime and called for the national unity to counter such anti-state elements.

The prime minister, addressing the inauguration of the Restoration of Kachhi Canal damaged by 2022 floods, said whether it was the Kashmir issue, the United Nations or the UN Security Council, Saudi Arabia always acted as Pakistan's advocate and benefactor, as the Kingdom also bailed out Pakistan recently to seek IMF program.

"Despite this, such venom-spitting is an unforgivable crime. I as the prime minister of Pakistan want to announce that the nation will break any hand trying to undermine the Pakistan-Saudi friendship. This is not a joke. The allegation is beyond understanding. The largest national interest is being "slaughtered" to serve the short-term political interest," he remarked after inaugurating the project that will irrigate over 715,000 acres of land in Balochistan and revive life in the area turned barren after the floods. The prime minister told the ceremony also attended by federal ministers Attaullah Tarar, Ahsan Iqbal, Awais Leghari and Dr Musaddik Malik, Punjab

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, and Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfaraz Bugti, that during the last 77 years, Saudi Arabia attached no strings or pre-conditions to its support to Pakistan and the current leadership had also asked its administration to invest in Pakistan as MoUs worth billions of dollars had already been signed.

Commenting on a statement by the spouse of PTI founder regarding Saudi Arabia, he said: "There can be no animosity to Pakistan bigger than this" and explained that such people were naive to the magnitude of the damage through their "venomous" words. Prime Minister Shehbaz recalled the Kingdom's support to Pakistan after it carried out

the nuclear tests in 1998 in the form of a free-of-charge oil facility as well as financial support.

He told the gathering that the feasibility study of the Kachhi Canal Project was started in 1998 during Nawaz Sharif's tenure and was completed in his second tenure after suffering a lot during Pervez Musharraf time.

He appreciated the WAPDA and Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal and their respective team for accomplishing the repair project and assured the federal government's all-out support for the second phase. Prime Minister Shehbaz also appreciated the Balochistan chief minister for reviving the merit-based order and launching the solarisation of tube-

wells. Similarly, he also spoke highly for the Punjab Chief Minister for launching the project of a cancer hospital, free tractor scheme for farmers to bring about the agricultural revolution and other initiatives in the education and health sectors.

Earlier, in her address, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz said the canal project would bring about prosperity in Balochistan besides enhancing coordination and closeness among the provinces. She said the credit for all mega public welfare projects like motorways, youth scholarships, modern transport facilities including Orange Line, Metro or Speedo buses and student bikes went to the PML-N government.

Visits Peshawar: COAS resolves to hunt down enemies of peace to ensure lasting stability and security

RAWALPINDI (APP): General Syed Asim Munir, NIM, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) on Friday visited Peshawar, as a follow up of the National Apex Committee meeting held on November 19 and prelude to Provincial Apex Committee meeting to be held soon.

The COAS was provided a comprehensive briefing on the prevailing security situation and the progress of ongoing counter-terrorism operations in the region, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news. Chief Minister KPK and field commanders were also present at the occasion.

Paying profound tribute to the Shuhada and Ghazis, the COAS emphasized the unparalleled sacrifices being rendered for the defense of the motherland.

He remarked that these sacrifices served as a cornerstone of national resilience, inspiring and unwavering dedication of the armed forces and of law

enforcement agencies.

The COAS commended the high morale, operational readiness, and unyielding commitment of the troops in effectively countering all forms of threats. He reiterated the Army's firm resolve to dismantle hostile terrorist networks and eradicate the illegal spectrum undermining national security.

Highlighting the collective determination of the nation and its security forces to combat terrorism, the COAS stressed that thwarting the nefarious designs of inimical elements remained a top priority.

"Through synchronized and robust operations, Pakistan Army in collaboration with Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) will relentlessly hunt down the enemies of peace to ensure lasting stability and security," he assured.

Earlier, upon his arrival, the COAS was received by the Corps Commander Peshawar.

CJP extends jail reforms initiative to KP

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr Justice Yahya Afridi has underscored the need for a just and equitable criminal justice framework, emphasizing that a humane and efficient prison system forms its backbone.

The Chief Justice stated this while chairing a consultative meeting convened today at Peshawar. The CJP appreciated the prison management in KP, noting that 1,289 prisoners charged with minor offenses had been released through camp courts conducted by judicial officers over the past three months and urged other provinces to replicate these efforts to alleviate overcrowding.

The meeting was in continuation to the series of nationwide discussions initiated earlier this month by the Chief Justice of Pakistan in Lahore and Islamabad, aimed at formulating a comprehensive National Jail Reform Policy. The agenda focused on prison reforms and inmate welfare as key components of a broader strategy to modernize Pakistan's criminal justice system.

The Chief Justice PHC Justice Ishfaq Ibrahim highlighted the lack of rehabilitation facilities for the convicts in the province, stressing the need to develop a strong rehabilitation system for absorption of the convicts in the society. He proposed sentence remissions to inmates who achieve educational excellence during their confinement, aligning with broader rehabilitation goals.

The meeting also focused on the LJCP's proposed National Jail Reform Policy, which aligns with international standards, including the Nelson Mandela Rules, Bangkok Rules, and Beijing Rules. This policy aims to ensure the humane and rehabilitative management of correctional facilities across Pakistan. Participants expressed strong support for the proposal, emphasizing the importance of alternative sentencing options and rehabilitation programs for under-trial prisoners.

A significant outcome of the meeting was the recommendation to establish a Jail Reforms Committee to address pressing issues such as overcrowding, inmate welfare and case processing delays.

QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Asim Kurd Gailo meeting with Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail presiding over meeting of Board of Governor of Cadet Colleges.

Bajwa denies Saudi role in Imran's ouster

LAHORE: Refuting Bushra Bibi's statement about Saudi government's role in the ouster of former premier Imran Khan, ex-army chief Qamar Javed Bajwa said Pakistan and Saudi Arabia held friendly ties during the PTI regime.

Talking to a private tv channel, the former army chief termed Bushra Bibi's statement a pack of lies. He asked how a friendly country could interfere in Pakistan's internal affairs.

He pointed out that the OIC summit was held in Islamabad on March 21, 2022, questioning whether there had been any tension in the ties between both countries, would Saudi Arabia have allowed the summit to take place in Pakistan.

Detailing Imran's visit to KSA, Bajwa said Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman himself came to receive the former in Jeddah. "Shah Mehmood Qureshi and I were present at the dinner during the visit," said Bajwa.

The ex-army chief said he had no inkling as to what is wrong with Bushra Bibi. He expressed concern over her statement, saying Imran can endorse it to make it a narrative.

CM satisfied with successful operations of forces

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has expressed satisfaction over the successful operations carried out by the security forces in different areas of the province.

In a statement issued here on Friday, the Chief Minister said that the successful operations were carried out against terrorists in Dera Bugti, Awaran and Kech districts.

He said that the successful operations of security forces against terrorists are the proof of the stable writ of state. He pledged that the security forces and masses would defeat the terrorism together.

In addition to this, protection of common men and rule of law would also be ensured by completely restoring peace in Balochistan.

