

# Independent

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## Emphasises economic stability for country's prosperity COAS expresses resolve to protect Pakistan's digital borders

*Says no matter how difficult the situation may be, if we all stand together, nothing can harm us; Commends active participation of defense manufacturers from friendly nations at IDEAS-2024 at Karachi Expo Centre*

KARACHI (APP): Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir says protection of Pakistan's digital borders and the digital security of the people is the responsibility of the state.

Addressing the business community in Karachi today, he said that terrorism is backed by those who do illegal businesses, with certain elements behind them.

The Army Chief emphasized that we must always prioritize the country over personal interests as nothing, including politics, is above Pakistan.

Describing the state as a motherly figure, he said the value of the state should be understood by looking at the people of Libya, Iraq, and Palestine. He reminded the audience, "Remember, we have no identity other than Pakistan."

Talking about challenges facing the nation, General

Syed Asim Munir said no matter how difficult the situation may be, if we all stand together, nothing can harm us.

Encouraging Pakistani expatriates to bring their investments back home, he said through this move, the people will prosper, and the country will develop.

Earlier General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) Chief of Army Staff (COAS) on Wednesday visited the International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS-2024) at the Karachi Expo Centre.

During the visit, the COAS commended the active participation of defense manufacturers from friendly nations and observed an impressive display of arms and equipment by both domestic and international exhibitors, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release.



KARACHI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) Chief of Army Staff (COAS), visiting the International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS-2024) at the Karachi Expo Centre.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Polio Oversight Board meeting with Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif.

## PM reaffirms commitment to eradicate polio from Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday reiterated the resolve of the government to make Pakistan a polio-free country and said that the federation along with all the provinces were taking steps at polio eradication.

He said all the provinces had been taken into confidence over the polio eradication measure and together they would efface the disease. A delegation of Polio Oversight Board comprising Christopher Elias, Representative of Bill and Malinda Gates Foundation, Dr Hanan Balkhy, Regional Director World Health Organization, UNICEF Regional Director Sanjay Wijesekera, Deputy Director Center for Disease Control and Prevention Andrea Fristedt, Rotary Foundation Trustee and National

Chair Dr Aziz Memon, Dr. Ziyad bin Ahmed Meemish of King Salman Humanitarian and Relief Center and Health and Environmental Advisor K Srelief Dr. Abdullah bin Saleh called on the prime minister, PM Office Media Wing in a press release said.

The prime minister thanked the delegation for their visit and support to government's efforts to end polio.

He also expressed his gratitude to King Salman Foundation, Bill and Malinda Gates Foundation, Rotary Foundation, UNICEF and CDC that are partners to government in its anti-polio measures.

The prime minister observed that the part played by these organizations showed global efforts in the polio eradication drive and expressed the confidence that they would overcome

the challenge of polio and would not rest till it was banished forever. The meeting was attended by PM Coordinator on National Health Dr Mukhtar Ahmad Bharath, PM's Focal Person on Polio Eradication Ayesha Raza Farooq and other senior officials.

The delegation praised the prime minister and the polio eradication team for their efforts.

The representative of Bill and Gates said that the current strategy of the country against polio disease had effectively been implemented and its effects were being witnessed at the macro-level which hopefully would end the polio cases.

Dr Hanan Balkhy said that for the public health, the regional countries were required to strengthen their contacts and initiate dialogue.

## Imran Khan gets bail in new Toshakhana case

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday granted post-arrest bail to the PTI founder in Toshakhana-II case.

The court accepted the bail against surety bonds worth Rs. one million and ordered the authorities to release the accused.

The court, however, said that the bail could be withdrawn if the accused didn't cooperate during the trial process.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb announced the verdict on the arrest bail petition of the PTI founder.

During the hearing, the court questioned what action was taken against the three customs officers responsible for the wrong assessment of the Bulgarian Jewelry set.

The FIA's prosecutor

said that it was a mistake on their part but it was not criminal misconduct by the officers. The NAB had not recommended any disciplinary action against these officers, he added.

He said that the jewelry said was never submitted to Toshakhana, adding that the accused managed to get a low-value assessment of the set and caused a loss to the national exchequer.

He said that the PTI founder and his wife both took benefit of it. He further said that this court had granted bail to Bushra Bibi but she was not appearing before the trial court which is delaying the indictment process of the accused.

He said that the PTI founder misused his position and threatened the person responsible for assessing the value of the set.



Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf laid foundation of Pakistan Maritime Science and Technology Park (PMSTP) during IDEAS 2024.

## CNS inaugurates Pakistan Maritime Science and Technology Park

**Independent Report**

KARACHI: The groundbreaking ceremony of Pakistan's first Maritime Science and Technology Park (PMSTP) was held at EXPO Centre during IDEAS-2024. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, graced the event as the Chief Guest.

While addressing the ceremony, the Naval Chief highlighted historic significance of the project, stating that PMSTP will pave the way for much-needed growth in maritime sciences, technologies, businesses, and industries. He emphasized that this initiative will open new avenues for enhancing Pakistan's GDP and advancing the maritime sector. The Naval Chief further underscored that the success of PMSTP reflects strong partnerships cultivated with visionary individuals and organizations.

PMSTP is the country's first dedicated maritime science park, integrating academia, industry, and government in a unique collaboration to foster growth across Pakistan's maritime sectors.

The park's initiatives will target diverse fields, including Naval Technologies, Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security, Ocean Renewable Energy, Seaford Processing, Shipbuilding, and Coastal Tourism.

PMSTP is envisioned as a transformative hub for innovation and advancement, focusing on maritime science and technology to bolster Pakistan's blue economy. The project represents a significant step toward addressing Pakistan's economic challenges, with plans for expansion beyond Karachi to Islamabad, Lahore, and Gwadar.

## SC nullifies IHC decision on matter of allotment of plots to judges, bureaucrats

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has announced reserved judgment after six months on the matter of allotment of plots to judges and bureaucrats in sector F-14 and F-15 Islamabad. SC while accepting appeal plea of Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) has declared Islamabad High Court (IHC) decision null and void.

A 3-member bench of SC presided over by Justice Munib Akhtar had reserved judgment on May 21.

Justice Ayesha Malik announced the decision.

The decision said IHC

should see the matter again and decide in this regard. It is pertinent to mention here IHC had declared Federal Government Employees Housing Scheme (FGEHS) unconstitutional. The court had said in the decision that the state land is not for elite class and it is only for public interest. Judge, bureaucrats and public office holders cannot make policy for personal interest against public interest. Judge and bureaucrats are for the service of people who are real stake holders. FGEHA cannot make any scheme against the constitution.

## President, Prime Minister pay tribute to martyred soldiers 12 security personnel martyred in Bannu suicide attack: ISPR

*Six terrorists killed in attempt to attack joint check post in Bannu's Mali Khel; 10 personnel from security forces, 2 from FC martyred*

RAWALPINDI (APP): Security Forces killed six Khwarij terrorists on Wednesday by effectively thwarting Khwarij attempt to enter the Joint Check Post in general area MaliKhel in Bannu District.

