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ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Army Staff, General Syed Asim Munir addressing Margalla Dialogue 2024.

High-level ministerial dialogue in Baku Culture-based solutions can aid climate change adaptation: Tarar

BAKU (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Friday made a passionate call for taking culture driven climate action to address the global climate crises.



While delivering a speech at a high-level ministerial dialogue on the Cultural Heritage and Climate Change in Baku, the minister began his speech with a heartfelt commendation to Azerbaijan, the UAE and Brazil for bringing all the nations together for the sec-

ond high-level dialogue on culture based climate action.

"Here in Baku, a city that breathes history and radiates cultural vibrancy, we find ourselves surrounded by the reminders of the strengths and resilience that heritage brings to

our lives," he said while describing the city as "a testament to what a culture can achieve. It preserves the past, shape the present and guides us towards more resilient future," he added.

The minister remarked, as I reflects upon the lega-

cies like Baku, I reminded of the cultural gems back home in Pakistan where the people of Indus civilization which originated along the banks and tributaries of the mighty river Indus which is also a home to one of the world UNESCO heritage sites Mohenjo Daro which dates back to 2500 BC.

He said, "today, as we convene to discuss about how we channel these values, our ingenuity, creativity and resilience to address one of the greatest challenges of our times, the global climate crises, the communities, across the world, are feeling the devastating impacts of climate change."

Highlighting Pakistan's meager contribution to the global carbon emission, he said that his country was among the top ten countries that was most vulnerable to the climate change which not only posed great threat to the lives and livelihoods but also culture and national heritage.

Pakistan, Turkiye to strengthen bilateral ties in diverse sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a significant diplomatic meeting, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday met with Turkish Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya and discussed matters of mutual interests, focusing on enhancing the historic relationship between the two nations.

The meeting, held during Minister Naqvi's visit to Turkey, covered a wide range of topics, including regional security, economic partnerships, and the repatriation of Pakistani prision-

ers currently held in Turkey.

The discussion revolved around strengthening Pakistan-Turkey relations, which both leaders described as deeply rooted in shared history, culture, and religion.

Minister Naqvi praised the enduring brotherhood between the two countries, noting that their collaboration is steadily evolving into a sustainable strategic partnership.

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ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with the Interior Minister of Turkiye Ali Yerlikaya.

Train service resumes from Quetta with departure of Jaffar Express for Peshawar

Independent Report
QUETTA: The train service was resumed after four days of suspension from Quetta Railway Station when Jaffar Express departed for Peshawar on Friday morning.

The senior officials of Pakistan Railways Quetta were present on occasion of the restoration of train service from the Quetta Railway Station.

The Jaffar Express de-

parted for Peshawar carrying over 250 passengers in seven coaches.

It may be mentioned here that the train service was suspended from Quetta for interior country due to the security reasons on November 11.

The Bolan Mail and Chaman Passenger trains have not been restored yet. According to the sources, Chaman Passenger is scheduled to depart for Chaman today.

CTD, intelligence agencies jointly foil terror plot, arrest 3 militant in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police, Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD), in collaboration with intelligence agencies, carried out a joint intelligence-based operation in the outskirts of Islamabad, arresting three operatives of a banned organization on Friday.

A police spokesperson told APP that the arrested terrorists were found in possession of explosives, hand grenades, and firearms with ammunition.

He added that the operation successfully foiled a potential terror plot that could have posed a significant threat to the security of the federal capital.

PM felicitates Sri Lankan President on his party's victory

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday extended his heartfelt felicitations to President of Sri Lanka Anura Kumara Disanayake on resounding victory of his party in the parliamentary elections.

"This is a testament to the confidence and trust that the people of Sri Lanka have reposed in his vision and leadership," the prime minister wrote on his X account.

He said Pakistan remained committed to further expanding its close and longstanding relations with Sri Lanka, which were based on mutual respect, shared values, and a long history of cooperation.

Governor summons session of BA on Nov 19

Independent Report
QUETTA: The session of Balochistan Assembly has been summoned at 03:00 PM on November 19, 2024.

According to an official notification issued here by the Provincial Assembly's secretariat on Friday, the Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has summoned the session.

As per the notification, the session of provincial assembly would remain continued till November 28, 2024.

A large number of worshippers, including families and community leaders, attended the prayer, demon-



QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Saleem Khosa, Muhammad Khan Lehri and Dr. Nawab Kibzai meeting with Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai.

Pakistan will not become part of any global conflict: COAS Gen Asim Munir

Fitna al-Khawarij has become a hub for global terror organisations and proxies; Indian brutalities in IIOJK continuation of Hindutva ideology, policy; Minorities unsafe in foreign countries due to India's extremist ideology; Absence of proper regulations for freedom of expression is leading to the deterioration of moral values in societies worldwide; Once again urges Afghan govt to prevent its territory from being used for terrorism and take strict action against perpetrators.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) on Friday reiterated that Pakistan would not become part of any global conflict rather it would continue to play its role to global peace and stability.