Governor announces increase in quota of admissions in cadet colleges of Balochistan

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has announced to increase the quota of new yearly admissions in all cadet colleges of the province.

The Governor announced that the quota of admissions in every cadet college of the province would be increased from 70 to 100.

Besides, 10 seats would also be allocated for students of the district where the cadet college is situated.

He stressed that we have to mobilize all the available resources to meet the target for the cadet colleges have been established.

He said that we would keep on the progress so as to continue the sustainable development of all cadet colleges.

The Governor was chairing the 18th meeting of Board of Directors of

Cadet Colleges of Balochistan here on Friday.

The meeting was attended by the Provincial Minister for Education, Ms. Raheela Hameed Durrani, Advisor to Chief Minister for Women Development, Dr. Rubaba Buledi, Principal Secretary to Governor, Hashim Khan Ghilzai, Secretary Education, Hafeez Tahir, Secretary Services and General Administration Department, Habibur Rehman, Secretary Law, Kaleemullah Kakar, Additional Secretary, Naseer Shah, Principals of all cadet colleges of the province besides other concerned high ups.

The meeting was briefed about all 11 cadet colleges of the province including Mastung, Killa Saifullah, Pishin, Jaffarabad, Kohlu, Panjgur, Noshki, Awaran, Kharan, besides two female cadet colleges of Quetta and Turbat.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Air Force (PAF) Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaeher Ahmed Baber Sidhu exchanging views with General Tan Sri Dato Sri Mohd Asghar Khan Bin Goriman Khan, Chief of the Royal Malaysian Air Force during meeting held at Air Headquarters in Islamabad.

Malaysian Air Force Chief calls on CAS Zaeher Ahmed

ISLAMABAD (APP): During his first-ever visit to Pakistan, General Tan Sri Dato' Sri Mohd Asghar Khan bin Goriman Khan, Chief of the Royal Malaysian Air Force called on Air Chief Marshal Zaeher Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force on Friday at Air Headquarters.

On his arrival, a smartly turned-out contingent of Pakistan Air Force presented Guard of Honour to General Tan Sri Dato' Sri Mohd Asghar Khan bin Goriman Khan.

During the meeting, Chief of the Air Staff highlighted the robust bilateral defence ties that exist between Pakistan and Malaysia.

domain, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

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Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Kurram atrocity

With the situation in KP's Kurram tribal district already volatile for the past several months, the murderous violence witnessed on Thursday has not come as a surprise.

At least 38 people were killed when a convoy of vehicles was attacked in an act of terrorism in Lower Kurram, in what is one of the biggest single mass-casualty attacks this year. The convoys consisted mostly of members of the Shia community. In this part of KP, militancy, tribal disputes and sectarianism, which has claimed both Shia and Sunni lives, have created a powder keg.

Sadly, the state has ignored the situation for years, or made only half-hearted efforts to address it. This year, a land dispute between two tribes metastasised into something uglier, with over 80 people killed since July, many of them while travelling by road. The people of Kurram took to the streets two weeks ago, demanding peace and safety on the roads. As yesterday's atrocity showed, the state was unable to provide these.

Unfortunately, the centre and KP government are both so embroiled in politicking that the security situation of Kurram and other parts of the province fails to attract their attention. Statements are issued, promises are made, but the people of KP are left to fend for themselves as bloodthirsty terrorists ravage the province. Security institutions have also failed to flush out militants threatening peace in KP.

Kurram is particularly sensitive, due mainly to its sectarian dynamics and proximity to Afghanistan, in addition to the presence of militant groups and heavy arms. Yet the state has been unable to deweaponise the area, or judiciously resolve the tribal disputes that can spiral into communal blood-letting.

It would be a monumental mistake for the state to continue ignoring the violence in Kurram. Instability can easily spread to the adjoining districts if not contained, and vested interests can exploit sectarian differences in the region to create communal discord across Pakistan. The first duty of the state is to track down and punish the elements responsible for the latest attack. It cannot be business as usual after this brutal episode, and all state institutions must come up with solid plans to protect Kurram's people, and other vulnerable populations in KP.

A multiparty conference to discuss law and order in KP has been scheduled for next month. Considering the latest outrage, this conclave should be held earlier. Moreover, along with state functionaries, the ulama and tribal elders must also work to defuse the situation and ensure a retaliatory spiral of violence does not ensue.

The state has dithered over Kurram's security long enough. It is time to provide justice to the victims of violence, while terrorists and their facilitators must be tracked down and made to answer before the law.

Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

While the PTI-run government in KP continues to depict itself as the last remaining bastion of democracy in the country, pitched against the governments at the centre and other federating units, many parts of the province have once again become killing fields.

Target killers roam free in Bannu, Waziristan and other Pakhtun regions. Attacks against political workers, security personnel and ordinary civilians have become an almost daily affair. Religiously inspired militants sometimes acknowledge responsibility, but there is an eye-catching number of perpetrators in the now familiar category of 'unknowns'.

Bloodletting in Kurram district reached unprecedented proportions a couple of weeks ago as local property disputes were instrumentalised by militant elements to stoke sectarian tensions at will. And yesterday, a bus of civilians was fired upon near Parachinar resulting in over 30 deaths.

In such cases, neither the chief minister of KP nor the prime and interior minister at the centre provide the general public with any meaningful information let alone chart out a strategy to deal with what, by any account, is a situation spiralling completely out of control.

All we get are tired condemnations of 'terrorism', with none of our civilian political leaders ever saying openly that the resurgence of militancy might have had to do with the state's previous backing of the Taliban in Kabul.

Neither is anyone willing to antagonise any of Pakistan's big external patrons, namely the US, Gulf kingdoms and China, all of whom are

Killing fields

part of the geopolitical games that underlie both current and previous waves of violence in Pakhtun regions.

There are also important organic factors in the re-emergence of the Pakistani Taliban and other militant groups. They are entrenched economic players in border trade, or what is routinely called smuggling. They extort money from transporters and shop owners in many of the Pakhtun tribal districts. I noted above that they take advantage of property disputes, particularly over agricultural land. Finally, these players have also developed the big stakes in the extraction of a host of natural resources, including pine nuts, timber, mineral deposits, etc.

Geopolitical wranglings amongst all the big players in this sordid story also revolve around the desire to either exclusively control economic flows, or to at the very least ensure that competitors do not establish monopolies in trade, mining, construction and other sectors.

In Pakistan we are used to hearing that the only thing that matters is national security, but anyone with even current knowledge of the current violence in KP understands that this is just a handy catchphrase for a power game that is largely about social control and economic resources.

The contraband trade across the Pak-Afghan and Pak-Iran borders implicates states, militants, and a host of other economic players. Simply decrying 'smuggling' and putting up a fence here and there protects the big profiteers while destroying the livelihoods of the large number of small operators reliant on this trade. Political violence is then both cause and conse-

quence of the deliberate reduction of this complex political economy to 'national security'.

The PML-N and PPP have shown that they will do everything to appease those higher above them in the political food chain, both at home and abroad, so they are not about to bell the cat. But if the anti-establishment posture of the PTI — and the otherwise firebrand KP chief minister — is more than just a façade, we should expect more critical reflection on the epidemic of violence in Pakhtun tribal and other districts. Indeed, the chief minister himself hails from D.I. Khan, which is at the crossroads of so many recent attacks.