"In ensuing fire exchange, six khwarij were sent to hell. The attempt to enter the post was effectively thwarted by own troops, which forced the khwarij to ram an explosive laden vehicle into the perimeter wall of the post. The suicide blast led to collapse of portion of perimeter wall and damaged the adjoining infrastructure, resulting in Shahadat of 12 brave sons of soil that include 10 soldiers of the security forces and two soldiers of Frontier Constabulary," said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

"Sanitization operation is being conducted in the area and the perpetrators of this heinous act will be brought to justice. Security forces and law enforcement agencies of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave men further strengthen our resolve," it further said.

President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressed grief over the martyrdom of 12 security forces personnel in a terrorist attack that took place in Bannu.

In their separately issued statements, both the president and prime minister paid tributes to the armed forces personnel for sacrificing their lives and killing six terrorists while safeguarding the country.

"The whole nation salutes the soldiers for sacrificing their lives for the security of their motherland,"

the president said and reiterated the nation's resolve to wipe out terrorism from the country.

He also prayed to Allah Almighty for the elevation of the martyrs' ranks in paradise and for strength for the bereaved families to bear the loss.

"The sacrifices of the nation's soldiers will never be squandered. The Fitna Al Khawarij (terrorist) posing threats to the lives and properties of the people will have to pay a heavy price for it," Prime Minister Shehbaz said and reiterated that the fight against terrorism will continue till the complete elimination of this scourge.

Meanwhile the funeral prayers of 12 Shaheed personnel of armed forces who fought valiantly against Khwarij terrorists in MaliKhel were offered on Wednesday at Bannu Garrison.

When asked about negotiations between the federal government and PTI leadership, Tarar questioned, "Even if there were negotiations, who would guarantee that PTI will remain peaceful?" citing the party's history of violating peaceful protest norms.

The minister's remarks came following a major development ahead of the looming November 24 protest by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday approved the bail plea of party founder Imran Khan in the Toshakhana case.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb of the IHC accepted Khan's bail plea against two surety bonds worth Rs1 million each, which must be submitted by separate guarantors.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Saudi Deputy Interior Minister Nasser bin Abdul Aziz Al Dawood.

## Pakistan, Saudi Arabia agree to declare Islamabad & Riyadh as twin cities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi held an important meeting with Saudi Arabia's Deputy Interior Minister Dr. Nasser bin Abdulaziz Al-Daoud on Wednesday and discussed enhancing bilateral ties, mutual interests and security cooperation.

Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki was also in attendance. The Saudi Deputy Minister emphasized their close ties with Pakistan and expressed eagerness to enhance collaboration in various domains.

The ministers deliberated on measures to dismantle networks involved in sending beggars from Pakistan to Saudi Arabia. Naqvi revealed that 4,300 individuals have been placed on the Exit Control List (ECL) as part of a zero-tolerance policy.

Both sides agreed to expedite the repatriation

## China reaffirms strong support for Pakistan's fight against terrorism

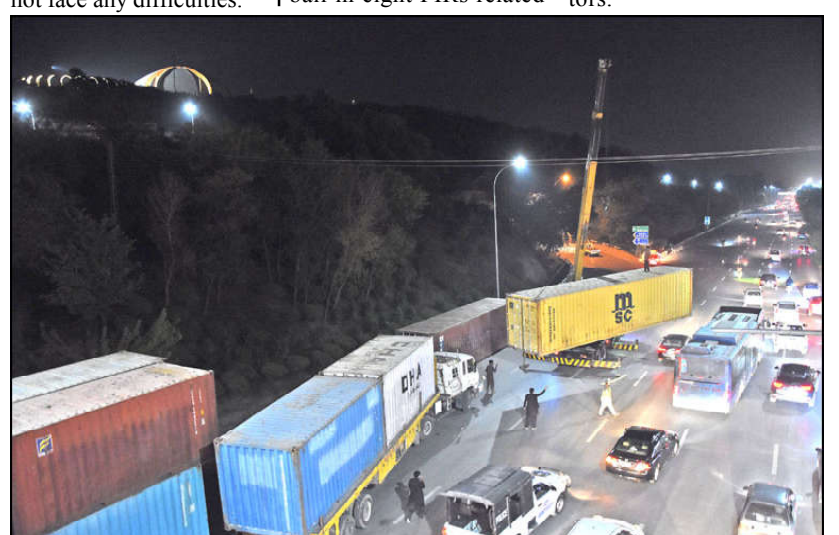
BEIJING: A Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson reiterated Beijing's strong backing for Pakistan in its ongoing efforts to combat terrorism, particularly in the troubled region of Balochistan.

During a regular press briefing on Wednesday, Lin Jian expressed China's unwavering commitment to supporting Pakistan's fight against the menace of terrorism. "Let me say broadly that China firmly supports Pakistan's effort of fighting terrorism," he stated, responding to a query about Pakistan's comprehensive military operation targeting terrorism in Balochistan.

## Joint military exercise between Pakistan, China begins in Pabbi

PABBI (Online): Opening Ceremony of Pak-China Joint Exercise Warrior-VIII between Pakistan Army and Peoples' Liberation Army of China was conducted at National Counter Terrorism Center Pabbi, today. Three weeks long Exercise in Counter Terrorism domain is 8th in the series of bilateral exercise being conducted annually. The exercise is aimed at refining professional skills through joint training besides harnessing the historic military to military relations among the Iron Clad Brothers.

Lieutenant General Shahid Imtiaz, HI (M), Commander Rawalpindi Corps graced the occasion as Chief Guest.



ISLAMABAD: Workers placed heavy shipping containers at Islamabad Highway near zero point for road block ahead of upcoming PTI protest in the Federal Capital.



Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**Islamabad protest**

From the scale of preparations, one wonders if the Islamabad Police is preparing for war.

According to recent news reports, thousands of security personnel, 1,200 containers, large quantities of anti-riot gear, thousands of rubber bullets and thousands of teargas guns and shells have been requisitioned by the capital's police in anticipation of the protest announced for this Sunday by the PTI.

Reinforcements in the tens of thousands have also been requested from the FC, Rangers, Sindh and Punjab police, and the authorities have been told that millions of rupees will be required to feed and transport law-enforcement personnel while they are deployed in the city. At the same time, Section 144 has been extended for two more months in the city, and it appears from the security plans that Islamabad will once again be turned into what locals pejoratively describe as 'Containeristan'. Is all of this really necessary? It must be asked.

The city administration may have intended to demonstrate strength by sharing the plans it has made, but instead, it looks like it is panicking. Large protests and sit-ins are part and parcel of Pakistan's political process, and the PTI's announcement of a march on Islamabad is nothing out of the ordinary if past precedents are considered.

It may be true that the party's decision to frame this protest as a 'do or die' moment has raised the stakes, but if the predictions and analyses shared by TV commentators are to be believed, it seems that the security personnel requisitioned for the event will outnumber the protesters many times to one. Instead of broadcasting its preparedness for a 'war' with protesting citizens, perhaps Islamabad Police should direct its energies towards coming up with a plan on how their right to protest will be accommodated while respecting security concerns.

On its part, the PTI leadership needs to tone down the rhetoric and reconsider the pressure it is placing on its cadres to ensure turnout. Demanding that each lawmaker turn up with a prescribed number of supporters or forego their party ticket reflects a lack of confidence in the party's position. Requiring its leaders to prove their 'loyalty' could also push some diehards to take more extreme measures to please their leaders. This could prove counterproductive.

The protesters should not be led to believe they are marching to 'conquer' Islamabad.

