

Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Islamabad

Vol. XIV No. 272 Reg. mails-B / ID-445 Friday November 22, 2024, Jamaadi ul Awwal 19, 1446 A.H. Ph: 2158688, 2158997 Pages 4: Rs. 12

At least 40 killed in gun attack on passenger vans in Kurram district

SHO says 25 people injured; Kurram DC says two separate convoys were of members of the Shia community; President Zardari, KP CM condemn attack.

KURRAM (Agencies): At least 40 people were killed and several others injured when unidentified gunmen opened fire on passenger vehicles in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's (K-P) Kurram district on Thursday.

The convoy, which was en route from Parachinar to Peshawar, came under heavy fire in the Ochut area, a remote part of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province. According to police, the gunmen targeted the convoy from surrounding hills, hitting several vehicles with automatic gunfire.

Authorities reported that the attack left 40 dead, including a woman, while several of the wounded are in critical condition, raising

concerns that the death toll may increase.

Soon after the incident, medical teams quickly responded, transferring injured passengers to nearby hospitals.

The provincial government has deployed additional security forces to the region, while officials confirmed a perimeter has been established around Ochut as search operations continue for the attackers.

The motivations behind the ambush remain unclear, and no group has yet claimed responsibility.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, while condemning the incident at a press conference in Islamabad, confirmed that

38 people were martyred in the gun attack.

Following the incident, Naqvi contacted Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur to discuss the growing terrorist attacks in the province. Both agreed to enhance cooperation in the fight against terrorism.

Meanwhile President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday strongly condemned the incident of firing took place in Kurram district targeting the passengers vehicles.

The president, in a statement, expressed grief over the loss of precious lives in the incident and called it a coward and inhumane act.

President of Belarus to undertake official visit to Pakistan from Nov 25-27

ISLAMABAD (APP): At the invitation of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, President of the Republic of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko will undertake an official visit to Pakistan from November 25-27.

President Lukashenko will hold extensive talks with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and discuss areas of bilateral cooperation and engagement.

Several agreements and Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) will also be signed during the visit, according to a curtain raiser issued by the Foreign Office.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairing a review meeting of the Public Procurement and Good Governance.

PM for ensuring third party validation in all government procurements

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed the relevant authorities to ensure third party validation including quality insurance in all the government procurements.

Chairing a meeting held here to review good governance and public procurements, the prime minister also directed to bring reforms in Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) and purge the authority of any type of influence.

"Procurement of services and purchasing in all government institutions in a transparent way is the top priority of the government," the prime minister said adding that ensuring transparency in the government institutions' procurement would help building the foreign investors' confidence on Pakistan.

Mohsin Naqvi rules out talks with PTI founder

Govt to secure Red Zone during visit of Belarus' President; Interior ministry orders KP bureaucracy to ensure state resources not used; Section 144 in Rawalpindi till Nov 26

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has ruled out negotiations with the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), stating that dialogue cannot take place under threats.

Talking to the media after appearing in the Islamabad High Court on Thursday, Naqvi emphasized the government's focus on ensuring the safety of the city and upcoming state events, as a high-level Belarusian delegation, including their president, is set to visit Pakistan next week.

Naqvi revealed that stringent security measures, such as placing containers and potentially suspending mobile services, would be implemented to protect the visiting delegation and maintain order. "The safety of state guests is our top priority, followed by the security of Islamabad's residents. Protests during such crucial

times cannot be allowed," he asserted.

Addressing the PTI's recent protests, Naqvi criticized their timing, which he claimed often coincides with significant national events. He urged the public to evaluate the motives behind these actions.

"Protests are not prohibited, but they must be confined to their own districts and provinces. Marching on Islamabad will not be permitted."

Responding to questions about potential negotiations with PTI, Naqvi clarified that no talks were underway with the PTI founder.

"I support dialogue, but it cannot happen under threats or conditions that disrupt law and order," he added. He also dismissed the notion of PTI setting deadlines for negotiations, urging them to seek resolutions through legal avenues like the courts.

Murad urges federal govt to convene CCI meeting

KARACHI (APP): Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah on Thursday called on the federal government to convene a meeting of the Council of Common Interests (CCI).

According to statement issued by CM House spokesman, CM Sindh called on the federal Government to convene CCI meeting under Article 154 (3) of the Constitution.



ISLAMABAD: Workers busy in placed heavy shipping containers near Faizabad flyover along Islamabad Highway for road block ahead of upcoming PTI protest, in the Federal Capital.

IHC bars protests, urges interior minister to engage PTI for peaceful dialogue

Monitoring Desk ISLAMABAD: In light of recent legislative developments surrounding public protests, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued a directive prohibiting demonstrations, rallies, and sit-ins that violate the new law on public gatherings.

However, the court has instructed Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi to initiate peaceful negotiations with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to ensure that future protests are conducted within constitutional limits.

Chief Justice Aamer Farooq issued a five-page written order in response to PTI's petition challenging the restrictions on public protests on Thursday.

The IHC directed the Interior Secretary to form a

committee, either under the leadership of the Interior Minister or a suitable official, to facilitate dialogue with PTI's leadership.

The committee will also brief PTI leaders on the security sensitivities linked to the Belarusian President's upcoming visit, stressing the need for peaceful proceedings.

The Chief Commissioner of Islamabad was also directed to join the committee, as the court expressed confidence that this outreach would likely foster some progress.

The IHC order clarifies that PTI must submit a formal request to the Deputy Commissioner of Islamabad at least seven days in advance if it intends to hold a

protest. Approval will allow PTI to carry out the demonstration legally. The Interior Minister has been tasked with conveying this procedural requirement to PTI leadership.

The court's order further instructs the Interior Ministry to prioritise resolving the issue through dialogue. If talks fail to yield a breakthrough, the government and relevant authorities are urged to take steps to maintain peace and order in Islamabad.