The underlying problem is the militarised and imperialised structure of power in this country. The power of the religious right — and militant groups especially — is a direct offshoot of this structure. The somewhat absurd spectacle of one federating unit's official state apparatus engaging in mass protests against the centre should not distract us from the fact that the prevailing structure of power is floundering badly.

An anti-establishment politics is not about displacing those currently at the helm so that the next player can lurch towards yet another crisis of what is fundamentally an anti-people and anti-nature system.

Such a politics must be based on a programme for lasting peace, centred on economic redistribution, dismantling the establishment-centric political order, and a non-aligned foreign policy that privileges mutual cooperation with our neighbours. -- Courtesy Dawn

Iqbal's philosophy

Saad Malook

Iqbal's philosophy could be an elixir for creating and sustaining global peace. The ongoing genocide of Palestinians by Israel and its allies is a heinous crime against humanity that has been stoking the boiling cauldron of conflicts in the Middle East, which would embroil the entire world and cause World War III. If WWII occurs, it would be a nuclear war.

In Why Social Justice Matters (2005), political philosopher Brian Barry predicted that life on earth would be almost wiped out by 2100 either by nuclear holocaust or ecological decay. Is this just a prediction or a stark reality humanity faces? Certainly, under the dark clouds of violence, war, or terrorism across the world, a clear threat of nuclear holocaust hangs over us.

Some argue that Iqbal is a radical philosopher who supports warfare. This argument is wrong because Iqbal's philosophy liberates humanity from exploitation, humiliation, colonialism, and imperialism through positive human action. Iqbal's ideal individual is creative, dynamic, empirically informed, and a creator of a just and peaceful world.

In a new year message, 'Brotherhood of Man', broadcast from All India Radio, Lahore, on Jan 1, 1938, Iqbal not only described the sociopolitical conditions of the world at the time but also presented a manifesto for global peace. With this manifesto, Iqbal can be placed among the first-rank peace theorists of the 20th century, including Albert Schweitzer, Albert Einstein, Bertrand Russell, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Iqbal Ahmad, and Nelson Mandela.

In 'Brotherhood of Man', Iqbal's argument states that on the one hand, human beings

have made remarkable progress in science and technology, which created a new world. On the other hand, the world is so miserable that "It is as if the day of doom had come upon the earth, in which each looks after the safety of his own skin." After over eight decades, there has been no moral progress.

Historically, just before the start of WWII, Iqbal asked a crucial question: is this going to be the end of all progress and evolution of human civilisation? Indubitably, WWII devastated humanity by killing millions through conventional and nuclear arsenals.

Iqbal fosters the creation and sustainability of positive peace. Negative peace refers to the absence of war, while positive peace refers to the presence of life-promoting values and activities. Only positive peace is sustainable. Iqbal writes: "Remember, man can be maintained on this earth only by honouring mankind, and this world will remain a battleground of ferocious beasts of prey unless and until the educational forces of the whole world are directed to inculcating in man respect for mankind."

According to Iqbal, 'honouring mankind' is necessary for creating peace. He also believes that global peace is impossible unless educational institutions impart the ethics of 'honouring respect for humankind', which I prefer to term 'reverence for humanity'. Thus, all states must educate their people about the ethics of reverence for humanity for peaceful global coexistence.

Highlighting the central ideals of Islam — equality, freedom, and solidarity — Iqbal accentuates the significance of brotherhood. He articulates: "Only one unity is dependable, and that

unity is the brotherhood of man, which is above race, nationality, colour or language."

Indeed, the idea of the brotherhood of human beings provides a foundation for human unity, which eventually causes peaceful coexistence in the world. Iqbal envisages that false ideologies are enemies of global peace. He argues that until and unless the shackles of so-called democracy, accusatory nationalism, and degraded imperialism are destroyed, there is no possibility of the good life in which the ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity are realised.

Iqbal correctly argues that an ideology cannot promote peace if it causes humiliation, exploitation, or exclusion. Only that ideology can succeed that expresses reverence for humanity, transcending religion, culture, colour, or language because the whole world is the 'family' of God: all human beings are God's creatures.

To create eternal peace on earth, global leaders must stop the crimes against humanity, particularly in Palestine and held Kashmir, before WWII breaks out and makes Brian Barry's prediction about the extinction of life come true.

Political leaders must have the moral and intellectual vision to promote the values of unity rather than division, cooperation rather than conflict, dialogue rather than war, and above all, humanistic education rather than the indoctrination of racism, colour, caste, or creed.

At the end of 'Brotherhood of Man', Iqbal offers a prayer: "God Almighty may grant humanity to those who are in places of power and government and teach them to cherish [humankind]." -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Ahsan vows to increase ports' efficiency, boost trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday reaffirmed the government's strong commitment to strengthening seaports' efficiency, boosting trade and ensuring sustainable economic development in the country.

He expressed this resolve while chairing a consultative meeting on enhancing the efficiency of Karachi ports by improving hinterland connectivity.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Secretary Planning Awaiz Manzoor Sumra, Member Infrastructure Waqas Anwar, CEO of the Public Private Partnership Authority, besides senior representatives from the Ministries of Maritime Affairs, Communications, Railways, Aviation Division and Commerce Division, a news release

said. During the meeting, Member Infrastructure Waqas Anwar presented a detailed briefing on improving port efficiency, providing a progress update from the Ministry of Maritime Affairs regarding a committee constituted by the Prime Minister's Office to address cross-cutting issues at Karachi Port.

He highlighted that Pakistan's merchandise trade as a percentage of GDP stood at 26 percent, significantly lower than the global average of 44 percent. "From 2015 to 2020, Pakistan's ports handled over 3 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of container traffic annually, with approximately two-thirds managed at Karachi's three terminals and the remainder at Port Qasim."

He pointed out that rail access to Karachi Port was underutilized, with nearly all cargo transported

via road, leading to congestion and environmental challenges. "Existing rail facilities are insufficient for efficient goods transfer due to their limited capacity for loading and unloading operations."

Karachi Port faces significant road congestion due to ban on trucks movement from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., affecting traffic flow into and out of port areas. Port Qasim, on the other hand, benefits from better road connectivity (N-5 and M-9 via Eastern Bypass) but may face road access congestion by 2030 if rail connectivity is not improved. To address these challenges, the Member Infrastructure proposed short and long-term measures. The short-term measures include implementing 24/7 port operations while scheduling freight truck movements to reduce congestion.

Punjab Governor says: Business community is the backbone of the country's economy

Lahore (Online): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan attended the ceremony organized by the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry at the Governor House Lahore as the chief guest. The ceremony was attended by the newly elected presidents and group leaders of all the chambers of commerce and industry, small chambers, women's chambers and joint chambers.