The party is within its rights to organise and protest, but at the same time, it must demonstrate that it is conscious of its responsibility to ensure that its activities remain peaceful. As Nov 24 draws nearer, both the PTI and the Islamabad administration must remain wary of how their posturing will be interpreted and keep within the limits of reason and the law.

**Past and future**

Mahir Ali

This week's column was intended to be a diatribe against the circumstances that are choking the denizens of Delhi and Lahore, and a reflection on the absurdity of the inevitably doomed Conference of the Parties (COP29) in a country determined to thrive on its oil exports.

But then, a sorrowful memory intervened. I was still a relative novice in the newsroom of this paper 40 years ago today when Ghazi Salahuddin, Dawn's energetic news editor, informed me that the nation's foremost poet was on his deathbed in a Lahore hospital.

Shortly afterwards, Ghazi confirmed the inevitable — and persuaded me to write a tribute. I was out of my depth, given my perfunctory knowledge of Urdu literature. I had known him as 'Faiz chacha' since my childhood as a friend of my parents, although I was better acquainted with his warm-hearted partner, Auntie Alys. It wasn't until my mid-teens that I began to appreciate Faiz as an exquisite poet.

My only one-to-one with him occurred in an antechamber at Moscow's Metropol hotel in 1977. I was at the cusp of a fruitless journey to earn a medical degree at the People's Friendship University, and only vaguely aware of the disaster that was unfolding in Pakistan. I can't recall the month, but it was after the March elections and before the July coup. Faiz summoned me out of his crowded living-room salon into a dining room where he offered me one of his Kent cigarettes (and was mildly surprised when I gratefully accepted) before launching into a broad overview of what was transpiring in our homeland.

I was mildly bewildered to begin with, but the primary purpose of the poet's narrative was to as-

suage any concerns I might have about the safety of my parents. Blissfully unaware at the time of their ultimately unsuccessful endeavours to effect a rapprochement between prime minister Z.A. Bhutto and the Baloch leaders he had stupidly incarcerated — amid death threats that persuaded my father to carry his World War II service revolver on train journeys to Hyderabad, where the National Awami Party stalwarts were imprisoned — I wasn't particularly worried. Until that conversation.

Not long afterwards, a fellow student informed me that Pakistan, like Bangladesh, had a Zia at the helm, and reminded me of the inimitable Punjabi poet Ustad Daman's sadly evergreen couplet: 'Pakistan diyaan majaan ee majaan/ Jithay waikho faujan ee faujan' (a loose translation: 'There is no end to Pakistan's joy/ Wherever you look, the military is deployed'). A distraught Daman left his own deathbed to attend Faiz's funeral, where he reputedly wailed, "Don't leave me behind!" Neither of them lived to witness the unexpected demise of Pakistan's most toxic tyrant, or the hybrid horrors that followed.

The aftermath might have reinforced their despair. And both the Lahoris (sure, Faiz was a Sialkoti who also lived in Karachi and Beirut, and spent time elsewhere, while Daman never budged from his inner-city bolt-hole) would have been appalled by their hometown's profoundly depressing contest with Delhi as the most polluted city in the world. They would have been familiar with the delightfully crisp air, crunchily frost and morning mist of the Lahore winters that enthralled me as a child, walking or cycling to school.

Faiz might also have

been alarmed by the venue of COP29. I'm not sure if Baku ever figured in his verse, possibly because even during its Soviet phase Azerbaijan's capital tended to be viewed as an oily city. Several of his 1970s poems are datelined Moscow, Tashkent, Samarkand and so on — but never, as far as I can tell, Baku. Luckily for him, Faiz passed away well before the USSR ceased to exist, a mock democracy resurfaced in his beloved Pakistan, and an India where he was widely adored — a sentiment he heartily reciprocated — lapsed into Hindutva.

Faiz would have been disappointed but perhaps not surprised by what has occurred in the past 40 years. I don't have a copy of the tribute I speedily churned out in 1984 — just three weeks after an unexpected morning phone call from Ghazi at my YMCA lodgings, minutes away from the coalface, had alerted me to Indira Gandhi's assassination — but I do recall focusing in part on Faiz's consistent internationalism, and notably the drumbeat of rebellion that echoed throughout Aajao Afreeka (Come Back, Africa).

A couple of years later, his poem Hum Dekhain Geentereed the stratosphere courtesy of Iqbal Bano's brilliant rendition. It envisaged a future that remains suspended between now and a possible tomorrow. His record as a journalist, literary critic and trade unionist testifies to the fact that Faiz was always more than just a poet. Yet it is primarily his verse that will forever remain a guiding torchlight towards a brighter tomorrow in which today's younger generations might revel across the subcontinent. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Self-radicalisation**

Mohammad Ali Babakhel

Radicalisation is a human tendency that is as old as humanity itself. However, in the modern age, instant connectivity has increased the possibility of self-radicalisation. Technology, particularly the internet and social media, has enabled individuals to connect globally, share their ideologies, recruit and train others, make appeals for funding, and propagate, communicate, and coordinate their activities. The anonymity of the internet aids these activities and allows individuals to self-radicalise without active and face-to-face support.

The radicalisation process can vary, but generally involves four stages: pre-radicalisation (the lifestyle of an individual prior to radicalisation), self-identification, indoctrination, and acceptance of a role as a warrior. During radicalisation, an individual adopts extreme political, social, or religious thoughts, rejects the status quo, or undermines contemporary values. Extreme websites, direct interactions with violent extremists, community support for violence, and anger against certain political decisions regarding foreign and internal policies may provide 'justification' for radicalisation.

Historical factors, such as the involvement of family or friends in violence, an individual's previous criminal record and previous exposure to violence, history of training imparted by militant groups, and foreign travel, particularly to a conflict area, are important factors that may lead to radicalisation. Radicalisation can also be inspired by experiences while travelling abroad, research, or human rights violations, particularly in areas occupied by foreign forces.

Home-grown terrorist cells are generally semi-autonomous or consist of isolated individuals. These individuals may be 'self-starters' and may not have a criminal record. There is an impression that home-grown recruits are usually second-generation immigrants facing an identity crisis. Narratives of unresolved conflicts in history may provide them motive for action and lead to self-radicalisation. Personal experiences of victimisation, political grievances, and feelings of exclusion are also instrumental in self-radicalisation.

During the self-radicalisation process, the person may experience a crisis caused by personal or social disruption. Relationships, rituals, and roles may change during the radicalisation period. In this time, individuals may be on a slippery slope where they engage with a radical group or individuals propagating a radical ideology. External factors like polarisation within society and social isolation faced by an individual may contribute to self-radicalisation, as isolation reinforces radicalism. Poverty is also often seen as one of the prime reasons for radicalisation, but it seems to be a myth as many militants come from middle-class backgrounds and have a university education.

Self-radicalisation can be tackled through partnerships between law-enforcement agencies and citizens.

To address the menace of radicalisation, LEAs have implemented various programmes, including 'neighbourhood policing', which seeks to establish trust within a community by establishing an information exchange mechanism. The Turkish police have developed a 'community partnership

program--me to gather information from community members about suspicious activities. Similarly, in 2010, the US Department of Homeland Security announced the 'See Something, Say Something' programme.

Disengagement and de-radicalisation are well-thought-out psychological and social processes. Disengagement involves behavioural changes in the affected person, including leaving a radicalised group or limiting one's role within the group. De-radicalisation involves cognitive change, such as relinquishing an ideology. Deradicalisation programmes can be evaluated and monitored to understand the economic, psychological, and social motivations for joining an extremist group.