The IHC has requested that the Ministry of Interior provide an update on the situation and the progress of negotiations by November 27. The hearing has been adjourned until then.

PTI founder's jail statement reflects growing anxiety, frustration: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Thursday said that the PTI founder's statement from jail, seeking release to delay protests, reflected his growing anxiety and frustration.

In a striking comment on the PTI founder's statement, Attaullah Tarar said that the statement, "If you release me from jail, I will postpone the protest," was an admission of the prisoner's frustration and panic.

Tarar stated that it has been proven that the call for chaos on November 24 was aimed at securing a 'deal.'

ECP strips Adil Bazai of NA membership over floor-crossing

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday officially stripped PML-N MNA Adil Bazai of his National Assembly membership for representing NA-262 Quetta-I due to floor-crossing.

The ECP issued its verdict on the disqualification references filed against Bazai and subsequently released a notification declaring the constituency vacant under Article 634(4) of the Constitution.

RAWALPINDI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan has reiterated that his party's planned protest in Islamabad on November 24 will proceed, asserting that no assurances have been given for his release.

No release, no reprieve; Imran Khan unyielding on Nov. 24 protest plans

In a statement from Adiala Jail, Khan said that an offer was made through party leaders Ali Amin Gandapur and Barrister Gohar to suspend the protest, but his demands for the release of detained party members were not met.

Imran emphasised that the government's decision not to free him,

despite Islamabad High Court (IHC) approving his bail, demonstrates a lack of sincerity in negotiations. He accused authorities of attempting to extend his incarceration and thwart the protest.

"We are left with no choice but to protest like a living nation," Imran remarked, adding that the November 24 rally will see participation from Pakistanis abroad who enjoy freedom in other countries. He asserted that negotiations would continue, though he expressed doubts about the government's seriousness.



KARACHI: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamsad Mirza visiting 12th International Defence Exhibition and Seminar-24 at Expo Center

CJCS visits IDEAS-24, holds wide-ranging talks with officials of different countries

RAWALPINDI (APP): General Sahir Shamsad Mirza, NI (M), Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) on Thursday visited the 12th International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS-24) and held wide-ranging talks on the sidelines.

The CJCS held separate meetings with numerous officials including Defence Ministers, Commanders of Armed Forces and other important officials from different countries, including Türkiye, Azerbaijan, South Africa, Argentina, Malaysia, UAE, Cambodia, Kingdom of Eswatini, Gambia, Brunei, Maldives and Malawi, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

During the aforementioned meetings, key aspects of the defense and security relationship were discussed. All parties reflected on various areas of bilateral security and cooperation, especially in defense production.

The dignitaries expressed a strong interest in deepening their engagement with Pakistan's defense sector.

The CJCS also gave a keynote speech at a seminar, titled "Pakistan's Defence Production and Potential: Challenges and Way Forward".

The Chairman JCSC emphasized that Pakistan's defence industry is the force behind equipping the battle-hardened Armed Forces of Pakistan.

He further said that through superior R&D and using innovative and cost-effective solutions, Pakistan's defence industries are not only fulfilling country's essential defence requirements but also exploring avenues of collaboration in the international defence market. He noted that the platform of IDEAS is an ideal opportunity for industrializing Pakistan's well-developed Defence Industrial Complex to the international community.

The Chairman JCSC also visited Pakistan Pavilion and lauded the efforts of Tri-Services in showcasing Pakistan's indigenous defence related equipment manufactured at par with global standards.



Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf being briefed at a stall during IDEAS 2024.

SCP summons IGP, Home Secretaries in missing children case

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan has expressed serious displeasure over the reports on the state of missing children and directed all provinces to submit a detailed report that how many children have been abducted and how many are being recovered.

The Court summoned Inspectors General of Police and Home Secretaries of all the four provinces for next hearing to be held on 28 this month.

The six member Constitutional Bench of the SCP, headed by Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan and comprising Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Jus-

tice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Musarrat Hilali and Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan was hearing a petition regarding missing children in Pakistan.

The petitioner informed the Court that the Committee for missing children constituted by the SCP has done nothing yet.

Justice Jamal Mandokhail, while referring to the abduction of a 10 years old kid Muhammad Mussawir in Quetta a week ago, expressed disappointment over the failure of the law enforcement agencies despite continued protests in the city.

CNS visits IDEAS 2024

Independent Report KARACHI: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, visited the ongoing International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS) 2024 at Expo Centre, Karachi.

During his visit, Admiral Naveed Ashraf interacted with foreign military officials, industry representatives, and exhibitors; engaging in discussions on advancements in naval technology, global security trends, and potential areas for future collaboration. He also commended the innovative solutions on display and highlighted the importance of international partnerships in bolstering regional security.

Admiral Naveed Ashraf's visit to IDEAS 2024 underscores Pakistan Navy's commitment to enhancing its capabilities and fostering cooperation with global partners.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Military option

Considering that Balochistan has been experiencing a steady wave of terrorist violence over the past few months... Using the platform of the Apex Committee, the civil and military leadership said on Tuesday that an operation would be launched to counter terrorism and separatist violence in the province...

Romancing the word

F.S. Aijazuddin

Could this space be better used than to pen a requiem to a fellow writer and columnist? Khaled Ahmed passed away last Sunday, in Lahore, just as the suffocating smog lifted, making life for those who have survived him livable.

Foreign Service, Khaled worked with Sohail Iftikhar (son of the Congress politician Mian Iftikharuddin). Sohail had established Nigarishat, with the aim of publishing Urdu translations of historical classics. Khaled's bilingual talents were evident in his first publication — a translation into Urdu of Niccolao Manucci's Storia Do Mogor, Vol. 1: Or Mogul India; 1653-1708, an account of Mughal history under Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb.

fore and after Mr Z.A. Bhutto and Gen Ziaul Haq had made it mandatory. He helped an upwardly mobile Pathan entrepreneur Rehmat Shah Afridi establish an English newspaper The Frontier Post, here in Lahore. Despite Khaled's editorial skills, the newspaper lost money by the bagful.