Addressing the ceremony, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that the business community is the backbone of the country's economy. He said industrial growth fosters social and economic development in the country. Governor Punjab said that the economic

indicators of the country are improving. He said that country's interest rate has come down to 15 percent and inflation has also come down to single digits. He said that continuity of policies is very important for the development of the country's economy. Governor Punjab said that it is a sorry state of affairs that despite being an agricultural country, we are importing food items. Governor Punjab said that at present about 25 million (2.5 crore) sacks are lying outside in warehouses which are likely to spoil. Governor Punjab said that our industries are currently suffering due to IPPs.

He said that due to the efforts of FPCCI and Gohar Ijaz, situation of five IPPs has improved.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where five ships, Jaru Bhum, X-Press Salween, Navios Tempo, Kualalumpur Express and Al-Deebal carrying Container and LNG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal and Engro Elengy Terminal respectively on Thursday.

Meanwhile six more ships, Aqua-1, Corona, OM Singapore, Angelina, Hafnia Phoenix and Iolao scheduled to load/offload Fuel oil, Palm oil, Yellow Beans, Gasoline and Coal are also arrived at outer anchorage during last 24 hours.

A total of thirteen ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them five ships, X-Press Salween, Jaru Bhum, Navios Tempo, Kualalumpur and Izumo Hermes are left the port on today morning, while five more ships, Milaha Ras.



Mr. John Tucknott CMG MBE meets with Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on 22 November 2024 in Islamabad.

Jam reviews quarterly trade figures, future trade strategy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan on Friday reviewed quarterly trade figures and stressed to execution of the 'Export-Led Growth Strategy'.

Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan (JK) chaired a high-level meeting to review Pakistan's quarterly trade figures, where he was briefed on the latest trends in international trade and strategies being devised to bolster exports, said a

press release issued here.

During the meeting, Commerce officials provided a comprehensive overview of trade performance with key trading partners, highlighting emerging export destinations and newly introduced export items. The briefing also covered practical suggestions to enhance market access and address technical trade barriers, ensuring Pakistani products reach a broader global audience.

The impact of

external factors, such as global economic fluctuations and geopolitical uncertainties, was also discussed. Strategies to mitigate these challenges and sustain export growth were presented for consideration.

Lauding the efforts of Commerce officers, Jam Kamal emphasized the central role of the Ministry of Commerce in advancing Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision of an export-led growth strategy.

SBP injects Rs2.37 trillion in the market

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) injected Rs2,369.5 billion in the market through reverse repo purchase and Shariah Compliant Mudarabah based Open Market Operation (OMO) on Friday. According to OMO results issued here, the SBP conducted Open Market Operation, Reverse Repo Purchase (Injection) on November 22, 2024 for 7-day and 28-day tenors and accepted total 25 bids cumulatively amounting to Rs2,220.5 billion.

The central bank received 18 bids for 7-day

tenor cumulatively offering an amount of Rs2,239.7 billion at the rate of return ranging between 15.04 to 15.08 percent while 3 bids were received for the 28-day tenor offering total amount of Rs120.5 billion at the rate of return ranging between 15.06 to 15.07 percent. The central bank accepted the entire amount offered through all the 3 bids for 28-day tenor -Rs.120.5 billion- at the 15.06 percent rate of return while an amount of 2,100 billion offered through 18 bids for 7-day tenor was accepted by the central bank at 15.04 percent.

Increase in fish production imperative to meet food needs: FCCI

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) President Rehan Naseem Bharara said on Friday that fish production must be enhanced to meet domestic food needs by encouraging establishment of new fish farms in Punjab.

In a message issued here on Friday, he said that fish is a rich source of protein but it has to be imported from other riverine areas to meet domestic requirements.

PBBC chairman, Rana discuss to increase coop. in industrial, agri sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Pakistan-Britain Business Council (PBBC) John Tucknott CMG MBE on Friday met with Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain and discussed ways and means to increase cooperation in diverse fields including industry and agriculture.

During the meeting, the two sides also agreed to work together to further enhance the trade relations between Pakistan and the United Kingdom (UK), said a news release.

The PBBC delegation includes the Council's CEO Rashid Iqbal, Head of Trade and Investment UK Adeel Khan, Senior

Advisor for Trade and Government Relations Saima Amjad, Director of Trade and Investment Waqar Ullah and Chief Coordinator for UK and Pakistan Umamah Riaz.

Rana Tanveer emphasized that both countries should increase trade volume and highlighted the potential for British companies to invest in the electric vehicle manufacturing sector.

John Tucknott agreed to enhance bilateral relations in the agricultural and industrial sectors.

The meeting was also attended by Secretary of the Ministry of Industries Saif Anjum and Director General Mukhtar Ahmed.



RAWALPINDI: President Chamber of Commerce, Usman Shaukat addressing a press conference at the Chamber Building.

Weekly inflation up by 0.67 percent

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), went up by 0.67 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on November 21, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 324.11 points as compared to 321.94 points during the past week.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an

increase of 4.92 percent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732 witnessed increase of 0.91 per cent and went up to 318.40 points from last week's 315.52 points.

The SPI for consumption groups of Rs 17,732 to 22,888; Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175, increased by 0.85 percent, 0.72 percent, 0.70 percent and 0.61 percent respectively.

PPP alliance with PML-N is of compulsion, not of love: Governor

LAHORE (Online): Governor Punjab Sardar Salim Haider Khan has said PPP alliance with PML-N is of compulsion rather than of love.

"If PPP becomes minus then the premiership can sustain no more. Governor is a constitutional post and in principle chief minister has to come to governor but despite it I myself went to meet Chief Minister (CM). We want things are done on merit and PPP be consulted being ally. 6 months have passed but CM neither telephoned nor she made any consultation, he said this while addressing participants of National Security Workshop under National De-

fence University Islamabad Friday.

I tried to make contact with CM by telephone several time but zero response came every time. Deadlock took place. I don't deem it proper to go to her now, he added.

He said that PPP didn't forge alliance with PML-N out of love, but out of compulsion. Punjab Governor said that he has informed his leadership President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari about the situation in Punjab. He said that as per tradition Chief Minister should have visited the Governor, adding that he broke that barrier and went to the Chief Min-

ister himself. He said that he assured Chief Minister that being coalition partners they should work together as a team. He said that Peoples' Party only wants the supremacy of merit.

Punjab Governor said that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari played a key role in getting the 26th Constitutional Amendment passed. Punjab Governor said that the experience of alliance with the PML-N in the past was a bitter experience. He further stated that he expected that the PML-N would have learnt lessons from the past. He said that despite written agreements and consultative meetings, no implementation has taken place so far.



LAHORE: British High Commissioner Jane Marriott meeting with Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora.

CM reviews 'Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar' programme

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has expressed her unwavering commitment to fulfilling the promise of providing affordable housing to the underprivileged and urged the relevant authorities to expedite completion of the 'Apni Chhat Apna Ghar Programme'.

Speaking at a special review meeting here on Friday, she said the programme was not just a slogan but a tangible effort to improve the lives of the common man. "Apni Chhat Apna

Ghar is a dream for every citizen, and we are determined to make it a reality," she affirmed.

The CM was updated on the progress of the scheme, with 927 applicants having received their first installment of loans. She informed that more than 800 houses under the initiative are nearing completion. "Ensure that the second installment payments are made promptly to help these families move forward," she directed.