What financial incentives did the radicalised person or their family derive from engagement in violence? How can family members be engaged in the deradicalisation process?

Governments and LEAs must adopt measures to address terrorists' use of the internet. This includes removing radical content from the web, filtering and restricting users' access, controlling the exchange of information, and investing in countering extremism in cyberspace. Blocking certain websites may seem like the easiest solution, but simply blocking them may only be a technical fix. An alternative, more effective option is to counter extremist narratives.

There is a dire need to shift the focus from the 'war on terrorism' to the battle of ideas. Killing terrorists may be easy, but defeating ideology can prove rather difficult. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Commerce News**



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja in a meeting with TikTok delegation.

**Ahsan proposes GSP-Plus, 5Es framework alignment to get export-led economic growth**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday proposed a multi-pronged strategy, aligning the GSP-Plus programme with the 5Es framework to get export-led economic growth secure a prosperous future for Pakistan. "The GSP-plus programme represents more than just trade preferences. It is a roadmap for sustainable development and good governance. By aligning it with the 5Es framework, we can unlock the true potential of export-led growth, empower our citizens and secure a prosperous future for Pakistan," he said.

The minister was speaking as the guest speaker at a conference titled "Promoting Good Governance through Trade - Leveraging through GSP+," organized by Fredrick Naumann Foundation. Addressing the gathering, Ahsan Iqbal called for seizing the opportunity to strengthen governance and build resilience and position Pakistan as a globally competitive economy. "Together we can ensure that trade becomes not only a driver of economic prosperity but also a catalyst for equity, transparency and sustainability," he added.

Despite the successes, he said challenges remained, adding weak enforcement of laws, low diversification of exports and environmental vulnerabilities needed immediate attention to maximize the benefits of GSP-Plus and align with 5Es framework - Exports.

E-Pakistan, Environment and Climate Change, Energy and Infrastructure, Equity and Empowerment.

Elaborating his proposed strategy, the minister suggested establishing export diversification centers with incentives for green technologies and high-value products.

He asked for setting up a National Compliance Task Force to oversee GSP-plus implementation and address gaps in governance on permanent/quarterly basis.

**Rana unveils plan to shift 30% of transport to EVs by 2030**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain unveiled the government's ambitious plan here on Wednesday, aiming at shifting 30 percent of transportation to electric vehicles (EVs) by 2030 to promote an environmentally friendly transport system.

Addressing a press conference, the minister said that the plan includes shifting of two-wheelers, three-wheelers and four-wheelers to electric vehicles, adding the plan was aimed at reducing the environmental impact of transportation and alleviating the financial burden of import bills associated with traditional fuel costs.

The minister said that many countries are currently using electric vehicles, and the demand is increasing due to new technology, which offers manifold advantages and benefits. Rana Tanveer highlighted the commitment and hard work of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to launch a new electric vehicle policy (2025-30) to control air pollution and reduce oil imports. He said, PM has

**Commerce Minister chairs high-level meeting on OIC trade fair**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan on Wednesday chaired high-level meeting on Wexnet and OIC Trade Fair Progress.

The Minister of Commerce today visited the National Insurance Corporation Limited (NICL) to preside over a meeting on the progress of the highly anticipated Wexnet 2024 and the 18th OIC Trade Fair, scheduled to be held from November 29 to December 1, 2024, at the Expo Centre Lahore, said a press release issued here. The meeting was attended by Secretary TDAP Sheryar Taj, Chief Executive TDAP Zubair Motiwala, and senior officials from the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP). During the session, TDAP officials provided the Minister with a comprehensive briefing on the planning and execution of the upcoming events. The Minister emphasized the significance of Wexnet 2024 as a platform to promote women entrepreneurs and directed TDAP to intensify efforts in showcasing their achievements.



ISLAMABAD: A Delegation from China Geological Survey (CGS) Calls on Secretary Petroleum to Bolster Geoscientific Collaboration.

**CDNS achieves Rs 550b mark in annual savings target**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has achieved a target of Rs 550 billion in fresh bonds and achieved 15 percent of the annual target for the current fiscal year, from July 1 to November 15th.

The CDNS has set an annual target of Rs 1650 billion for the current Fiscal Year, 2024-25, which will promote the saving culture in the country, the senior official of CDNS told APP on Wednesday.

Similarly, the CDNS has set a target of Rs 170 billion in investment in Islamic finance for the Current Fiscal Year, which will lead to the growth of the Islamic economy in the country. Replying to a question, he said that the CDNS has realized a target of Rs1.742 trillion in fresh bonds and exceeded 100 percent of the annual target in the last fiscal year 2023-24, from July 1 to June 30.

**Shenzhen to reduce tax on larger house transactions**

SHENZHEN 20 (Xinhua/APP): Shenzhen in south China's Guangdong Province on Tuesday became the latest major Chinese city to reduce taxes for transactions involving larger houses.

The city said in a notice that it will scrap the distinction between ordinary and non-ordinary housing starting on Dec. 1, which will unify favorable tax policies for the two categories.

**DISCOs suffers Rs 591 bln loss in FY 2023-24**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Power Distribution Companies (DISCOs) suffered a loss of Rs 591 billion on accounts of line losses and less recovery during last fiscal year 2023-24.

However, the losses stood at Rs 239 billion in first quarter of the current fiscal year 2024-24 as compared to Rs 308 billion during the corresponding period of last year, showing an improvement of Rs 69 billion, said a statement issued by Ministry of Power Division here Wednesday.

The recovery of DISCOs also witnessed a visible upward trend and it was recorded as 91 per cent as compared to 84 per cent during the said periods.

**Shaza urges TikTok to use its platform for educational purposes**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Secretary of State for Information Technology and Telecommunications Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Wednesday urged TikTok to use its platform for educational purposes.

"Various skills and basic education can be imparted through TikTok, and the Ministry of IT will fully support TikTok in achieving this objective," she said during a meeting with a TikTok delegation led by its Director of Public Policy, Mr. Emir Gelen.

According to a news release, the meeting focused on matters of mutual interest, including the availability of quality and productive content on social media platforms.

Secretary IT, Zarrar Hasham Khan, was also present during the discussion. The TikTok delegation briefed the Minister on the platform's initiatives in Pakistan and outlined upcoming programmes.

Shaza Fatima emphasized the importance of ensuring that quality content is accessible, noting that TikTok has a vast user base in Pakistan.

The delegation assured the Minister that TikTok would prioritize meaningful and educational content.

They also expressed the platform's willingness to collaborate with the Ministry of IT & Telecom and its associated departments to achieve these goals.

**Railways CEO holds public e-court**

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Railways is committed to providing facilities to passengers while ensuring their safety, utilising all available resources to the best of its capacity. This was stated by Pakistan Railways CEO Amir Ali Baloch during an e-Kutchehy on Wednesday, where he addressed public queries. He said that while trains were currently facing delays due to smog and adverse weather conditions, Pakistan Railways continues its operations even when airports and motorways are closed. "Our priority is the safety of passengers over addressing delays," he stated.

The CEO further assured that he is personally overseeing train schedules and that efforts are being made to resolve issues impacting punctuality. To enhance convenience, the names and phone numbers of train managers will soon be prominently displayed in all trains.