Resource dilemma

Umer Farooq

Pakistan has turned to two US law firms to fend off Tehran's penalty claim over the delayed gas pipeline project with Iran. Does this sound familiar? It should if we recall Reko Diq. Just recently, Pakistan settled a lawsuit with Barrick Gold over the Reko Diq mining project.

inaction. This legal manoeuvring underscores a decade of missed opportunities and geopolitical hesitations. As energy shortages persist, one wonders when Pakistan will move beyond excuses and pipelines on paper.

sources. For a country of our size, meeting energy demands requires solid, well-thought-out plans. Major decisions must account for global consequences. Poor management will leave us vulnerable to court battles. In a dollar-starved economy, we cannot afford to waste taxpayer money on lawsuits.

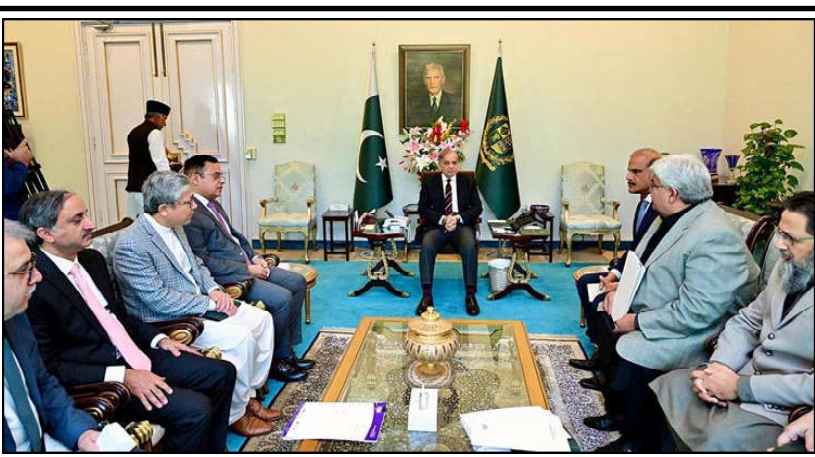
Commerce News

Ethiopian embassy, TDAP agree to join hands for Single Country Exhibition

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Embassy of Ethiopia and the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) on Thursday agreed to forge collaboration for holding the Single Country Exhibition in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia during the next year in a successful manner.

strategies to sensitize the traders of both the countries about the business and trade opportunities in each other countries' major economic sectors including agriculture and agro processing, pharmaceutical, surgical items, automotive, Information Technology, leather and leather products, construction material, steel and aluminum.

had shown promising results, addressing macro-economic imbalances, increasing productivity, creating ease of doing business and providing a conducive environment for attracting the foreign direct investment.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a meeting with FBR officials to appreciate their performance for Sales Tax fraud detection.

TAPI project crucial for meeting country's energy needs: Dr. Musadik

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr Musadik Malik, emphasized Pakistan's determination to complete the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project, calling it crucial for meeting the country's energy needs.

The ambassador invited Dr. Musadik Malik to visit Turkmenistan, which the Minister warmly appreciated. During the meeting, Ambassador Movlamov commended Pakistan's recent economic progress and highlighted an improvement in the country's financial situation.

PRA integrates e-IMS with PoS

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) is integrating its Electronic Invoice Monitoring System (e-IMS) with the Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) Points of Sale (PoS) system.

Pakistan wins "Best Pavilion" award at Global Sourcing Expo

ISLAMABAD (APP): In the visionary leadership of the Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, Pakistan won the "Best Pavilion" Award at Global Sourcing Expo.

Pakistan's outstanding representation on the international stage. The Global Sourcing Expo, the largest exhibition for textiles, leather, and home textile products in the Oceania region, featured exhibitors from major exporting nations, including China, India, Vietnam, Cambodia, and South Africa.



ISLAMABAD: The Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan, Alibek Bakayev, meets with Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain.

Sharjah-Pakistan Business Roundtable highlights shared vision for economic growth

SHARJAH (APP): The Sharjah FDI Office (Invest in Sharjah) and the Pakistan Business Council in Sharjah hosted the Sharjah-Pakistan Business Roundtable here on Thursday.

between Pakistan and the UAE. He emphasized that the bond between the two countries is built on shared values, traditions, and a collective commitment to progress. He further noted that the leadership of Pakistan and the UAE share mutual trust and confidence and have a strong desire to expand political, trade, and economic relations.

Canadian-Pakistanis briefed about Roshan Digital Account's benefits

OTTAWA (APP): The Pakistan High Commission, Ottawa, on Wednesday hosted a webinar at which the Canadian-Pakistanis community was apprised of the benefits and opportunities offered by the Roshan Digital Account (RDA), a flagship programme of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) in collaboration with Pakistani commercial banks.

Commissioner; Syed Ali Raza, Head of Pakistan Remittance Initiative (PRI) at the State Bank of Pakistan; Nofel Daud, Chief Digital Officer, Bank of Punjab; Salman Saeed, Head of Home Remittances Division; Ishiati Ahmed Akil, Consul General, Montreal; Khalil Ahmed Bajwa, Consul General, Toronto; Ghulam Hussain, Acting Consul General, Vancouver; and Altamash Janjua, Trade and Investment Counsellor, Canada. A press release of the High Commission said the webinar highlighted the integral role of the Canadian-Pakistani community comprising over half a million individuals contributing significantly to diverse sectors such as finance, technology, and economic development.

Pak total liquid foreign reserves near \$16 billion

KARACHI (APP): The total liquid foreign reserves of Pakistan stood at US\$ 15,967.7 million as of November 15, 2024 while the forex reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan increased to \$ 11,288 million.