Addressing at a special ceremony of Margalla Dialogue 2024 organized by the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI), the COAS spoke on the topic 'Pakistan's Role in Peace

and Stability' and highlighted significant contributions in promoting regional harmony and international peace.

He said Pakistan is playing a pivotal role in promoting peace and stability both regionally and globally. A total of 235,000 Pakistani peacekeepers have participated in UN peacekeeping missions for maintenance of global peace and 181 Pakistanis have also sacrificed their lives in this regard, he added.

Regarding challenges faced by the world, Gen Asim Munir highlighted that in recent years, the world was confronted to several challenges including the rapid spread of misinformation and disinformation being one of the major challenges.

The influence of non-state actors has increased significantly due to global changes which was also a key challenge, he added.

The COAS said that the world was also wit-

nessing immense transformations in the fields of economy, military, and technology. "Terrorism by violent non-state actors and state-sponsored entities remains a significant global challenge," he said.

He went on to say that although technology has played a crucial role in disseminating information, but it has also crucial role in rapid spread of misinformation and disinformation.

Stressing the need for comprehensive laws and

regulations, Asim Munir said that without comprehensive laws and regulations, misinformation and hate speech would continue to destabilize political and social structures. "Absence of proper regulations for freedom of expression is leading to the deterioration of moral values in societies worldwide," he observed.

The COAS said inequality, intolerance, and division on religious, sectarian, and ethnic grounds also

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US says it stands by Pakistan in combating terrorism, slams Quetta train station bombing

WASHINGTON (APP): The United States stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Pakistan in its fight against terrorism, the State Department said Thursday, while condemning last week's deadly bombing on the railway station in Quetta.

"We strongly condemn the BLA (Balochistan Liberation Army) Majeed Brigade's November 9th bombing at a railway station and we extend our deepest condolences to the victims and their families," Principal Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel told the daily press briefing.

"We have a shared interest in combating these kinds of threats with Pakistan," he said, adding, "We have a shared commitment to regional security," he said in response to a question from a Pakistani correspondent. "The U.S. itself has designated the BLA as a specially designated global terrorist organization," Patel said.

"We did that back in 2019. And at the end of the day, we're going to continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Pakistan in its fight against terrorism and violent extremism."



His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Deputy King of the Kingdom of Bahrain offering Bahrain Medal - First Class, upon Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Forces, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu.

Bahrain awards 'Medal-First Class' to ACM Zaheer for enhanced military cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): On behalf of King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Deputy King of Kingdom of Bahrain, conferred Bahrain Medal - First Class upon Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force at Sakhir Air Base, Bahrain.

The medal was awarded to Air Chief in recognition of his distinguished efforts to enhance military cooperation and

defence collaboration between the two brotherly countries, said a press release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) here Friday.

The ceremony was witnessed by senior civil and military leadership of Kingdom of Bahrain.

His Royal Highness conveyed his heartfelt acknowledgement to Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu for the

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Salat-e-Istisqa offered across country to seek divine mercy for rain

ISLAMABAD (APP): Responding to an appeal by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the nation collectively turned to Allah in Salat al-Istisqa (prayers for rain) on Friday, with the central congregation held at the iconic Faisal Mosque in the Federal Capital.

A large number of worshippers, including families and community leaders, attended the prayer, demon-

strating a united front against the ongoing dry spell that has exacerbated environmental and health challenges, including smog.

The special prayers were offered immediately after the weekly 'Jumma', (Friday) prayers, with clerics urging people to seek forgiveness and turn towards righteous deeds as a means to invoke Allah's mercy.

Committed to regional, global peace



ISLAMABAD: Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail meeting with Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal. MNA Jamal Shah Kakar is also present.

Governor meets Ahsan Iqbal in Islamabad

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail met the Federal Minister for Planning and Development, Ahsan Iqbal in Islamabad on Friday morning.

The Member National Assembly from Quetta, Jamal Shah Kakar was also present on the occasion.

During the course of meeting, the Governor and Federal Minister discussed the matters about federal development projects in Balochistan.

Services of DC Harnai placed under suspension on inefficiency

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Deputy Commissioner Harnai, Muhammad Arif Kakar has been suspended on Friday with immediate effect.

According to an official notification issued here by the Services and General Administration Department, the services of Deputy Commissioner Harnai, Muhammad Arif Kakar have been placed under suspension on account of inefficiency and negligence from duty with immediate effect and until further orders.

Shania Khan, Abdul Shakoor appointed as Members BIC

Independent Report
QUETTA: Ms. Shania Khan and Abdul Shakoor have been appointed as the members of Balochistan Information Commission under the Right to Information Act 2021.