CM Maryam

Nawaz was further briefed that over 50,000 applicants' data had been transferred to Akhuwat Foundation for verification. Of these, 38,000 applicants have been verified, with more than 20,900 submitting the necessary documentation.

As of now, 8,424 applications have been fully processed. She highlighted the success of the digital portal, which has seen over 600,000 registered users and more than 325,000 applications for house construction.

Minister promises transparency in hospitals revamping project

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique reaffirmed the government's commitment to transparency in the ongoing hospitals revamping project, stressing that there would be no compromise on quality and timelines. He made these remarks while presiding over a meeting at the Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Department, here on Friday.

The minister stressed the importance of completing the revamping projects in various government teaching hospitals of Lahore on time. He stated that contractors had been instructed to expedite work to ensure the convenience of patients visiting government hospitals. "Revamping projects are being prioritised, and their continuous monitoring is being conducted to maintain high standards," he said. During the meeting, Khawaja Salman Rafique reviewed the latest progress on the projects underway in nine teaching hospitals, including Services Hospital, Nawaz Sharif Hospital Yaki Gate, Mian Munshi Hospital, Lady Aitchison Hospital, Mayo Hospital, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, Kot Khawaja Saeed Hospital, Jinnah Hospital, and General Hospital.



BAHAWALPUR: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif visits the residence of Federal Minister for Housing & Works, Riaz Hussain Pirzada to offer condolences on the sad demise of his brother Sajjad Hussain Pirzada.

Global moot urges for collective action to mitigate climate change

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): A global conference of experts titled "Empowering Communities: The Case for Locally Led Adaptation in Climate Resilience," hosted in Azerbaijan's Baku city, emphasized the urgent need for collective action against climate change to mitigate the impacts of disasters.

Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, addressed a distinguished forum at a special event hosted in the Pakistan Pavilion during the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29) in Baku, Azerbaijan, says a message reaching and released to the media here on Friday.

The event saw the participation of prominent figures, including Romina Khurshid Alam, Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, representatives from the German Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Cres-

cent Societies (IFRC), national societies, and other key humanitarian stakeholders.

A thought-provoking panel discussion featured distinguished speakers, including Member Managing Board Jamaican Red Cross Audrey Mullings, Ms. Ninni Ikkala Nyman, and Manzoor Ali from IFRC, Head of Delegation German Red Cross in Pakistan Asif Aman, and PRCS Deputy Director Climate Change Sajjad Ali, who focused on the significance of locally driven adaptation strategies.

Chairman of PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari was the keynote speaker in his exclusive session. In his remarks, Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari underscored PRCS's extensive humanitarian work in Pakistan, especially during the 2022 monsoon floods.

He gave the details regarding the organization's ongoing recovery programs and proactive measures.

Two killed, four others injured as roof collapsed

RENALA KHURD (APP): A mother and daughter on Friday died, and three brothers and father received injuries as the roof of their old house collapsed in Village 19/1 RA. According to rescue sources, the roof suddenly caved in, due to which a woman, namely Abida Bibi, and his daughter Iffat were killed on the spot. While three brothers, including 6-year-old Anas, Ibrahim, 5-year-old Ali.

Two friends shot dead in Swabi

PESHAWAR (APP): Two close friends were killed and another injured when their alleged rivals fired at them inside a general store in Swabi district on Friday morning. Police said two friends named Jawad and Fawad and owner of the shop, Umair were fired at by the assailants inside the shop, which police said was a likely result of an old rivalry between the deceased and attackers.

NIC Hyderabad's Global Entrepreneurship Week 2024 concluded

HYDERABAD (APP): The National Incubation Center Hyderabad wrapped up its most dynamic Global Entrepreneurship Week yet, turning four days into a celebration of innovation, community, and entrepreneurial spirit. The event kicked off with inspiring opening remarks from NIC Hyderabad's new Project Director, Sana Shah here Friday.

From November 18 - 21, the center buzzed with activity as startup founders, industry experts, and students came together to learn, connect, and grow.

NICH startups like Pak Bio Energy, Chaloo, Aashi Herbs, OrderMs and Sab Bachao sharing their

journey from idea to impact, inspiring the next generation of entrepreneurs in the audience.

The "Queens of Commerce" panel, moderated by Shahzana Memon, brought together powerhouse female founders Laraib Fatima from Brand Craft Studio, Kanwal Aftab from Cloves and Cardamom, Nadia Patel from Fempro and Amneh Shaikh from Polly & Other Stories who captivated the audience with their stories of breaking barriers and building successful businesses. Their candid conversations about challenges and triumphs resonated deeply with aspiring entrepreneurs.

In collaboration with the State Bank of Pakistan, NIC Hyderabad celebrated Women Entrepreneurship Day. Chief Manager Adeel Iqbal shared SBP's future roadmap for supporting women entrepreneurs. Beenish and Shahida from the Women Chambers provided valuable community insights, while the powerful journeys of Aashi Herbs and Agri Revolution, two trailblazing NIC startups, showcased success stories.

The week continued with a lineup of impactful workshops. Muneeb ur Rehman led the "Entrepreneurs' Mental Health Summit", emphasizing techniques for managing stress

and fostering work-life balance. Adnan Ashraf's "AI Tools for Entrepreneurs" session offered a hands-on introduction to AI-powered solutions for streamlining operations and boosting productivity. Sheikh Hammad Amjad provided a comprehensive guide on building a startup from scratch in the "Startup Foundry" workshop, targeted at our pre-incubation members. Ghayyas Uddin from Valeem equipped founders with advanced strategies for creating a standout online presence in the "Digital Brand Building Masterclass".

In a virtual session, NIC Hyderabad partnered with the US Consulate Karachi to bring entrepreneurs an exclusive masterclass with Cheryl Edison, a renowned strategic business advisor. The online event provided startups with invaluable insights into international market strategies, business model innovations, and the nuanced art of building a global presence.

Community spirit shone through at the VR Startup Cricket League, where competitive pitches were replaced with cricket bats, creating lasting bonds among participants. The "Karobar Katchup" proved to be more than just a networking event, sparking genuine connections and potential collaborations.

International News

Over 60 feared dead as Israel bombs homes in Gaza

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: The Israeli military bombed at least five crowded homes in northern Gaza early with many casualties buried beneath the rubble, Palestinian health officials said, as troops deepened an incursion along the territory's northern edge. Rescue operations were under way in the northern Gaza town of Beit Lahiya, medics said. Hamas media put the number of fatalities at 66, most of whom it said had not been recovered.

Hussam Abu Safiyya, director of Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahiya, one of three medical facilities barely operational in the besieged northern area, said at least 200 people lived in the residential district that was bombed in Beit Lahiya and that many people remained missing. Abu Safiyya said medics were recovering injured people and treating them on-site because they had no ambulance vehicles to move them to hospitals.

Even if the injured

make it to hospital, many then die because of a lack of medical supplies and specialised surgeons after Israel detained or expelled most of the medical staff, Abu Safiyya said. Israeli operations in Gaza have focused for weeks on the northern edge of the territory, where the military has laid siege to three major towns and ordered residents to flee. Residents in the three towns — Jabalia, Beit Lahiya and Beit Hanoun — said Israeli forces had destroyed hundreds of houses in since they began the latest offensive on Oct 5.