PCJCCI stresses establishing 'Digital Silk Road'

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan-China Joint Chambers of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) has urged the government to take a lead in developing "Digital Silk Road" for having maximum benefits out of the economic corridor to be constructed by China in the Asia-Pacific region.

connectivity. Information has become a core resource and is crucial to international cooperation. "The next leap for regional connectivity is to create Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway," he said. Infrastructure development is progressing steadily for the China proposed Belt and Road Initiative, but parallel with a communication and infrastructure network connecting Asia, Europe, and Africa, there is dire need of breaking the barriers of information among the connecting nations, he added.

Public hearings continue across LESCO region

LAHORE (APP): On the special instructions of the Ministry of Power Division, a series of Open Kachehry (public/customers hearings) are being held in the LESCO region with the aim of solving the problems faced by the consumers in electricity bills and other matters immediately.

Maryam meets NDU delegation, briefs participants on Punjab development initiatives

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif Thursday met the participants in the 26th National Security Workshop of the National Defence University (NDU), who gave her the title of 'Super CM'. She gave the participants a two-hour briefing on the government performance. The head of the National Security Workshop delegation said that it was a blessing to come to Punjab, where sincerity and effort for the people is clearly visible. "By coming to Punjab, we have come from darkness to light," he added. The CM said, "The overall situation in Punjab

is better than other provinces. No recommendation in any sort of appointment has been made in Punjab. I do not pay heed to anyone on the issue of merit. Every sector is in a state of decline due to lack of accountability. The journey of development and prosperity gets affected due to political instability. Unfortunately the governments are not allowed to function properly." She added, "Every work that has a positive impact on the lives of 15 crore people is my priority. We want to control smog as soon as possible. Positive effects

of government's measures are coming to light. People lose their lives due to lack of health and treatment facilities. "We are all Pakistanis irrespective of our political affiliations. Our aim is to promote patriotism. Inflation is low and foreign exchange reserves are increasing in Pakistan. The stock market has broken all records; IT exports are increasing. With increasing exports, dependence on foreign aid decreases, we will be able to live our lives with pride and dignity." Maryam Nawaz said, "Controlling inflation is an uphill task, bringing it down from 38 per cent to 7 per cent is a mega achievement.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan in a group photo with a delegation of Parliamentary Leader of PPP Punjab Assembly, Syed Ali Haider Gillani, and MNA, Syed Ali Qasim Gillani in Governor House.

PPP is not in favor of bill to impose agricultural tax on farmers: Governor

Independent Report

LAHORE: Parliamentary Leader of Pakistan People's Party in Punjab Assembly, Syed Ali Haider Gillani, and Member of National Assembly, Syed Ali Qasim Gillani met with Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan in Governor House Lahore. During the meeting, various issues faced by the farmers were discussed. Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that the country's economy depends on agriculture. Farmers play an important role in the country's economy. He said that Pakistan People's Party has always raised its

voice in favor of farmers. Governor Punjab said that People's Party is not in favor of the bill to impose agricultural tax on farmers. He said that Pakistan People's Party walked out during the presentation of the recent bill of imposing agricultural tax on farmers in the Punjab Assembly. Governor Punjab said that the support price of wheat was announced at Rs 3900 by the government, but it was sold in the market at a much lower price. Governor Punjab said that fertilizers and seeds are very expensive. He said that the farmer is already perturbed over inflation, adding that 45% agricultural tax is injustice to the farmers.

FBR officer shot dead a citizen over 'monetary issue'

PESHAWAR (APP): A man was killed by an officer of FBR in front of Customs House here Thursday, said SP Cantt Aitzaz Arif.

He said the Additional Commissioner In-land Revenue FBR identified as Irfan Ullah, resident of Swat, presently residing in Shaheen Muslim Town here shot dead a citizen, Abdur Rehman which the police said was probably a result of some monetary dispute. However, in a prompt action by Town Police, the accused was arrested and a double barrel gun was recovered from him. Police said the accused seemed to be mentally disturbed.

Governor Kundi to convene APC to address security, governance issues in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday expressed grave concern over the deteriorating security situation in the province and announced to convene All-Parties Conference (APC) in early December to address security and governance issues in the province.

In a video message released here by the Governor Secretariat, he criticized the provincial government over its negligence in addressing the issues. The Governor recalled that he repeatedly took up the KP's issues with the Prime Minister and the President but unfortunately the provincial government had failed to take meaningful steps to ensure the safety of its citizens. "They are busy in organizing protests in Islamabad or seeking the release of their party's founder, while the province is left at the mercy of terrorists. The government has completely failed to protect the lives and property of the people," he said. He said the APC would bring together all political parties in the province to discuss solutions for security challenges, resource allocation, and KP's issues with the federal government.



PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary and President City University Sabur Sethi awarding degree to a graduate student at the 13th Convocation of City University of Science and Information Technology.

UNODC delegation calls on Minister Arora

LAHORE (APP): A delegation from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Pakistan, comprising Syed Arslan Malik and Fatima Raza, along with Executive Director of the Youth Development Foundation, Shahid Rehmat held an important meeting with Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora and Secretary of Human Rights and Minority Affairs Punjab Ali Bahadur Qazi. The meeting was held to discuss UNODC's ongoing projects in Punjab

and explore opportunities for collaboration with the provincial Minority department to further strengthen initiatives for the welfare and development of minority communities. The meeting primarily focused on UNODC's efforts in the region, especially those aimed at promoting minority rights, social inclusion, and sustainable development. The delegation emphasized the need for aligning the ongoing projects with the Punjab government's long-term strategies for supporting marginalized and minority communities.

Kundi condemns attack on passenger vehicles in Kurram

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, strongly condemned the attack on the passenger vehicles in Lower Kurram district on Thursday and expressed his deep sorrow over the loss of more than 30 precious lives. He prayed for the elevation of the deceased's ranks and offered his heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the grieving families, wishing them patience and strength.