According to an official handout issued here on the other day, the appointment of both persons as the members of Information Commission has been made for the period of three years, in light of the decision of the provincial cabinet held on October 22, 2024.

According to the handout, both the persons have been refrained from holding the public office as well as affiliation with any political party and joining any profession during the appointment period.

Needless to mention here that the provincial cabinet had accorded approval in this regard.

CJP chairs meeting to view progress regarding jail reforms

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Justice of Pakistan/Chairman, National Judicial Automation Committee Justice Yahya Afridi on Friday chaired an online meeting to view the progress on the decisions taken regarding jail reforms in a meeting dated 2nd November held in Lahore.

Chief Justice of the Lahore High Court, Ms. Aalia Neelum, along with Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza, Administrative Judge/Monitoring Judge of Prisons in Punjab represented the LHC, Justice Shabbir Raza Rizvi, former Judge of the LHC, Secretaries of the Home and Prosecution Departments,

Punjab, Inspector Generals of Police and Prisons departments, Punjab, Ms. Aminah Qadir, Constitutional and Human Rights Lawyer, Ahad Khan Cheema, Senator and Ms. Khadija Shah participated in the meeting.

The Chief Justice of Pakistan nominated Ms. Aminah Qadir as coordinator to the sub-committee on Jail Reforms and directed that she along with Ahad Khan Cheema and Ms. Khadija Shah, as per TORs of the committee, to visit the jails in Punjab in order to prepare a comprehensive report in consultation with other stakeholders of the criminal justice system.

PM Shehbaz-led govt making all-out efforts to revive country's economy: Nawaz

LONDON (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif said on Friday that the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif-led government was making all-out efforts to boost the country's economy.

Speaking to media in London, the three-time

former premier said, "Why people will pour on to the streets for the PTI founder? The nation does not recognize his [PTI founder's] achievements as his performance is zero."

He recalled his ouster as the premier, saying, "I

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Commissioner, Brig. Shakeel start process of provision of free E-passports to locals of Chaman



Independent Report
QUETTA: The process of provision of free E-passports has been started to the local people of Chaman, as per the announcement made by the government.

The Commissioner Quetta Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat and Commander Chaman Scouts, Brigadier Shakeel Ahmed started the distribution of free E-passports among the local citizens of Chaman at the Deputy Commissioner Complex, Assembly Hall.

Earlier, Commissioner Quetta Division, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat inaugurated the newly constructed Deputy Commissioner Complex in Chaman on Friday.

Also present on the occasion were the district President of PML-N, Attaullah Khan Achakzai, former President of

Chaman of Commerce, Imran Khan Kakar, besides others.

Addressing the ceremony, Commissioner said that the government has set target of provision of 20,000 free E-passports to the people of Chaman. The government is depositing the fees of passports of the people by itself. At the moment, 5,000 passports have been prepared, which are being provided to the citizens free of cost, he added. He announced that the process of visa on passports would also be started soon.

He said that Rs. 900 millions have been distributed among the people which otherwise are facing financial hardships after closure of the border.

The amount has been distributed under the Benazir Income Support Programme.

Govt committed to safeguarding minorities rights: Chaudhry Salik

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Chaudhry Salik Hussain highlighted the significance of interfaith harmony at the central celebration of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's 555th birth anniversary on Friday.

He affirmed the government's commitment to protecting the rights of religious minorities, saying that all religions deserve respect. He praised the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) services in facilitating religious minorities and described hosting pilgrims as a national duty. He also lauded Guru Nanak's teachings of humanity and detailed ongoing efforts to renovate religious sites, including Gurdwara Bhai Karam Singh and Gurdwara Bhai Joga Singh, while reaffirming that Pakistan remains a safe country for minorities.

ETPB Chairman Ataur-Rehman extended warm greetings to the Sikh community and welcomed pilgrims from India and beyond. He highlighted various

development initiatives, such as constructing 100 rooms in Nankana Sahib and providing medical and lodging facilities for pilgrims. He also mentioned that Kartarpur had been prepared to host 5,000 pilgrims, although fewer visitors had arrived.

Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora, Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs and President of the Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, called on Sikhs worldwide to visit sacred sites in Pakistan. He acknowledged the government's efforts in preserving Sikh heritage, stating that Sikh history is incomplete without Pakistan.

Other dignitaries, including Sardar Harjit Singh Pappa of the Delhi Gurdwara Management Committee, praised the Pakistani government for its hospitality. Bhai Joga Singh encouraged Sikhs to visit Pakistan, noting the unparalleled religious freedom they experience here.

The event included speeches by members of the Provincial Assembly, Sikh leaders, and officials from ETPB. A 'Nagar Kirtan' procession was held from Gurdwara Janam Asthan to Gurdwara Kiara Sahib, with participants chanting slogans such as "Pakistan Zindabad" and "Sikh-Muslim Friendship Zindabad."