## CM Punjab message on World Children's Day

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said that it is foremost responsibility for everyone to ensure the provision of education, health, and protection to innocent children for their bright and excellent future. In her message on World Children's Day, the CM said, "Children are a special gift of Allah Almighty, there is nothing more beautiful in the world than their smile." The CM added that the state is like a mother, and there can be no compromise on the health,

education, protection, and development of children. She mentioned that the Punjab government has launched the 'School Nutrition Program' to protect children from stunted growth and malnutrition. The 'Early Childhood School System' will focus on the mental and intellectual development of children. Additionally, the 'Virtual Centre for Child Safety' has been launched for their protection, she added. She further stated that children with diabetes will receive free insulin at home through the Chief

Minister Insulin Program, and children will be safeguarded from fatal diseases through the vaccination program. Pakistan's first government autism school is being built to cater to the special needs of differently-abled children. She emphasized that a zero-tolerance policy is in place regarding any form of cruelty, abuse, or child labor. She pledged that every child should remain safe, healthy, and educated, and that the Punjab government would ensure the protection of children's rights at any cost.

## Punjab govt accelerates efforts to make Nawaz Cancer Institute operational

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique has directed the Infrastructure Development Authority Punjab (IDAP) to expedite the completion of the Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer Treatment and Research project to make it functional as soon as possible.

Chairing a meeting at King Edward Medical University on Wednesday, the minister reviewed progress on the project and set a target of twelve months for the completion of the first phase. He reiterated that initiatives

improving public health are a top priority for the Punjab government. The hospital will be expanded in phases and equipped with modern, state-of-the-art facilities. The meeting discussed various aspects, including the construction progress, modifications to the master plan, procurement of advanced medical equipment, and other operational arrangements. It also emphasized the importance of establishing a premier bone marrow transplant facility and suggested increasing the number of beds.

## Kundicondemns attack on Mali Khel check post Bannu

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Wednesday strongly condemned tragic suicide attack on Mali Khel security forces check post in Bannu district, resulting in the martyrdom of 12 security personnel.

The governor expressed heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyred heroes. In a statement, the governor paid tribute to the brave security forces, saying, "The sacrifices of these martyrs will never be forgotten."



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah exchanges views with Special Assistant to Public Private Partnership and Investment, Qasim Naveed Qamarduring meeting, held at CM House in Karachi.

## Policy Dialogue on "Energy Crisis: Problem, Impact & Solutions" concludes

LAHORE (APP): The two-day Policy Dialogue on "Energy Crisis: Problem, Impact & Solutions" jointly organized by Executive Development Institute (EDI) of the National School of Public Policy (NSPP) concluded here Wednesday.

The Executive Development Institute (EDI) is working for the continuous professional development of officers and executives of the public and private sectors

by organizing multiple activities such as trainings, policy dialogues and webinars etc.

On behalf of Dr. Ijaz Munir, Rector, National School of Public Policy, Ahmad Nazir Warraich, Dean EDI, officially inaugurated the session and provided an overview of NSPP and EDI. He emphasized Pakistan's energy sector challenges, such as debt, high energy imports, power shortages affecting the economy, and reliance on fossil fuels.

## Mariyum Aurangzeb says: Anti smog drive to be continued in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb has stated that despite an improvement in the smog situation, the anti-smog campaign will continue with full vigor. She commended the efforts of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Punjab government institutions, and the police, emphasizing that public cooperation is key to improving environment and eradicating smog.

She further mentioned that while schools have reopened, strict adherence to

precautionary measures has been instructed. Teachers and students must ensure use of masks, while parents and students are encouraged to adopt carpooling to reduce traffic congestion. Additionally, 15 brick-kilns operating without zigzag technology have been dismantled, and three industrial units in Gujranwala, Rahim Yar Khan, and Sheikhpura have been sealed. Crackdowns on vehicles, trucks, and buses with faulty engines or excessive smoke emissions are ongoing.

## Nine dead, 1,424 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least nine people were killed and 1,424 others injured in 1,375 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours. As many as 626 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 798 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams.

The data analysis showed that 806 drivers, 55 underage drivers, 183 pedestrians, and 444 passengers were among the victims of road crashes.

## 26 children fall victim to diphtheria in KP: Health Dept

PESHAWAR (APP): The diphtheria infection among children in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has turned into a dangerous epidemic, wherein at least 26 children have died during the current year, reported the provincial health department here on Wednesday. It said that 380 children in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have been reported infected with Diphtheria. Among the most affected districts, Peshawar remained at the top where the most 12 children lost their lives to the disease.

## Kundi lauds Bilawal to form committee to tackle issues

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Wednesday lauded Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to form a committee to raise issues with the federal government.

The nine-member committee includes prominent figures such as Raja Pervez Ashraf, Naveed Qamar, Sherry Rehman, Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah, Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Safaraz Bugti, Makhdoom Ahmad Mahmood,

Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, and Haider Gillani. The committee will maintain communication with the federal government and highlight key concerns.

A report will be presented at the upcoming Central Executive Committee (CEC) meeting next month.

A notification regarding the formation of the committee was issued by PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's political secretary, Jameel Ahmad Soomro.



PESHAWAR: Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Central Information Secretary and Member National Assembly (MNA), Sheikh Waqas Akram along with others addresses to media persons during press conference, at Peshawar press club.

## KP judicial academy holds workshop on gender-responsive human resource management

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Judicial Academy (KPJA), in collaboration with ROZAN Pakistan, organized a two-day training workshop on "Gender-Responsive Human Resource Management" for D&SJs/ Zilla Qazis, Senior Civil Judges/A'ala Ilaqa Qazis.

Twenty-three (23) Judges/Qazis of various districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa participated in the training workshop. The workshop was designed to arm the Judges/Qazis with essential skills and knowledge for

promoting gender-responsive practices.

The inaugural ceremony was graced by Barrister Ikhtiar Khan, worthy Registrar, Peshawar High Court, as the chief guest. Mr. Jehanzeb Shinwari, Director General KPJA, Mr. Zia Ur Rahman, Dean Faculty, Dr. Qazi Ataullah, Senior Director Research & Publication, Director Instructions, and other directors and officers of the Academy, and Representatives of ROZAN Pakistan, also attended the ceremony.

## International News

## Putin, ascendant in Ukraine, eyes contours of a Trump peace deal

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin is open to discussing a Ukraine ceasefire deal with US President-elect Donald Trump but rules out making any major territorial concessions and insists Kyiv abandon ambitions to join Nato, five sources with knowledge of Kremlin thinking told Reuters.

Trump, who has vowed to swiftly end the conflict, is returning to the White House at a time of Russian ascendancy. Moscow controls a chunk of Ukraine about the size of the American state of Virginia and is advancing at the fastest pace since the early days of the 2022 invasion.

In the first detailed report of what President Putin would accept in any deal brokered by Trump, the five current and former Russian officials said the

Kremlin could broadly agree to freeze the conflict along the front lines.

There may be room for negotiation over the precise carve-up of the four eastern regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson, according to three of the people who all requested anonymity to discuss sensitive matters.

While Moscow claims the four regions as wholly part of Russia, defended by the country's nuclear umbrella, its forces on the ground control 70-80 per cent of the territory with about 26,000 square kilometres still held by Ukrainian troops, open-source data on the front line shows.