Governor Kundi described the firing as an extremely heinous act and expressed grave concern over the incident, especially considering it occurred despite the presence of a convoy. He emphasized that the ruthless perpetrators, responsible for shedding the blood of innocent passengers, should receive no leniency.

Azma Bokhari says: PTI's 90pc members against Nov-24 protest

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has said that 90 per cent of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) members are opposed to the protest scheduled for November 24. In a statement, issued on Thursday, she said that by chanting the slogans of "Al-jihad Al-jihad", the PTI had proven itself the political wing of TTP (Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan). She said that

activists of the jihadist party had armed themselves with weapons, shells, slingshots, glass and rubber bullets, etc. She said Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa chief minister was being used as a pawn against the federation. The minister said Imran Khan's wife Bushra Bibi's authoritarian and demeaning attitude had caused a rift among her members in the assembly, adding that Aliya Khan and Sher Afzal Marwat.

Man killed, son injured in road accident

FAISALABAD (APP): A man was killed and his son suffered injuries in a road accident near Gatwala on Wednesday night.

According to police, Tahir Nadeem (51), along with his son Zeeshan (20), was going on motorcycle near Gatwala on Sheikhupura road when they collided with another motorbike coming from the opposite side. Meanwhile, a speeding car ran over Tahir from the rear side. As a result, Tahir Nadeem died on the spot.

KP CM condemns armed attack on passenger vehicles in Kurram

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, has strongly condemned the armed attack on passenger vehicles in the Uchaat area of Kurram district on Thursday. Expressing deep sorrow over the tragic loss of lives in this heinous incident, the chief minister has tasked a delegation comprising the provincial law minister, the local MNA, MPA, and the Chief Secretary to visit Kurram, assess the ground realities and submit a detailed report.

Furthermore, the chief minister has instructed the reactivation of a previously held tribal jirga to help stabilize the situation in the area. Ali Amin Gandapur emphasized that the provincial government, police and all relevant institutions are making concerted efforts to improve law and order in the region. As part of these measures, he directed the concerned authorities to expedite the establishment of a Provincial Highways Police to ensure the safety of all major routes across the province.



HYDERABAD: Members of All Pakistan Car Dealers Association are holding protest demonstration for demanding protection, in Hyderabad.

International News

ICC issues arrest warrants for Israel's PM Netanyahu, Gallant

Monitoring Desk
THE HAGUE: The International Criminal Court (ICC) on Thursday issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former defence Minister Yoav Gallant, as well as Hamas's military chief Mohammed Deif. The arrest warrants had been classified as "secret", to protect witnesses and to safeguard the conduct of the investigations, the court said. "However, the Chamber decided to release the information below since conduct similar to that addressed in the warrant of arrest appears to be ongoing," the tribunal said. "Moreover, the Chamber considers it to be in the interest of victims and their families that they are made aware of the warrants' existence." ICC chief prosecutor Karim Khan in May requested the court issue ar-

rest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant over alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza. Netanyahu sacked Gallant as defence minister on November 5. Khan also sought warrants against top Hamas leaders, including Deif, on suspicion of war crimes and crimes against humanity. The prosecutor dropped the application for former Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh on August 2 "because of the changed circumstances caused by Mr Haniyeh's death" in Tehran on July 31, the ICC earlier said in a statement. According to Israel, Deif was killed by a strike on July 13 in southern Gaza, though Hamas denies he is dead.



Chief adviser of Bangladesh's interim government Muhammad Yunus with former premier and Bangladesh Nationalist Party chairperson Khaleda Zia at a reception in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

UN nuclear chief welcomes Iran's 'concrete step' on uranium stockpile

Monitoring Desk
VIENNA: UN atomic watchdog chief Rafael Grossi on Wednesday welcomed Iran's "concrete step" on agreeing to cap its stockpile of highly enriched uranium after Tehran implemented preparatory steps to stop adding to its inventory. "I think this is a concrete step in the right direction—we have a fact which has been verified by us," Grossi told reporters in Vienna. "I attach im-

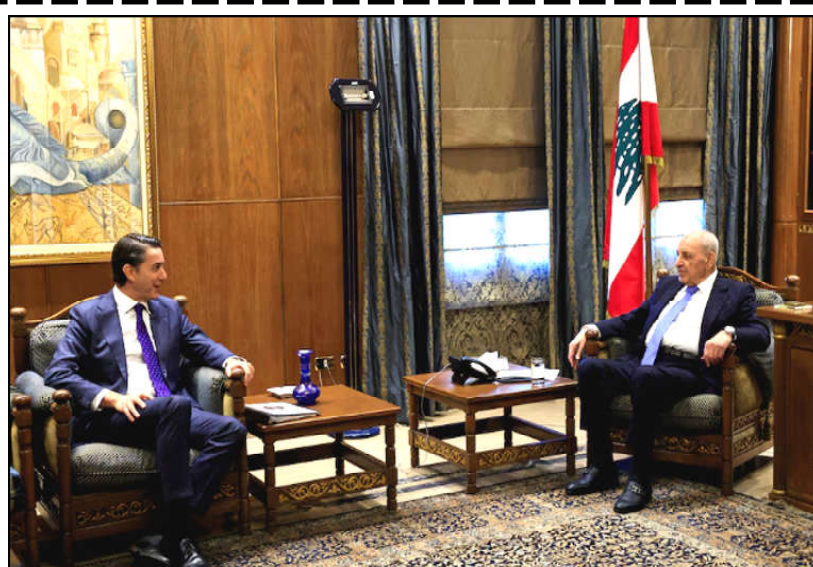
portance to the fact that for the first time... since the distancing of Iran from its past obligations, they are taking a different direction," he said. But he said he could "not exclude" that Iran's commitment might falter "as a result of further developments". The comments by Grossi came after Western powers submitted a resolution censuring Iran for its poor cooperation with the International Atomic Energy

Chinese defense minister declines meeting with Pentagon chief

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: China's defense minister declined a meeting with US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin during a meeting of defense leaders in Laos, a move the Pentagon chief said on Wednesday was unfortunate. Multilateral gatherings of national security officials in Asia have been used in the past for meetings between US and Chinese defense leaders, but China declined a meeting request by Austin during this week's Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-Plus defense ministers meeting. "It's unfortunate. It affects the region because the region really wants to see us, you know, two significant players in the region, two significant powers, talk to each other," Austin told reporters. "I don't think that it has any sort of implications for the future."