The celebrations featured strict security arrangements, a medical camp led by Dr. Tanveer, and a spectacular evening fireworks display. Sikh leaders also presented gifts to the federal minister and other participants. Pilgrims are scheduled to visit Sacha Sauda in Ferozabad as part of the commemorations.



BAKU: Chairman NADMA Lt. General Inam Haider Malik held a significant meeting with Mr. Kamal Kishore, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Representative of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) at COP 29

AJK President lays Rs 569m dev. projects in state-run Women University, Bagh

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has laid foundation stones of two different Rs 569 million construction projects at the state-run Women University in Bagh district.

The projects included Rs 315 million administrative block and Rs 254 million state of the art student hostel building at the main varsity's campus.

Addressing ceremony on this occasion, the AJK President said that primary objective in his life was to raise awareness about the Kashmir cause on global scale and to resolve the problems being confronted by the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir at local level.

He added that visiting Bagh had always been a pleasant experience for him particularly the Women's University, which, he said, was founded to provide higher education and training opportunities to the women of the liberated territory.

"I am happy to see that the objectives for which this institution was established are being achieved fully", the president said, adding that it was heartening to see that challenges faced by the university in terms of basic infrastructure, acquiring land and attracting highly qualified faculty had now been overcome.

He expressed the optimism that a state-of-the-art infrastructure would be available for the university very soon and the students after graduating from the institution would be able to serve the nation in a much better way.

"It is a matter of great satisfaction that the university has made its place in the global ranking in spite of numerous challenges in a very short period of time", he said.

The president said that sports activities played an important role in the mental development of the students.

"It is commendable that the Women's University is providing ample opportunities to the female students to participate in sports activities", the president said, adding that girls of the region possessed a great potential to win competitions at the national level.

The president, who is also the Chancellor of the Azad Kashmir Universities urged the students not forget the sufferings of their brothers and sisters who were reeling under India's brutal suppression in the Indian occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir.



QUETTA: Vice Chancellor University of Balochistan Prof. Dr. Zahoor Ahmed Bazzi and Program Manager Helping Hand for Relief and Development (HHRD) Raheel Ahmed signing a Memorandum of Understanding.

Parliamentarians call for expanding electric bus routes across city

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of Parliamentarians on Friday urged the need for expanding electric bus to new routes across the federal capital.

The delegation comprising Tariq Fazal Chudhary, Raja Khuram Shahzad Nawaz, and Anjum Aqeel, said during a meeting with chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa.

The chairman stated that the existing routes will be reviewed and the new routes would be added as per the need of residents. He emphasized the importance of regular meetings to address issues faced by the residents of Islamabad.

Randhawa stated that ownership of key initiatives and projects by the Parliamentarians is essential for the city's development and progress. The

Parliamentarians reaffirmed their commitment to support CDA for Islamabad's development, beautification, and overall betterment.

They expressed their full cooperation for CDA's initiatives and offered their valuable suggestions to resolve city-wide challenges effectively. During the meeting, progress on projects under the Rural Development Package was reviewed.

Chairman CDA assured that financial hurdles affecting progress would be resolved urgently. The DG Works CDA was designated as the focal point for expediting work on the ongoing projects.

The development of green belts along Islamabad Expressway was also discussed, including proposals for establishing play grounds through Corporate

Social Responsibility (CSR).

The DG Environment Environment was assigned to oversee issues related to upgradation of existing parks and new parks, green belts, and open spaces.

The Parliamentarians were briefed on the digital parking system recently launched in Islamabad and plans for its expansion to other commercial centers and markazs. Chairman CDA stated that the revenue generated from digital parking will be spent on the uplift and upgradation of the local area improvements.

The Parliamentarians expressed their full support for this initiative.

The Chairman updated the delegation on efforts to address sewage issues, including the creation of a dedicated body, Islamabad Water.

Bahrain awards...

Continued from page 1

participation of Pakistan Air Force contingent comprising JF-17 Block-III fighter jets alongside air and ground crew in the Bahrain International Airshow.

Chief of the Air Staff expressed his gratitude for the honour of receiving the Bahrain Medal - First Class.

On the sidelines of Bahrain International Airshow, Commander of Ninth Air Force (US Air Forces Central Command - AFCENT), Lieutenant General Derek France called on Air Chief Marshal Zaher Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force.

The Air Chief reiterated his resolve to further enhance the existing bilateral cooperation between the two strategic partners.

The Commander AFCENT appreciated Pakistan's efforts in promoting regional peace and vowed to enhance cooperation in the fields of joint training, mutual exercises and military to military collaboration.

In a separate meeting, Chief of the Air Staff also called on Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Commander-in-Chief of the Bahrain Defence Force.