Russia may also be open to withdrawing from the relatively small patches of territory it holds in the Kharkiv and Mykolaiv regions, in the north and

south of Ukraine, two of the officials said.

Putin said this month that any ceasefire deal should reflect the "realities" on the ground but that he feared a short-lived truce which would only allow the West to rearm Ukraine.

"If there is no neutrality, it is difficult to imagine the existence of any good-neighbourly relations between Russia and Ukraine," Putin told the Valdai discussion group on November 7.

"Why? Because this would mean that Ukraine will be constantly used as a tool in the wrong hands and to the detriment of the interests of the Russian Federation."

Two of the sources said outgoing US President Joe Biden's decision to allow Ukraine to fire American ATACMS missiles deep into Russia could complicate and delay any settlement.

## Bomb cyclone pounds Northwest US, leaving 600,000 without power

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: A powerful storm was clobbering Washington state on Wednesday, knocking out power to hundreds of thousands while wreaking havoc on road travel and causing at least one death and two injuries.

A woman was killed on Tuesday when a tree fell on a homeless encampment in Lynnwood, just north of Seattle, local fire department officials said on social media. Two people were also injured when a tree fell on their trailer in Maple Valley, southeast of Seattle.

Schools across western Washington canceled classes or postponed the start of school on Wednesday.

The storm with tropical storm force winds of 50

miles (80 km) per hour and gusts around 70 mph felled trees and power lines overnight. It knocked out electricity to more than 600,000 homes and businesses in Washington, Southwest Oregon and Northern California, according to the Poweroutage.us.

"The storm is just beginning," said Rich Otto, a meteorologist with the NWS Weather Prediction Center in College Park, Maryland.

"We haven't gotten a ton of rain yet, just 2-3 inches over Southwest Oregon and Northern California," Otto said.

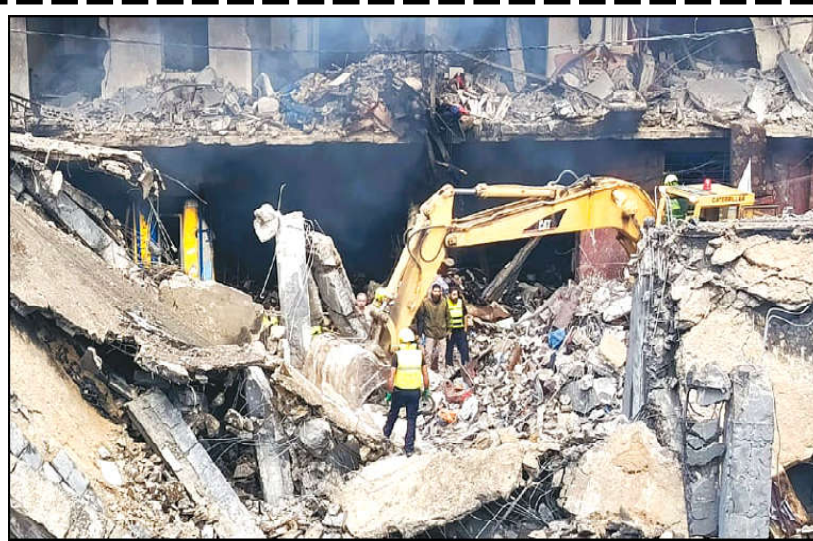
But the storm, called a "bomb cyclone" which happens when the storm rapidly intensifies, is going to stall over Northern California in the next few days, he said.

## Senegal's president faces budget challenge after likely parliamentary win

**Monitoring Desk**  
DAKAR: A likely absolute majority for President Bassirou Diomaye Faye's Pastef party in Senegal's legislative election would empower him to pursue his ambitious 25-year agenda, though his first challenge will be coming up with a budget amid a fiscal crisis.

Faye sought a clear parliamentary majority in Sunday's vote to implement the reform agenda that helped sweep him to power in a landslide election victory in March. But analysts say creating a budget catering both to his voters' needs and to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), with which his government is currently in talks, will be challenging.

Former president Macky Sall, who headed an opposition coalition, on Monday congratulated Pastef on its win.



US President Joe Biden delivers remarks during an event launching the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty at the G20 Summit at the Museum of Modern Art in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

## Hamas negotiators 'not in Doha', but political office not closed, says Qatar

**Monitoring Desk**  
DOHA: Hamas negotiators are not in Doha but their office has not been permanently closed, Qatar said on Tuesday following speculation that the Palestinian group had been ordered out of the Qatari capital.

"The leaders of Hamas that are within the negotiating team are now not in Doha," foreign ministry spokesperson Majed Al-Ansari said, adding: "The decision to ... close down the office permanently, is a

decision that you will hear about from us directly."

Qatar, along with the United States and Egypt, had led months of fruitless negotiations for a truce in the Gaza conflict, but the Gulf state announced earlier this month it was pausing its mediation efforts.

The announcement followed reports Qatar had warned Hamas that its political bureau, which the Gulf state has hosted since 2012 with the blessing of the United States.

## IAEA says Iran has offered to cap stock of sensitive uranium

**Monitoring Desk**  
VIENNA: Iran has offered not to expand its stock of uranium enriched to up to 60 per cent purity, near the roughly 90pc of weapons grade, and made preparations to do that, the UN nuclear watchdog said in confidential reports to member states on Tuesday.

The offer is conditional, however, on Western powers abandoning their push for a resolution against Iran at this week's meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency's

35-nation Board of Governors over its lack of cooperation with the IAEA, diplomats said, adding that the push was continuing.

During IAEA chief Rafael Grossi's trip to Iran last week, "the possibility of Iran not further expanding its stockpile of uranium enriched to 60pc U-235 was discussed", read one of the two confidential quarterly IAEA reports.

It added that the IAEA had verified that Iran had "begun implementation of preparatory measures".

## Indonesia can reach net zero emissions before 2050: president

**Monitoring Desk**  
JAKARTA: Indonesia is optimistic it can reach net zero emissions before 2050, a decade earlier than previously targeted, President Prabowo Subianto told a G20 forum.

Prabowo also said Indonesia planned to retire all coal and fossil-fuel-fired power plants within the next 15 years, versus an earlier target of 2056, according to a statement from his office released on Wednesday. Indonesia will build 75 gigawatts of renewable power plants within the next 15 years, he added, echoing a commitment his envoy told the COP29 climate summit last week.

"We are also situated along the equator, therefore we have more than plenty of sunlight to fuel solar-based energy," Prabowo told the forum. "We have other sources of renewables and that's why we are very optimistic that we can achieve net zero before 2050." Indonesia is one of the world's biggest greenhouse gas emitters and its top exporter of thermal coal. But it is also home to the world's third biggest rainforests. Its current installed power capacity is more than 90 GW, with more than half of that powered by coal and less than 15% by renewables.

## Israeli strikes kill 15 in Gaza as hospital in north of the region makes distress call

**Monitoring Desk**  
CAIRO: Israeli forces killed at least 15 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday, including a rescue worker, health officials said, as tanks deepened their incursion in the area and blew up homes, according to residents.

Medics said at least 12 people were killed in an Israeli strike on a house in the area of Jabalia, in northern Gaza, earlier on Wednesday. They said at least 10 people remained missing as rescue operations continued. Another man was killed in tank shelling nearby, they said.