Bangladesh ex-PM Khaleda Zia makes first public appearance in 6 years

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: Bangladesh's ill-ness-stricken opposition leader Khaleda Zia made her first public appearance in six years on Thursday, months after her release from house arrest following the ouster of longtime foe Sheikh Hasina. The ferocious rivalry between the two former premiers — born in blood and cemented in prison — has defined politics in the



Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri meets with U.S. special envoy Amos Hochstein in Beirut, Lebanon.

Hezbollah says Israel 'cannot impose conditions' for truce

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Hezbollah's leader delivered a defiant speech on Wednesday (Nov 20) saying Israel cannot impose its conditions for a truce, as US envoy Amos Hochstein headed from Lebanon to Israel to try to end the war. Israel Foreign Minister Gideon Saar, in a near-simultaneous statement, said any ceasefire deal must ensure Israel has the "freedom to act" against Hezbollah. Hochstein announced in Lebanon that he would head to Israel on

Wednesday to try to seal a ceasefire agreement in the war in Lebanon, which escalated in late September after nearly a year of deadly exchanges of fire across Israel's northern border. Israel expanded the focus of its operations from Gaza to Lebanon, vowing to secure the north and allow tens of thousands of people displaced by the cross-border fire to return home. It has also intensified strikes on neighbouring Syria, a key conduit of weapons for Hezbollah from its backer Iran.

Russia, North Korea agree to boost charter flights after trade meeting

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea and Russia have signed a protocol on cooperation after meetings covering trade, the economy, science and technology in Pyongyang, North Korean state media KCNA said on Thursday. There were few details in the KCNA report, but Russia's TASS news agency said on Tuesday that the countries agreed to increase charter flights following the meeting, citing Russia's ministry of natural resources. Between January and September, the number of tourists travelling between Russia and North Korea amounted to over 5,000 people, with more than 70% travelling by air, it said. The increased charter flights are expected to take off not only from Russia's eastern region close to North Korea, but also from major Russian cities in other areas, TASS said, citing the ministry. KCNA said on Thursday that the Russian delegation led by natural resources minister Alexander Kozlov, which met North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on Monday, had now departed from Pyongyang. During the delegation's visit, zoo animals were transferred to North Korea as gifts from Russian President Vladimir Putin.

No hostages-for-prisoners swap deal with Israel unless Gaza war ends: Hamas

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Hamas' acting Gaza chief Khalil al-Hayya said in remarks broadcast on Wednesday that there would be no hostages-for-prisoners swap deal with Israel unless the war in the Palestinian enclave ended. "Without an end to the war, there can be no prisoner swap," Hayya said in a televised interview with the group's Al-Aqsa television channel, reiterating the group's position on how to bring the war to an end. "If the aggression is not ended, why would the resistance and in particular Hamas, return the prisoners (hostages)?" he said. "How would a sane or an insane person lose a strong card he owns while the war is continuing?"

Efforts to negotiate a truce for Gaza have stalled, and the US on Wednesday vetoed a UN Security Council resolution calling for an unconditional permanent ceasefire. Washington's UN ambassador said the US would only support a resolution that explicitly calls for the immediate release of the Israeli hostages as part of a ceasefire. Hayya, who led the group's negotiating team in talks with Qatari and Egyptian mediators, blamed the lack of progress on Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who in turn holds the Islamist group responsible for the stalled talks.

US again vetoes UNSC attempt for Gaza truce

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: The United States on Wednesday vetoed a UN Security Council resolution for a ceasefire in Gaza, drawing criticism of the Biden administration for once again blocking international action aimed at halting the 13-month conflict. The 15-member council voted on a resolution put forward by 10 non-permanent members that called for an "immediate, unconditional and permanent ceasefire" and separately demanded the release of Israeli prisoners. Only the US voted against, using its veto as a permanent member to block the resolution. Robert Wood, deputy US ambassador to the UN, said Washington had made clear it would only support a resolution that explicitly calls for the immediate release of prisoners as part of a ceasefire. Robert Wood said the US had sought compromise, but the text of

the proposed resolution would have sent a "dangerous message" to Hamas that "there's no need to come back to the negotiating table". Israel has killed nearly 44,000 people in Gaza. Members roundly criticised Washington for blocking the resolution put forward by the Security Council's 10 elected members: Algeria, Ecuador, Guyana, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, South Korea, Sierra Leone, Slovenia and Switzerland. "It is deeply regretted that due to the use of the veto, this council has once again failed to uphold its responsibility to maintain international peace and security," Malta's UN Ambassador Vanessa Frazier said after the vote failed, adding that the text of the resolution "was by no means a maximalist one". "It represented the bare minimum of what is needed to begin to address the desperate situation on the ground," she said.

Increased productivity, quality, innovation 'instant solution' to economic challenges: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday mentioned increased productivity, quality and innovation (PQI) as the 'instant solution' to the economic difficulties faced by the country in the absence of the required investment volume. "These [PQI] are the basic pillars on which the national competitiveness of any country depends," he said while addressing the inauguration session of the two-day National Productivity, Quality and Innovation (PQI) Summit-2024.