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pression in Indian illegally occupied Jammu & Kashmir was a continuation of its 'Hindutva Ideology' and policies. Resolving the Kashmir issue in accordance with UN resolutions and as per the aspirations of the Kashmiri people was imperative, he said.

The COAS said that Pakistan has always demanded ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon and sent humanitarian aid to both the countries several times. Pakistan has always emphasized the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, he remarked.

General Asim Munir said Pakistan is a nation of 240 million people, with approximately 63 per cent of its population under the age of 30. "Pakistan is endowed with immense natural resources and has emerged as a major agricultural producer globally," he said.

He said Pakistan is also large reserves of rare minerals besides is an important player in global freetrading.

"Owing to its unique geographical location and sea ports, Pakistan holds significant importance for trade with Europe, Central Asia, and the Middle East," he said.

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Minister Naqvi raised the issue of three Pakistani prisoners detained in Turkey and urged swift action for their repatriation.

Minister Yerrlikaya assured his Pakistani counterpart of full cooperation and proposed sending a delegation of experts from Pakistan to Turkey to expedite the matter. "This issue will be reviewed with compassion and care," he added.

Minister Naqvi extended a formal invitation to Minister Yerrlikaya to visit Pakistan, which was graciously accepted.

"Pakistan is a brotherly country, and I look forward to visiting Islamabad soon," said the Turkish Interior Minister.

Both leaders condemned terrorism in all forms and expressed solidarity in combating the global menace.

Minister Naqvi specifically condemned the October 23 terrorist attack in Ankara, emphasizing that terrorism has no religion or borders. He called for comprehensive measures and a unified global strategy to eradicate this threat.

"Terrorism is a challenge for the entire world, and collective efforts are required to overcome it," he stated.

Minister Naqvi also attended the SAHA International Expo and expressed gratitude to his Turkish hosts for their exemplary arrangements and warm hospitality.

The Expo showcased Turkey's advancements in technology and defense, underscoring the potential for deeper collaboration between the two nations.

Ethiopia, Pakistan agree for cooperation in education, science & technology sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): During the meeting, the two sides further discussed a bilateral memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed in May 2023 between the two countries to enhance cooperation in the areas of science and technology.

Moreover, Dr. Jemal Beker stressed on establishing institutional linkages between the two countries under the MoU for joint research programmes in health, education and renewable sectors and exchange of the delegations of experts to elevate the already flourishing relations.

He said the government of Ethiopia led by Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed has been taking tangible steps to empower its people through innovation and technology transformation road-map that improve socio-economic revolution in fin-tech, and digital competitiveness. In this regard, the Ethiopian government wants to cooperate with Pakistan in these sectors.

On the other hand, the Education, Science and Technology Minister lauded the consistent economic growth of Ethiopia and highlighted the religious attachment of the people of Pakistan with Ethiopia.

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witnessed upward trend at global level.

He said our shared goals and key challenges were included combating climate change, fighting terrorism, and ensuring global health.

Reiterating Pakistan's unwavering resolve in the fight against terrorism, the COAS said terrorism remained a shared challenge for all humanity at the global level. Pakistan has established a comprehensive border management regime to secure our western borders, he added.

He said that the menace of 'Fitna e Khawarij' has become a haven for all terrorist organizations and proxies worldwide. "We expect the Afghan interim government to ensure that terrorism against Pakistan and to take strict measures in this regard," he said.

He said vision 'Azme-e-Istihkam' initiative is an essential part of the National Action Plan, aimed at eradicating menace of terrorism and extremism. "Due to India's extremist ideology, minorities, especially in the US, UK, and Canada, are not safe," he said.

He said India's op-

Continued from page 1

had been the country's prime minister thrice. I was informed in jail that my wife has passed away. We have suffered the worst persecution."

Nawaz said, "We have endured the most injustice." He berated the PTI, saying, "The PTI should show a project that it can be proud of."

He stated, "PM Shehbaz's government is fixing the economy, and the economic indicators are improving."

Speaking about the recently approved 26th constitutional amendment, Nawaz said, "The 26th constitutional amendment is welcoming. The parliament had already made such an amendment, which was later canceled by the judiciary."

Martyred Pakistan Army Major, Havaldar laid to rest with full military honours

RAWALPINDI (APP): Two brave personnel of armed forces including Major Muhammad Haseeb who embraced martyrdom during an operation against terrorists at Harmai District were laid to rest in their native towns with full military honours.

Major Muhammad Haseeb (age: 28 years) and Havaldar Noor Ahmed (age: 38 years) were laid to rest in Rawalpindi and Barkhan respectively with full military honours, said an Inter Service Public Relations news release here Friday.

A large gathering of military and civil officials, personnel of armed forces, relatives of the martyrs, and local community members attended the funeral prayers and burials of the martyrs.

Pakistan's security forces remain steadfast in their commitment to eradicating the scourge of terrorism, and the sacrifices of these brave soldiers only strengthen nation's resolve.