In the Sabra suburb of Gaza City, the Palestinian civil emergency said an Israeli air strike targeted one of their teams during a rescue operation, killing one

staff and wounding three others.

The death raised the number of civil emergency service members killed since Oct 7, 2023, to 87, it said.

There was no immediate Israeli comment on the two incidents. Adding to the challenges facing the healthcare system in north Gaza areas, the civil emergency service said their vehicles were hardly operational because of shortages of fuel and equipment, citing Israel's continued refusal to allow them to bring the needed supplies.

In Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip, medics said one man was killed and others wounded in an Israeli air strike on the eastern territory of the city.

## Over 200 kids killed in Lebanon as US envoy sees end to war

**Monitoring Desk**  
GENEVA: Unicef has said more than 200 children have been killed and 1,100 injured in Lebanon in just two months, as US special envoy Amos Hochstein met officials in Beirut on Tuesday to discuss a truce plan with claims that an end to the war is "now within our grasp".

Unicef spokesperson James Elder at a press briefing in Geneva said, "Despite more than 200 children killed in Lebanon in less than two months, a disconcerting pattern has emerged: their deaths are met with inertia from those able to stop this violence."

"For the children of Lebanon, it has become a silent normalisation of horror," he said, while drawing "chilling similarities" between the conflicts in Lebanon and in Gaza, where a significant portion of nearly 44,000 people killed in are reported to be children.

On the other hand, Israel expanded the focus of

its operations to Lebanon from Gaza, where forces stormed Jabal Mukaber area and cordoned off the decades old Al-Shiyah mosque before tearing it down, Al Jazeera reported.

Earlier, State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said that the US had shared ceasefire proposals with both Lebanon and Israel.

During a visit to Beirut on Tuesday, US special envoy Amos Hochstein said an end to the Israel-Hezbollah war was "now within our grasp" as he met with officials to discuss a truce plan largely endorsed by Lebanon.

Following a meeting with Hezbollah-allied parliament speaker Nabih Berri, who has led mediation on behalf of the group, Hochstein told reporters he saw "a real opportunity" to end the fighting. "I'm here in Beirut to facilitate that decision, but it's ultimately the decision of the parties."



## PTI's "Final Call" for protest deemed failure: Amir Muqam

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Balistan and SAFRON and President PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Engineer Amir Muqam, Wednesday dismissed PTI's November 24 protest call as a 'flop show,' claiming it would yield no significant results.

Engr Amir Muqam, the PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa President, has described Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) "Final Call" for protests at D-Chowk on November 24 as nothing more than a "miscall."

He accused the party of attempting to provoke unrest and violence.

Muqam stated that Pakistan remains committed to combating terrorism in politics, warning that those who bring terrorism into politics will face the same consequences as terrorists.

He emphasized this stance as a reflection of Pakistan's dedication to eradicating extremism and promoting peace.

Engr Amir Muqam claims PTI leaders are using the protest call as leverage for a deal, while simultaneously seeking behind-the-scenes apologies and concessions.

Muqam stated that the PTI founder's refusal to engage with other political parties raises concerns about his political judgment and commitment to democracy.

He added that by avoiding discussions, Khan appears to lack trust in the democratic process, sparking worries about his unwillingness to consider opposing viewpoints or find common ground.

Federal Minister stated that Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin, should not act as the PTI founder's suicide bomber. He warned that if the law is taken into one's hands, it will intervene.

Muqam also pointed out that Imran Khan has instigated a revolution by handing over the party to his wife and sister.

He urged Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin to focus on addressing the rising terrorism in his province rather than expending energy on federal conflicts. Imran Khan's actions have drawn criticism, with many accusing him of hypocrisy.

His involvement in violent riots after his arrest on May 9, 2023, has raised doubts about his commitment to peaceful protest and democracy.

Muqam remarked that Ali Amin made bold statements before the Apex Committee but has remained silent since then.

He questioned whether Ali Amin is with the constitution or aligned with political terrorists.

Muqam also urged Imran Khan not to use innocent people as scapegoats, stating that it is not a leader's role to harm innocent workers and party leaders.

He further stated that PTI does not want the public to be relieved from inflation, noting that inflation has decreased and the economy has stabilized, which seems to cause discomfort for PTI.

"Those asking 'are we slaves' have proven to be actual slaves."

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government employees are being used to target the federal government and Punjab," he said.

"PTI founder, be cautious—Ali Amin Gandapur might embark on another tour of 12 districts on November 24."



Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Chaudhry Salik Hussain, met with members of the Japan-Pakistan Innovation Institute (JPII) in Islamabad

## Federal ombudsman reiterates commitment to protect rights of children

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Ombudsman, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi has called upon all segments of the society to redouble their efforts for protecting the rights of the children in the country.

In a message released on the eve of the World Children's Day, being observed on November 20th every year, he underlined the need to work together for creating a society where children can thrive, learn and grow without fear of violence, discrimination or marginalization, adding that it is our collective responsibility to ensure that our children are safeguarded from all kinds of exploitation, abuse and neglect.

Following is the text of his message issued on the occasion:

"The Federal Ombudsman Office has taken several initiatives for the welfare of children in the country which includes, a pilot research study to address the plight of street children, providing them with access to education, healthcare, and social services.

Pakistan has made significant strides in promoting the child rights, including the establishment of the National Commission for Children (NCC) and the introduction of child-friendly laws and policies.

## 1.5 mln employment opportunities to be provided to youth: Rana Mashhood

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan on Wednesday said that Youth is the future of Pakistan and as many as 1.5 million employment opportunities would be provided to them in Pakistan and abroad this year under PMYP. Addressing a news conference here at Pakistan Sports Board Complex along with Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC) Dr Mukhtar Ahmed, he said that around 3,000 athletes were participating in the Prime Minister's University Sports (PMUS) Olympiad across the country starting on November 21.

Mashhood said that the young generation can play a major role in the prosperity and stability of the country and Pakistan has a talented youth and has a pivotal role in advancing the country towards fast-paced development.

"We are dedicated to preparing our youth to excel in diverse fields, from sports to technical education, Information technology-driven industries to traditional crafts. This holistic approach will enable them to contribute meaningfully to Pakistan's socio-economic development," he added.

Chairman PMYP said that the PMUS Olympiad will not only foster a spirit of healthy competition but will also serve as a platform for the youth to engage, excel, and represent their universities with pride.

He said that the country's economy was moving towards the right direction under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and was taking various initiatives to highlight the potential and provide more employment opportunities to the youth.

Mashhood said that the successful holding of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit reflected the best policies of the govt, adding Pakistan's position had been strengthened at the global level and the trust of international financial institutions and big powers showed the best economic policies of the government.

The Chairman PMYP added that youth were misled in the recent past from the right path but "We are now preparing our youth to face the challenges of the modern world as dreamed by the founders of Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Muhammad Iqbal.



ISLAMABAD: a delegation led by Mr. Rod Smith, Group Managing Director, International Education for Cambridge University Press and Assessment visited the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training and met with Federal Minister Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui.

## NA body seeks 'clarity' of PWD projects' fund allocation, execution

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly's Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Special Initiatives on Wednesday deliberated on the Public Works Department (PWD) projects, seeking clarity on fund flow, disbursement and execution.

The committee meeting, chaired by Syed Abdul Qadir Gillani, voiced concerns over the information provided, stressing transparency and effectiveness of the projects.