Palestinians say Israel appears determined to depopulate the area permanently to create a buffer zone along the northern edge of Gaza, which Israel denies. Philippe Lazzarini, the head of the UN Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), said on Thursday that 80 per cent of the Gaza Strip is now high-risk, with many people increasingly desperate. "They are trapped with no safe place

to go. In northern Gaza, people remain under a tight siege. They run for their lives in vicious circles and have been deprived of humanitarian aid for more than 40 days now," he said in a post on X. "Across Gaza, the delivery of the little aid allowed in has become overly complex including because of insecure routes," he added. The administration of US President Joe Biden last month told Israel it had 30 days to improve the flow of aid to Gaza or risk consequences to US military assistance.

On Nov 12, Washington said it had concluded that Israel had made progress and was not impeding aid to Gaza. Many aid groups disagreed. Adding to the challenges, armed gangs have stepped up looting of aid trucks, contributing to spiralling prices of essential food items such as flour. The price of a 25kg sack of flour, if available, has risen to 700 shekels (\$186) from 50 shekels (\$13) over the past week.



People search for survivors in the rubble of a building hit by an overnight Israeli strike in the Beit Lahiya area of Gaza.

Israeli strikes kill 47 people in eastern Lebanon, official says

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Israeli strikes killed at least 47 people in eastern Lebanon, a Lebanese official said, pressing the campaign against the Iran-backed Hezbollah group as a US mediator sought to advance ceasefire talks in Israel.

US mediator Amos Hochstein, who said a ceasefire was "within our grasp" during a visit to Lebanon on Tuesday, met Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz. There were no immediate statements.

Indicating there were still gaps to close, a senior Lebanese official told

Reuters that Beirut had sought changes to the U.S. ceasefire proposal, to include ensuring a speedier withdrawal of Israeli forces from south Lebanon.

The diplomacy marks the most serious attempt yet to end the conflict between Israel and the heavily armed, Iran-backed Hezbollah, part of the regional spillover of the Gaza war that erupted more than a year ago.

Bachir Khodr, governor of Lebanon's Baalbek-Hermel province, said at least 47 were killed and 22 wounded in Israeli strikes in the Baalbek region.

10 killed in attack on Sufi shrine in Afghanistan: interior ministry

Monitoring Desk
KABUL: Ten people were killed when a gunman opened fire on a Sufi shrine in Afghanistan's northern Baghlan province, an interior ministry spokesman told AFP on Friday.

"A man fired on Sufis taking part in a weekly ritual at a shrine in a remote area of Nahrin district, killing 10 people," the ministry's Abdul Matin Qani said.

A Nahrin resident, who knew victims of the attack, told AFP that worshippers had gathered at the Sayed Pacha Agha shrine on Thursday evening.

They had begun a Sufi chant when "a man shot at the dozen worshippers", he said on condition of anonymity.

"When people arrived for morning prayers, they discovered the bodies," he added. Attacks regularly target Sufis during rituals or gatherings in Afghanistan, a country with a very large Muslim majority but where the Taliban authorities impose a strict interpretation of Islamic law, or Sharia, which is different from Sufism.

In April 2022, 33 people, including children, were killed in an explosion that targeted a Sufi mosque during Friday prayers in Kunduz province.

Putin says Ukraine war is going global

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin said on Thursday that the Ukraine war was escalating towards a global conflict after the United States and Britain allowed Ukraine to hit Russia with their weapons, and warned the West that Moscow could strike back.

Russia, Putin said, had responded to the use of US and British missiles by firing a new kind of hypersonic medium-range ballistic missile at a Ukrainian military facility. More could follow, Putin warned.

He said civilians would be warned ahead of further strikes with such weapons. After approval from the administration of President Joe Biden, Ukraine struck Russia with six US-made ATACMS on Nov 19 and with British Storm Shadow missiles and

US-made HIMARS on Nov 21, Putin added.

"From that moment, as we have repeatedly underscored, a regional conflict in Ukraine previously provoked by the West has acquired elements of a global character," Putin said in an address to the nation carried by state television.

The United States, Putin said, was pushing the world towards a global conflict. "And in case of escalation of aggressive actions, we will also respond decisively and in a mirror manner," he said.

Putin said the Ukrainian missile attack with ATACMS had failed to inflict any serious damage. But the Storm Shadow attack on Kursk region on Nov 21 had been directed at a command point and led to deaths and injuries, Putin said.

At least 150 people killed in violence in Haitian capital in past week: UN

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: Soaring violence in Port-au-Prince since last week has left at least 150 people dead, bringing the number of deaths in Haiti this year to over 4,500, the United Nations said Wednesday.

"The latest upsurge in violence in Haiti's capital is a harbinger of worse to come," UN rights chief Volker Turk warned in a statement. "The gang violence must be promptly halted. Haiti must not be allowed to descend further into chaos."

Violence has intensified dramatically in Port-au-Prince since November 11, as a coalition of gangs pushes for full control of the Haitian capital.

Well-armed gangs control some 80 percent of the city, routinely targeting civilians despite a Kenyan-led international force that has been deployed to help the outgunned police restore some government order.

"At least 150 people have been killed, 92 injured

and about 20,000 forced to flee their homes over the past week," Turk's statement said.

In addition, "Port-au-Prince's estimated four million people are practically being held hostage as gangs now control all the main roads in and out of the capital".

The Haitian capital has seen renewed fighting in the last week from Viv Ansanin, an alliance of gangs that in February helped oust former prime minister Ariel Henry.

Turk said that at least 55 percent of the deaths from simultaneous and apparently coordinated attacks in the capital resulted from exchanges of fire between gang members and police.

He also highlighted reports of a rise in mob lynchings. Authorities said Tuesday that police and civilian self-defence groups had killed 28 gang members in Port-au-Prince after an overnight operation as the government seeks to regain some control.

China blames US policy on Taiwan for defence leaders not meeting

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: China's defence ministry blamed the United States' stance on Taiwan for its minister not meeting his US counterpart during a gathering this week in Laos.

Defence Minister Dong Jun turned down US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin's request to meet during a gathering of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) defense ministers, US officials said on Wednesday.

"The U.S. side cannot undermine China's core interests on the Taiwan issue while engaging with the Chinese military as if nothing is wrong," a ministry spokesperson said in a statement on Thursday.

The remarks raised questions over whether only a change in US policy

towards the island can restore military-to-military talks at the defense minister level between the two countries.

The failure to meet is "entirely the responsibility" of the US, the Chinese spokesperson said.

The spokesperson also urged the US to "immediately correct its mistakes" and strive to create favourable conditions for high-level military exchanges between the two sides.

China views democratically governed Taiwan as its territory, a claim that Taiwan's government rejects.

The U.S. is Taiwan's most important international backer and arms supplier, despite the lack of formal diplomatic recognition.

Adani shares rally in India after founder's US charges

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Shares in Indian billionaire Gautam Adani's conglomerate rallied on Friday to pare the previous day's frenzied sell-off sparked by US charges alleging the tycoon paid more than \$250 million in bribes to secure lucrative government contracts.