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TENDER NOTICE

TSE-242511590603 Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, it is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. The Executive Engineer Building CW PP&H Department District Duki invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2024 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage Rates

Tender Fee Rs. 1000/- and Bid Security 2%

S.No	Name of Work/s	E/Cost
1	Renovation and Maintenance of Assistant Commissioner Luni Accommodation	5,000,000

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required No Prior Experience is Required There is No Requirement of Turn Over Procedure of Procurement: Single Stage One Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. **Tender Documents:** The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the under-signed 1,000 PKR Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 03 December, 2024 during office hours on working days Last Date of bid submission: The Tenders must be submitted latest by 03 December, 2024 till 12:00 PM. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under-signed at 01:00 PM Address: Executive Engineer Building CW PP&H Department District Duki Phone no: 0824660630 Email: malakasadkhanatareen@gmail.com

Executive Engineer Building
CW PP&H Department District
Duki

PRQ No. 1958/15-11-2024

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TENDER NOTICE

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Tender Fee Rs. 1000/- and Bid Security 2% for each work

S.No	Name of Work/s	E/Cost
1	PROVIDING AND INSTALLING OF SOLAR PANELS (CHINESE), SOLAR STREET LIGHTS (WITHOUT POLE) AND 300 GALLONS FIBER WATER TANK AT DIFFERENT WARD'S OF MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE MASTUNG	7,500,000
2	REPAIR AND REHABILITATION OF SOLAR SYSTEM FOR OFFICE, REPAIR OF WORK FOR OFFICE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW KITCHEN FOR OFFICE AND PROVIDING AT MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE MASTUNG	3,071,625

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required The bidder must have completed 1 Assignment of similar nature of work Turnover of at least 2,150,137 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm Registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) C-6 and above (Upto 25million) In Relevant Category and Specialized Code is CE21, EE11(i) (Solar) & EE11(ii) (Solar Energy). Procedure of Procurement: Single Stage One Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of a Bank Guarantee, Deposit at a Call of 2% specified above in the name of the undersigned from a scheduled bank. **Tender Documents:** The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the undersigned 1,000 PKR Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 06 December, 2024 during office hours on working days Last Date of bid submission: The Tenders must be submitted latest by 06 December, 2024 till 11:00 AM. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on the same day at the office of the undersigned at 12:00 PM Address: Municipal Committee Office Phone no: 0843895597 Email: irfank87996@yahoo.com

CHIEF OFFICER
MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE
MASTUNG

AB No. 500/15-11-2024

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Sports build people-to-people ties, US says on India's no to send cricket XI to Pakistan

WASHINGTON (APP): A U.S. State Department Spokesperson side-stepped a question about India's refusal to send its team for the 2025 ICC Champions Trophy to be played in Pakistan, it emphasized that sports connects people and is a "great way" to promote people-to-people ties.

Replying to a question from a Pakistani correspondent about the Indian cricket board's decision not to allow its team to travel to Pakistan, Principal Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel said he would not comment on the issue since it relates to the relations between India and Pakistan, and "that is certainly for them to speak to, whether it be through sports or other things."

"You have seen this Secretary (of State Antony

Blinken), this department prioritize the role that sports diplomacy has in connecting people," he told the daily news briefing on Thursday.

"And at the end of the day, sports connects so many people, and it's a great way for those human-to-human and people-to-people ties that this administration has really prioritized," Patel added.

The ICC Champions Trophy will be held in Pakistan from February 19 to March 09. Due to strained political relations, India has not played cricket in Pakistan since the 2008 Asia Cup.

The last bilateral series between the archrivals was played in India from December 2012 to January 2013. Since then, their encounters have been limited to ICC tournaments and Asia Cups.

Martyred Pakistan Army Major, Havaldar laid to rest with full military honours

RAWALPINDI (APP): Two brave personnel of armed forces including Major Muhammad Haseeb who embraced martyrdom during an operation against terrorists at Harmai District were laid to rest in their native towns with full military honours.



Major Muhammad Haseeb (age: 28 years) and Havaldar Noor Ahmed (age: 38 years) were laid to rest in Rawalpindi and Barkhan respectively with full military honours, said an Inter Service Public Relations news release here Friday.

A large gathering of military and civil officials, personnel of armed forces, relatives of the martyrs, and local community members attended the funeral prayers and burials of the martyrs.

Pakistan's security forces remain steadfast in their commitment to eradicating the scourge of terrorism, and the sacrifices of these brave soldiers only strengthen nation's resolve.

Continued from page 1

Minister Naqvi specifically condemned the October 23 terrorist attack in Ankara, emphasizing that terrorism has no religion or borders. He called for comprehensive measures and a unified global strategy to eradicate this threat.

"Terrorism is a challenge for the entire world, and collective efforts are required to overcome it," he stated.