The body members received a presentation on Emerson College, Multan, underlining the urgent need for a new academic block to address emerging trends in artificial intelligence (AI) and information technology (IT).

They discussed potential funding avenues to ensure the timely execution of this critical educational initiative.

On another agenda item, the members raised questions regarding illegal recruitments and encroachments in the capital city, which remained unresponsive due to absence of the Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) from the meeting.

## Delegation of IQRA University students visit operations division

ISLAMABAD (APP): The student volunteers of IQRA University visited the Operations division of Islamabad Police and met with SP Security/Operation Hakim Khan and SP Investigation Rukhsar Mehdi.

A police spokesperson told APP that the SP Security/Operations welcomed the delegation and briefed them about operational police work.

The student delegation visited the Operations division under the friends of police program. They were fully briefed about the procedures and advantages of Operations division.

## ICT public schools Cambridge, Education ministry agree to offer Cambridge qualifications

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training and International Education for Cambridge University Press and Assessment on Wednesday agreed to offer Cambridge qualifications in four selected federal government schools in Islamabad.

In that regard, a delegation led by Mr. Rod Smith, Group Managing Director, International Education for Cambridge University Press and Assessment visited the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training and met with Federal Minister Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui to sign an MoU.

Talking to the delegates, Dr. Khalid said that

## Bilawal strongly flays terrorist attack in Bannu

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Wednesday strongly condemned the terrorist attack on a security checkpoint in Bannu district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which claimed the lives of 12 security personnel.

He expressed heartfelt sorrow over the tragic loss and extended his condolences to the bereaved families. In a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, he paid tribute to the martyrs who laid down their lives while combating terrorists in the Mali Khel area of Bannu district.

"These brave soldiers are the pride of the nation, and their sacrifices will always be remembered," he said.

## WHO Regional Director for Europe hails excellent organization of COP29

ISLAMABAD (APP): Teymur Musayev, Azerbaijan's Minister of Health, met with Hans Henri Kluge, the WHO Regional Director for Europe, on the margins of the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Minister Musayev emphasized Azerbaijan's strong commitment to cooperation with esteemed health institutions, including the WHO, according to Azeriact news agency Azeriact.

Highlighting the significance of the Global Climate Conference in Baku, he also noted that Azerbaijan has officially joined the ATACH and will serve as a co-organizer of the Alliance from 2024 to 2026.

Minister Musayev expressed his confidence that bilateral cooperation would continue to grow.

Hans Henri Kluge praised the organization of COP29, stating, "Azerbaijan consistently organizes pivotal international events at the highest level, and COP29 is no exception."

## IGP Islamabad presided over a high-level meeting at the CPO

ISLAMABAD (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Raza, Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Islamabad Syed Ali Raza, DG Safe City Shakir Hussain Dawar, all AIGs, SSPs, and Zonal SPs participated in the meeting.

IGP Islamabad reviewed the overall law and order situation in the federal capital and issued orders to all officers to ensure the full security of public lives and property, government assets, important buildings and the entire city.

The IGP directed officers to enhance the checking process at checkpoints and make patrol duties more active. Surveillance from the Safe City Command and Control Center should be made more effective for the security of important locations and to address crime.

## Committee expresses satisfaction over PCSIR performance

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Standing Committee on Science and Technology in its fourth meeting held here Wednesday expressed satisfaction over the performance of Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR). The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Member National Assembly, Khawaja Sheraz Mehmood.

The meeting's agenda was to receive a briefing from the Chairman of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR) regarding its functions, responsibilities, and the targets set and achieved, particularly over the last three years.

During the meeting, the committee expressed satisfaction with the briefing provided by the PCSIR.

The Committee also emphasized the need for the benefits of all PCSIR projects and research to be accessible to the general public. The Chairman of PCSIR provided an overview of the organization, stating that PCSIR is the largest public sector research and development body in Pakistan, with a network of 17 laboratories and units, including 6 technical centers across the country.

## 2-day National PQI Summit-2024 starts

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives would hold a two-day National Productivity, Quality and Innovation (PQI) Summit-2024, starting here from Thursday. The summit titled "Driving Growth Through Excellence in Productivity, Quality, and Innovation" would be inaugurated by Minister Ahsan Iqbal, highlighting importance of productivity, quality.



ISLAMABAD: Leader of the Parliamentary Party of Pakistan Muslim League (N) in Senate and Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee in Foreign Affairs, Senator Irfan Siddiqui calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## IG Islamabad presided over a high-level meeting

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Raza chaired a high-level meeting at the Central Police Office to review the overall law and order situation in the federal capital.

He issued orders to ensure full security of public lives and property, government assets and important buildings.

A public relations officer told APP that Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police Islamabad Syed Ali Raza, DIG of Police Headquarters Mohammad Javed Tariq, DG Safe City Shakir Hussain Dawar, all AIGs, SSPs, and Zonal SPs participated in the meeting.

The IG Rizvi directed officers to enhance the checking process at checkpoints and make patrol duties more active. Surveillance from the Safe City Command and Control Center should be made more effective for the security of important locations and to address crime.

Search operations should be conducted across all areas to arrest suspicious elements, and countermeasures should be taken by carrying out final crackdowns on criminal hideouts.

IG further directed officers to promote a friendly atmosphere at the police stations and ensure that public complaints are resolved promptly. "Our first priority is to ensure the safety of lives and property of the people and solve their problems on a priority basis.

## IHC adjourns appeals regarding political discussion of prisoners

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday adjourned hearing till November 26, on appeals against termination of rule regarding ban on prisoners for political discussions.

The court asked the appellants to satisfy it on next hearing that how the decision of single member bench was not right.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Saman Razaft Intiaz heard the appeals of Punjab government and Chief Commissioner ICT against the verdict of single member bench. The court granted time to the lawyer of Sher Afzal Murawat to submit the power of attorney.

The advocate general, during the hearing, prayed the court to suspend the verdict of single member court which was rejected by the bench.

The chief justice remarked that the order for termination of any rule is extra-ordinary, adding that he had terminated only one law in ten years. He observed that the judge in chamber had written the reasons of the judgment and mentioned freedom of expression.



ISLAMABAD: Australian Deputy High Commissioner in Pakistan, Joanne Frederiksen admires paintings at the opening ceremony of the 'And Still I Rise' exhibition, exploring women's empowerment, presented by PNCA in collaboration with Nomad Gallery.



ISLAMABAD: Government employees hold placards during protest in favor of their demands at Pak-Secretariat in the Federal Capital.

## CDA to auction prime luxury hotel plots for overseas investors by Dec 17

ISLAMABAD (APP): Capital Development Authority (CDA) was informed on Wednesday that two luxury hotel plots have already been offered for international auction by 17th December, 2024 targeting overseas Pakistanis and companies. It was disclosed in a meeting chaired by CDA chairman which discussed best possible options for utilizing hotel plots in Islamabad. The meeting focused projects specifically designed for overseas Pakistanis, offering lucrative investment opportunities in Islamabad's thriving real estate sector. These projects aim to attract investments and foster economic growth while providing a platform for overseas Pakistanis to contribute to their homeland's development. During the meeting, Chairman CDA received a detailed briefing on integrated solid waste management for the capital city. It was highlighted that the study on solid waste management has been thoroughly reviewed, and bidding documents for outsourcing the services.