The summit, titled "Driving Growth Through Excellence in Productivity, Quality, and Innovation," has been organized by the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, with PQI identified as key drivers for achieving sustainable economic growth and enhancing Pakistan's global competitiveness.

Narrating success stories of developed countries that attained economic prosperity, the Planning minister said they first adopted key drivers of progress: productivity in the 1970s, quality in the 1980s and innovation in the 1990s, all triggered by the 'knowledge explosion'. "Competitiveness is not what you do with what you have inherited; competitiveness is all about what you are capable of creating," Ahsan Iqbal quoted Michael E. Porter, considered the Father of Competitive Strategy.

He regretted that Pakistan was ranked 110th in the National Competitiveness Index out of 140 countries, as reported by the World Economic Forum, adding, "Unfortunately, we stand nowhere."

The Planning minister stressed the need to improve capabilities and follow international trends and principles "if we want to be included in the leading

economies of the world." He urged the summit participants to explore ways for all sectors including public, private, industry, agriculture and services to move forward in line with the principles of enhanced PQI.

"The key to tackling the economic challenges is export-led economic growth, which can open the door to success for Pakistan by increasing exports from the current \$30 billion to \$100 billion," he remarked.

Ahsan Iqbal informed the audience that friendly countries, especially Gulf States including Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Qatar had an overall investment portfolio of \$29 billion in diverse fields in Pakistan.

He said Pakistan was turning around due to the difficult decisions taken by the current government of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), at the cost of its 'political capital.'



ISLAMABAD: The Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal inaugurated the National Productivity, Quality, and Innovation (PQI) Summit 2024. This two-day event revolves around the theme "Driving Growth Through Excellence in Productivity, Quality, and Innovation."

Afghan administration should stop its land from being used for terrorism: FO spokesperson

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistan while expressing concern over support being provided to terrorism in Afghanistan has said Afghan administration should stop its land from being used for terrorism. "Terrorism is grave threat for both of the countries. There should be immediate ceasefire in Gaza, this was said by

Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch in her weekly news briefing here Thursday.

She said Pakistan on several occasions have shared with Afghan authorities concrete evidence regarding the terror groups. We have grave concerns over safe havens of terror groups in Afghanistan, she added.

She hoped the Afghan authorities will consider terrorism as a serious threat not just to the region but to their own security and fulfill their obligations under various international agreements including Doha agreement.

The spokesperson regretted the result of last night's vote at the UN Security Council and its inability to reach consensus on the resolution calling for ceasefire in Gaza.

She reiterated Pakistan's call for an immediate, unconditional and permanent ceasefire, unhindered access to humanitarian assistance and full support to UN Relief and Works Agency and its mandated humanitarian activities.



ISLAMABAD: Chief guest Rana Mashood, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Program and Van Nguyen, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Pakistan in a group photo with participants during a market-driven vocational and technical skills training program concluded ceremony organized by Government of Japan, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Sarhad Rural Support Program.

Pakistan's future leaders shine at PM's University Olympiad 2024: Chairman

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a major boost to Pakistan's sports landscape, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan Thursday unveiled the Prime Minister's University Olympiad 2024 a national platform for university students to showcase their athletic prowess and foster unity.

In an exclusive interview, Khan promised an thrilling event, bringing together 3,000 athletes from universities nationwide to compete in various sports. Pakistan's exceptional young talent will take center stage, showcasing sportsmanship and skill, he added.

The Olympiad embodies the government's commitment to empowering youth through educa-

tion, skill development and entrepreneurship, he highlighted.

Khan said the government's focus on quality education and sports opportunities, both domestically and internationally.

He also praised initiatives like the Pakistan Education Endowment Fund, Punjab Information Technology Board and Pakistan Danish Authority, which provide educational opportunities and promote innovation.

Responding a question, he shared the remarkable strides PML-N led government has made in education, adding, the forefront of this progress is the Pakistan Education Endowment Fund, established to provide educational opportunities to children nationwide.

He mentioned that the Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) has been instrumental in promoting IT education, inspiring a new generation of innovators.

The Pakistan Danish Authority, born from the Punjab Danish Authority was another shining example of progress. Its network of Danish schools and centers of excellence offered free education to countless children, empowering them to shape their destinies.

Youth festivals have also uncovered talented individuals like Arshad Nadeem, he added.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Pakistan is prioritizing education. Initiatives like the Pakistan Education Endowment Fund demonstrate this dedication.

Impersonator gang busted; cash, uniform recovered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Police Sumbal police station team arrested two wanted members of the impersonator and snatcher gang involved in numerous snatching activities and recovered snatched cash and police uniform from their possession on Thursday.

A police spokesperson told APP that the Sumbal police team used technical and human resources and succeeded in apprehending two wanted members of the impersonator gang.

The accused were identified as Ishfaq and Aman. Police team also recovered the snatched cash and police uniform from their possession. Cases were registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway.

The police were alerted about these robbers by a citizen who was targeted by the two accused while they were wearing police uniforms. The criminals approached the victim in front of his house, where they robbed him of his purse and cash. The victim immediately called the emergency helpline "Pucar-15" and reported the incident. Following the citizen's prompt report, the police took swift action and launched a dedicated effort to apprehend the criminals. With relentless hard work, the police successfully arrested the two suspects involved in the crime.

CAS visits 12th edition of IDEAS-2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Air Chief Marshal Zaeher Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force on Thursday made a comprehensive visit to the 12th edition of the International Defence Exhibition IDEAS-2024 at Karachi Expo Centre.

This event showcases latest advancements in defence and aerospace technology, attracting both diverse array National and International audience, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release. The visit of Air

Chief underscores the importance of technological collaboration and innovation in enhancing national defence capabilities. During the visit, the Air Chief visited various stalls within the National Aerospace Science & Technology Park pavilion, which is prominently showcasing cutting-edge technologies in Space, Cyber, Artificial Intelligence, Electronic Warfare, Aerospace Designing, Sensors and Simulators domains, engaging in detailed discussions with national partners.