Minister Naqvi also attended the SAHA International Expo and expressed gratitude to his Turkish hosts for their exemplary arrangements and warm hospitality.

The Expo showcased Turkey's advancements in technology and defense, underscoring the potential for deeper collaboration between the two nations.

PM Shehbaz-led...

Continued from page 1

had been the country's prime minister thrice. I was informed in jail that my wife has passed away. We have suffered the worst persecution."

Nawaz said, "We have endured the most injustice." He berated the PTI, saying, "The PTI should show a project that it can be proud of."

He stated, "PM Shehbaz's government is fixing the economy, and the economic indicators are improving."

Speaking about the recently approved 26th constitutional amendment, Nawaz said, "The 26th constitutional amendment is welcoming. The parliament had already made such an amendment, which was later canceled by the judiciary."

Continued from page 1

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QUETTA: Activists of National Party are holding protest demonstration against killing of Akbar Baloch and demanding justice for him, at Quetta press club.

Ahsan suggests countrywide Mobile Learning Festival in collaboration with Pak Railways

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday suggested launching a Mobile Learning Festival in collaboration with Pakistan Railways, providing students from every district an opportunity to listen to the struggle stories of successful personalities and set their future goals.

"The Ministry of Education will be asked to take this initiative. It will help students explore their capabilities and set their future direction with complete determination," he said while addressing students at the inaugural ceremony of the Pakistan Learning Festival-2024, held at Islamabad College for Boys, G-6/3.

He remarked that Muslims of the Indian sub-continent managed to secure Pakistan after great sacrifices, and it was the responsibility of the younger generation to make it a proud nation by 2047, when both Pakistan and India would celebrate their 100th year of independence. "Pakistan's youth should celebrate this milestone with pride, without any excuses for lagging behind in development," he emphasized.

Citing an example, he said the country needed to give its full effort over the next 23 years, much like an athlete running a 1,200-meter race: maintaining a calculated pace for the first 1,000 meters, and then giving full energy during the final 200 meters to cross the finish line and clinch victory. He also mentioned Pakistan's development journey since its inception in 1947, when the newly-born state had nothing even common pins to bind papers in offices.

Today, however, he said Pakistan manufactured the JF-17 Thunder aircraft, became the world's first Islamic nuclear power and seventh overall, and has built a digital backbone with fiber optic cables running from Gilgit-Baltistan to Karachi. Additionally, the country has increased its number of universities from 2-3 to around 250, he added.

"Pakistan's situation is like a glass of water that is half-full and half-empty. We just need to fill it with hard work, greater unity, positive and constructive thinking, moving forward with a strong commitment to attain progress and prosperity among the community of nations," he said.

Ahsan Iqbal said setting aside negativity, disappointment, hatred and intolerance was essential for achieving set goals and realizing big dreams. "There should be no virus of hatred and bias in the mind to move forward in life and achieve success," he remarked. The minister also shared his personal success story, recounting how his education and practical experience helped him meet his goals through higher education, hard work, and commitment.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal addressing during Pakistan Learning Festival and book fair was held at ICB on 15, 16 and 17 November, 2024 by Federal Directorate of Education. IMCG F-10/2 participated actively in this festival and set up two beautiful stall of German Language and Astronomy.

Registrar Supreme Court of Pakistan, Muhammad Salim Khan on Friday visited various branches of the top court to assess working and identify opportunities for systematic improvement.

As part of the commitment and vision of Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Yahya Afridi to reform and improve the judicial system for the swift delivery of justice, he visited the Supreme Court building. The inspection covered the institution branch, information desk, police front desk, and parking area to assess current processes and identify opportunities for systematic improvement.

The primary objective of this initiative is to streamline operations by reducing the average response time of each process to foster an efficient, transparent, and accountable framework that better serves the public and meets the needs of litigants.

The visit focused on analysing business processes and identifying areas where the service delivery system can be overhauled to ensure a more inclusive and accessible environment.

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During his visit, he engaged directly with litigants who were present for their cases and visited the Bar Room to speak with lawyers.

World leaders hail Azerbaijan's excellent organization of COP29

ISLAMABAD (APP): Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev on the successful organization of the COP29 in Baku, calling him "Dear Brother".

Mostafa Madbouly, Prime Minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt, expressed his gratitude to Azerbaijan for the high-level organization of the COP29 and wished the country a successful conference. Georgia Meloni, Prime Minister of Italy, said she was delighted to see Azerbaijan as the President of COP29, which is considered as part of the climate initiative for peace, expressing her gratitude to Azerbaijan for the organization of COP29.