Wednesday's bombshell indictment in New York accused Adani and multiple subordinates of deliberately misleading international investors as part of the bribery scheme.

Adani, once the world's second-richest man, is a close ally of Hindu nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi and critics have long accused him of improperly benefitting from their relationship.

Ukraine launches UK Storm Shadow cruise missiles into Russia, a day after using US ATACMS

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine fired a volley of British Storm Shadow cruise missiles into Russia the latest new Western weapon it has been permitted to use on Russian targets a day after it fired US ATACMS missiles.

The strikes were widely reported by Russian war correspondents on Telegram and confirmed by an official on condition of anonymity. A spokesper-

son for Ukraine's General Staff said he had no information.

Moscow has said the use of Western weapons to strike Russian territory far from the border would be a major escalation in the conflict. Kyiv says it needs the capability to defend itself by hitting Russian rear bases used to support Moscow's invasion, which entered its 1,000th day this week.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti presiding over meeting of Ziarat Development Authority.

Ahsan for timely completion of all ongoing PSDP projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday chaired a meeting to assess the progress of projects being executed under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) during the current fiscal year.

Senior officials of the Ministry of Planning provided a detailed briefing on the allocation, releases and expenditure of funds for PSDP projects across the country, a news release said.

Addressing the meeting, the minister directed the ministry to develop a comprehensive strategy to ensure the timely completion of all ongoing PSDP projects.

Reviewing road infrastructure projects of Balochistan amounting to Rs400 billion, Ahsan Iqbal directed that these projects must be completed within three years.

He said the government was committed to prioritizing development initiatives in Balochistan, including Balochistan three projects of N-25 dualization of the Khuzdar-Kuchlak section of National Highway, the dualization and rehabilitation of the Karachi-Quetta-Chaman road from Karachi-Karor & Wadh-Khuzdar and the

Oct 2005 quake affected persons case SC constitutional bench seeks progress report from federal, provincial govts

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) constitutional bench while summoning progress reports from the governments in October 2005 earthquake affected persons case remarked tell us who is responsible for delay in the rehabilitation of affected population and projects.

Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan while giving observation said the rehabilitation of the quake affected persons was to be carried out with the cooperation of federation and province. We cannot stop calamities but we can fight. The affected persons are suffering hardships due to bad governance of departments and their non cooperation. The matters come to courts due

Pilgrims, under Govt scheme, to get airfare relief of Rs 1.24 bln

ISLAMABAD (APP): Intending Hajj pilgrims, under the Government Scheme, will receive a significant benefit of Rs 1.24 billion in reduced airfare costs.

Intending Hajj pilgrims under the Government Hajj Scheme are set to benefit from a significant Rs. 1.24 billion reduction in airfare costs next year.

An official said on Friday that pilgrims paid Rs. 234,000 each for air travel last year, but this year, the cost has been reduced to Rs. 220,000 per person.

This reduction will provide a relief of Rs. 14,000 for each of the 89,605 pilgrims traveling under the government's scheme, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal chairing a review meeting to assess the progress of Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) projects for 2024-25.

Pakistan-origin Royal Malaysian Air Chief visits hometown Haripur

HARIPUR (APP): General Tan Sri Dato' Sri Mohd Asghar Khan, Chief of the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF), paid a heartfelt visit to his ancestral village, Beer, in District Haripur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Friday.

District Police Officer (DPO) Haripur, Farhan Khan, confirmed the visit, stating that General Asghar Khan spent two hours in his ancestral village. During his visit, he offered Fatiha at the graves of his ancestors, including his grandfather Malik Qalandar, grandmother and uncle Malik

KP plagued by terrorism, lawlessness, says: ANP

Yaqub. He also visited family homes and met with relatives who still reside in the area. General Asghar Khan, born on December 26, 1965, in Selangor, Malaysia, has ancestral roots in the Tanawal region, specifically the village of Beer. He is the grandson of the late Malik Qalandar and the son of Goher Aman, both of whom belonged to this village.

The visit held deep sentimental value for the General as he sought to reconnect with his roots and honor his family's legacy.

The United States will remain a steadfast partner as Pakistan works to ensure the safety and security of all its citizens.

"We stand in solidarity with Pakistan and the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in this difficult time.

U.S. Mission spokesman deplores Kurram attack that leaves several dead

PESHAWAR (APP): The United States joins the Government of Pakistan in condemning the horrific attack in Kurram that killed dozens of innocent people and critically injured many more.

A statement issued by the U.S. Mission Spokesman, Janathan Lalley on Friday said "Our sympathies and condolences go out to the families and loved ones of those who lost their lives, and we wish the injured a full and speedy recovery".

The Pakistani people deserve to live free from harm, danger, and threat, and to feel protected and secure in their daily lives.

Ziarat Development Authority directed to ensure merit at every level: GoB to develop Ziarat environment friendly tourism place of Pakistan; seek national & international bids

CM announces to utilize buildings reserved for higher authorities under Public-Private Partnership mode for increasing resources of government; vows to make Ziarat Development Authority efficient institution, free from political influence

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has decided to develop Ziarat environment-friendly tourism site of Pakistan and to seek the bids from the national and international companies for implementation on the project.

The provincial government also decided to bring the Chief Minister's Anexy as well as Chief Secretary and Inspector General of Police Houses located in Ziarat under use for the tourism purposes.

Besides, the government rest houses and buildings would be used for the tourism purposes under Public-Private Partnership.

These decisions were made during a meeting of the

Ziarat Development Authority (ZDA) chaired by the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti here at the CM's secretariat on Friday morning.

The Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Additional Chief Secretary Development, Hafiz Abdul Basit and other concerned high ups were in attendance.

Addressing the meeting, Chief Minister said that the buildings reserved for the higher authorities would be utilized under the Public-Private Partnership mode for increasing the resources of government.

He reiterated the government's resolve to make the ZDA an efficient institution, free from political influence, and adding he asserted that neither any political personality would interfere in the affairs of ZDA nor we would let any government official take commission.

The Chief Minister said that all the political personalities have voluntarily vowed that no interference would be made in the ZDA against merit.

He made it clear that ZDA would operate as an independent body, and vowed that Ziarat would be introduced as unique tourism place in coming two years.

He also directed to the ZDA to ensure merit and transparency at every level, we would provide all required resources for it.



QUETTA: Chief Executive Officer QESCO Engr. Shafiq Ali meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Senate chairman explores NEOC, lauds tech-driven disaster response system

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani, on Friday, commended Pakistan's advanced disaster management systems and the use of technology to enhance response efforts.

Accompanied by Senator Manzoor Ahmed Kakar from Balochistan, the Chairman visited the National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) at NDMA Headquarters.

Chairman Senate expressed his immense appreciation of the national miracle project-NEOC. He commended NEOC's potential to guide regional countries and all stakeholder partners to enable strategic climate diplomacy space globally.

He lauded the integration of advanced technology in disaster management and stated that proactive interface of artificial intelligence, disaster's modelling platforms and synergy of national responders is crucial for timely and effective response.