ISLAMABAD: Van Nguyen, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Pakistan viewing skills during a market-driven vocational and technical skills training program concluded ceremony organized by Government of Japan, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Sarhad Rural Support Program.

Health ministers urge parents to prioritize polio vaccination amid rising misinformation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministers on Thursday appealed the parents to safeguard their children against polio through vaccination, as misinformation about polio vaccines spreads rapidly. They emphasized the critical role of standardized polio awareness drives in remote areas and routine immunization in controlling the disease. Ministers from three provinces while talking to PTV news channel have joined forces to stress the importance of collective action in eradicating polio.

They urged parents to safeguard their children against this debilitating disease through vaccination, amidst the alarming spread of misinformation about polio vaccines.

Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman

Rafique announced that despite only one reported case of polio in the province, the situation remains under control thanks to the government's proactive measures. To further combat the disease, the government is taking all necessary steps to enhance Expanded Programme (EP) coverage and launch standardized awareness drives.

Punjab Minister also emphasized the importance of taking polio drops seriously and urged parents not to compromise on their children's health. Bakht Muhammad Kakar, the Provincial Minister of Health in Balochistan has emphasized the importance of improving sanitation and hygiene systems, addressing parental refusal and boosting routine immunization.



KARACHI: A view of Counter-terrorism exercise during ongoing International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS) 2024.

PM announces Rs5 mln award for FBR officer to identify massive sales tax fraud

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday announced a Rs5 million award and gave away a commendatory shield to an FBR officer Ijaz Hussain who identified a sales tax fraud worth trillions of rupees.

The prime minister, talking to the officer, who called on him at the PM House, appreciated his dutifulness and honesty.

The act of the FBR officer is the outcome of the prime minister's ongoing drive for FBR reforms and

Expressing satisfaction over the positive outcomes of FBR reforms, the prime minister called for tightening the noose around the tax-evaders and their facilitators and strictly punishing them.

He instructed the FBR to thoroughly investigate the identified tax fraud and take the perpetrators to the task by engaging an highly capable legal team.

In the briefing, it was told that the credentials of an 80 years old lady was used for the sales tax fraud which was pointed out by



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday announced a Rs5 million award and gave away a commendatory shield to an FBR officer Ijaz Hussain who identified a sales tax fraud worth trillions of rupees.

In the meeting, the prime minister said that there was no dearth of dutiful and competent officers but they needed to be acknowledged.

Ijaz Hussain on March 4, this year.

It was told that under the sales tax fraud, Rs370 million were also transferred initially which was being recovered as a main culprit has already been arrested.

Dr Zia for enhancing Pakistan's int'l reputation in health, education sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Executive Director of Higher Education Commission (HEC) Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum has emphasized the importance of sustained efforts to enhance Pakistan's international reputation in health and education sectors.

While acknowledging the challenges in ensuring quality at all levels, he has emphasized that higher education is crucial for socio-economic development.

He made these remarks during a ceremony organized here yesterday by Quality Enhancement

Cell of Khyber Medical University (KMU) to strengthen quality assurance mechanisms in its affiliated and constituent institutions.

The event aimed to expand KMU's quality enhancement measures, originally implemented in line with HEC Quality Assurance Agency guidelines, to its medical, dental, nursing, and allied health sciences institutions.

Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum urged stakeholders to view quality assurance as a shared responsibility rather than an obligation imposed by HEC.

Maintaining peace and tranquility in capital utmost priority; DIG

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Inspector General of Police DIG Syed Ali Raza has instructed the police officials to be highly alert and ready all the time to deal with any emerging law and order situation.

"Will take every possible necessary measure to protect the lives and property of citizens as well as private and commercial property and ready to thwart adventurism from

any elements" DIG Syed Ali Raza said while addressing the police officials on Thursday, a public relation officer told APP.

DIG Ali Raza said that all the officers are putting their best efforts to maintain the law-and-order situation in the capital. "Islamabad Police will never allow anyone to disturb the peaceful environment of the city and will take all necessary steps to protect the lives and property".



ISLAMABAD: Rector COMSATS University Islamabad, Prof. Dr. Sajid Qamar awarding degree to a graduate student during the 35th and 36th Convocation at Convention Center.

COMSATS holds 35th, 36th convocation ceremony

ISLAMABAD (APP): COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI) celebrated its 35th and 36th convocation at the Convention Centre on Thursday, honouring 2,629 graduates. According to the press release, this group included 76 PhDs, 775 MS degrees and 2,193 BS degrees. The ceremony featured two sessions with 1,261 graduates including 29 PhDs in the morning and 1,368 graduates including 47 PhDs in the evening.

Professor Dr. Sajid Qamar, Rector of CUI congratulated the graduates and their families, expressing appreciation for the faculty's dedication.

He emphasized the importance of knowledge and urged graduates to embody the teachings of the Holy Quran in their lives, promoting truthfulness and integrity. Incharge of Islamabad Campus, Professor Dr. Sohail Asghar, encouraged graduates to carry forward the legacy of

CUI with pride and to face future challenges with determination. The ceremony featured the presentation of degrees across various disciplines including Bioinformatics, Physics, Economics and Business Administration.

The Minister of Science and Technology, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui served as the Chief Guest for the morning session, awarding 34 Gold Medals, 33 Silver Medals and 24 Bronze Medals to high-achieving students. In the evening session, Ambassador Dr. Mohammad Nafees Zakaria addressed the graduates, highlighting the importance of focusing on industry, innovation and technology in higher education.

COMSATS University Islamabad established in 1998, is recognized for its contributions to research and education in Pakistan and has expanded to seven campuses nationwide.