He was specifically impressed by the dedication and expertise of young NDMA domain experts and leading the example.

Chairman Senate expressed their satisfaction over the disaster response mechanism and were appreciative of its compatibility with the evolving challenges.

A comprehensive capability exposition was conducted for the chairman and Kakar showcasing Pakistan's indigenous state-of-art, hub of disaster's early warning and response spectrum.

The session highlighted the critical necessity for utilization of tech-driven disaster projections and predictive analysis to transform Pakistan's Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) cycle proactively in alignment with global standards and tech driven smart response framework.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Yousaf Raza Gillani along with Mr. Manzoor Ahmed Kakar, Senator from Baluchistan visited National Emergencies Operations Center (NEOC) at NDMA Headquarters.

NAHE launches National Outreach Program for HEF at SBKWU

QUETTA (APP): National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) launched a four-week National Outreach Program for Higher Education Faculty (HEF) in collaboration with HEC. Dynamic modules presented by NAHE on technology integration in higher education and we as educators will learn how to navigate the emerging digital landscape and post-learning environment.

The press release said that students would acquire the skills to design innovative teaching methods, explore using various tools to enhance teaching and learning in a mobile world, while the Communication Skills module enables faculty to develop effective narratives for their presentations and teaching sessions. The program is designed to enable the integration and implementation of effective speaking strategies.

Vice chancellor Dr. Rubina Mushtaq welcomed to the guests and participants and discussed the role of teacher and higher education in society.

The program is intended for early career faculty of Public Sector universities.

It is a four-week learning program to accelerate the transfer of essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes in three dimensions of a successful career as a faculty member: (1) Teaching & Learning (2) Applied Research and (3) Professional Practice.

Muqam strongly condemns allegations against Saudia

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Engineer Amir Muqam has strongly condemned the allegations against Saudi Arabia.

The minister said that Bushra BiBi made false allegations against Pakistan's friends which was an old tactic of PTI, said a press release issued here on Friday. He said Bushra BiBi has conspired to make Pakistanis unemployed abroad.

"Earlier, Pakistanis in Saudi Arabia had become unemployed and imprisoned due to failed policies of PTI. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif appealed to the Saudi leadership and obtained forgiveness in the past", the minister expressed.

Services of late parliamentarian applauded: BA adopts resolution on death of Maulana Khairkhan; session adjourned till November 25

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Balochistan Assembly adopted a resolution in recognition of the services of late former Member of Provincial Assembly and Minister, Maulana Allahdad Khairkhan in a sitting here on Friday afternoon.

The Speaker, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai was in the chair.

Fateha was offered for the departed soul of late Maulana Allahdad Khairkhan in the House as the Speaker pointed out that he (Maulana Khairkhan) died on November 19.

Meanwhile, the member of Provincial Assembly, Mir Zaid Reki tabled resolution commending services of the late parliamentarian.

In the resolution, it was also urged the House to defer the session of assembly as per the rules. So, the resolution was adopted and thus session of assembly was postponed till 03:00 PM, November 25, 2024.

Earlier, on a point of order, the MPA and former Chief Minister, Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch pointed out that the government members don't come in the assembly. He said that we, the members of Opposition meets the requirement of quorum. He urged the chair to give ruling for the presence of government members in the House.

Speaker NA commends security forces for successful operation against terrorists in Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Friday commended security forces for successful operations against terrorists in Balochistan.

Ayaz Sadiq praised the bravery and courage of security forces for their successful operations against terrorists in Awaran, Dera Bugti and Kech, said a news release.

He appreciated the security personnel for eliminating highly wanted terrorist elements and bringing them to justice.

The Speaker emphasized that the entire nation stands shoulder to shoulder with the security forces in the war against terrorism.

"The nation is proud of the bravery and sacrifices of our security forces," he said. He reiterated that actions against terrorist elements will continue until complete eradication of terrorism from the country.



QUETTA: Chairman PkMAP Mahmood Khan Achakzai meeting with Maulana Muhammad Khan Sherani at his residence.

Crackdown continues for prevention of narcotics in Quetta Division, Hamza

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Commissioner Quetta Division, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat has stated that every possible measures are being taken for prevention of narcotics in the division.

The Commissioner said that joint crackdown is continued against cultivation of the narcotics as well as smuggling, sale and purchase of the drugs.

He said that several operations have been carried out against narcotics in all districts of the division especially in Pishin and Killa Abdullah.

He was chairing a meeting about prevention of narcotics in Quetta Division here on Friday.

The meeting was attended by Additional Commissioner Quetta, Agha Samiullah, Secretary Excise, Sector Commander ANF, Deputy Commissioners of all districts of Quetta Division and other concerned high ups.

Certain important decisions were made for prevention of narcotics and specially stoppage of cultivation of poppy and other narcotics in land.

It was decided to arrest the grower found involved in cultivation of poppy.

The land where the narcotics was cultivated would also be confiscated by the government.

Six motorway sections to be closed for maintenance

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Highways and Motorway Police on Friday announced that six sections of the motorways would be closed from Friday night at 8 pm due to maintenance and repair works. According to Motorway police North Zone spokesman, Muhammad Saqib, M-1: Islamabad to Peshawar, M-2: Islamabad to Lahore, M-3: Lahore to Abdul Hakeem, M-4: Pindi Bhattian to Multan, M-14: Dera Ismail Khan to Hakta and M-11: Lahore to Sialkot would be closed.

Open Court to be held in Nasirabad on Nov 26

QUETTA (APP): Khuliki Kehchari (Open Court) will be organized under supervision of Nasirabad Deputy Commission Muneer Ahmed Kakar at Assembly Hall Dera Murad Jamali on November 26.

On special directive of Chief Minister, Chief Secretary Balochistan and Commissioner Division Nasirabad, the open court will be arranged in the area to address public issues.

All relevant department officials would attend the open court. The local administration has urged the people to participate and submit their complaints.



QUETTA: Provincial Advisor Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi talking with MPA Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch after conclusion of Balochistan Assembly session.

SC rejects petition seeking direct vote for minorities

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court has rejected a petition seeking direct vote for minorities in general elections saying that all citizens were equal according to the Constitution and there was no precedent in world democracies of separate voting on the basis of religion.

Former Minister for Minorities and Convener of World Minorities Alliance J Salik, in his petition, had pleaded the apex Court that minorities in Pakistan should be given an opportunity to elect their representatives to the parliament through a direct vote in general elections.

The counsel for the petitioner argued before the Court that there were 60 seats in the National Assembly for women while 10 for minorities but all the 70 seats are filled by the parliamentary parties through proportionate representation depriving minorities to elect their representatives through a direct vote.

The Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court, however rejected the petition.

Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, during the proceedings, remarked that fundamental rights are for all the citizens equally and separate voting for minorities may pave way to discrimination. Only the parliament has the authority to legislate if any such change is required.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Haji Noor Muhammad Dummer, Mir Asim Kurd Gailo, Parliamentary Secretaries, Mir Liaquat Lehri, Hadia Nawaz Baloch and MPAs Farah Azeem Shah, Salma Kakar and Shahida Rauf meeting with Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly Ghazala Gola.