Irakli Kobakhidze, Prime Minister of Georgia, also expressed his deep appreciation to the President of Azerbaijan for the excellent organization of the COP29. Judith Suminwa Tuluka, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, thanked Azerbaijan and personally President Ilham Aliyev, for hosting in Baku such a momentous event for humanity. Maia Sandu, President of Moldova, expressed her deep gratitude to President Ilham Aliyev and the Government of Azerbaijan for hosting COP29 in Baku.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has extended heartfelt congratulations to the Sikh community on the occasion of Baba Guru Nanak Dev's birth anniversary on Friday. In his statement, he highlighted Baba Guru Nanak's enduring legacy, emphasizing his teachings of love for humanity, equality, and compassion, which continue to inspire millions worldwide. "Baba Guru Nanak promoted the values of humanity, equality, and empathy, which remain relevant to this day," stated Naqvi.

He further praised the Sikh spiritual leader as a symbol of religious tolerance and interfaith harmony, urging people to embody these principles to foster unity and peace.

The minister warmly welcomed Sikh pilgrims from across the globe who have travelled to Pakistan to participate in the celebrations. "We are delighted to host pilgrims from various countries for these sacred festivities," he remarked.

Naqvi also acknowledged the significance of Kartarpur Sahib, one of the holiest sites in Sikhism, located in Pakistan, as a beacon of interfaith harmony.

To facilitate the Sikh diaspora, the government has introduced an online free visa service for passport holders from the United Kingdom.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon on Friday chaired a high-level meeting with key officials to enforce stricter regulations on polluters and promote public awareness to tackle rising air pollution and smog.

The meeting was attended by the senior officials, including the SSP Traffic, Director Excise, and all Assistant Commissioners (ACs), to address the growing smog issue in the federal capital.

The meeting expressed resolve to take decisive steps against sources of air pollution. Vehicles emitting smoke would be barred from entering the Federal Capital, and strict action would be taken against factories contributing to poor air quality.

Senator Afnan slams PTI's 'politics of chaos'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senator of the Pakistan Muslim League-N Afnan Ullah Khan Friday lambasted the PTI's "politics of chaos," vehemently warning that the government will not tolerate any attempts to destabilize the nation and undermine its progress.

In an interview with a private news channel, "PML-N Senator Afnan Ullah Khan cautioned that protesting in the red zone will no longer be tolerated following CM KPK's dare-to-government statement.

Senator Afnan Ullah strongly condemned the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's incendiary remarks, warning they could provoke unrest.

ISLAMABAD (APP): President of All Pakistan Chinese Overseas Youth Federation (APCOYF) and Chairperson of Dolphin Communication Asma Ismail Butt Friday said the relations between Pakistan and China are of great importance at the international level.

She said this while participating in the overseas meeting at the Chinese Embassy Islamabad and also held an important meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Jiang Zaidong, said a press release.

Asma said the example of mutual unity between two countries is not where to be found, and stressed the need for continued diplomatic efforts to further strengthen cultural and bilateral relations.

On this occasion, Asma Ismail Butt and the Chinese Ambassador discussed important points related to the mutual values and strengthening of mutual relations between the two countries.

Ambassador Jiang Zaidong praised Asma Ismail Butt for organizing a successful media award show to pay tribute to the services of the distinguished journalist community at the national level from the platform of APCOYF.

Journalism plays vital role in democratic societies; Mashhood

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP), Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan on Friday said that journalism played a very important role in democratic societies and parliamentary reporters were doing excellent coverage of the Parliament. Talking to a delegation of the Parliamentary Reporters Association (PRA) here at his office, Mashhood reiterated the importance of youth in nation-building and assured the PRA representatives that the government, through the Youth Programme, remains committed to supporting the young people of Pakistan in every possible way.

He said that persons associated with the media industry could also avail the facility of modern training courses started by PMYP.

Mashhood said that journalists have an important responsibility regarding the supremacy of the Constitution and the stability of democracy. The PRA representatives on the occasion praised Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan for his tireless efforts in the realm of youth empowerment and development. The representatives acknowledged that Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan was widely regarded as one of the best choices.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi on Friday held a Khuli Katchery (open court) at the Central Police Office, where he listened to the concerns of citizens and police officers, issuing on-the-spot directives for their timely resolution.

During the khuli katchery, IG Rizvi listened to the issues of citizens and police officers and issued directives to senior police officers on the spot for timely resolution of their concerns, a public relation officer told.

IG Rizvi said that resolving citizens' issues on merit is our top priority. Negligence and carelessness in duties will not be tolerated. Citizens facing any issue related to the police can come to the Khuli Katchery. My office is always open for my citizens, IG Rizvi said.

IG further directed the officers to resolve the citizen grievances on merit within the stipulated time frame and report back to the Central Police Office. Rizvi directed all SDPOs and SHO's to adhere to the designated office hours and prioritize resolving citizens' issues.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Female art enthusiasts admire a painting at the opening ceremony exhibition PNCA & Nukta Art Studios present FUNKAR 01, during Talent Hunt Program Art Competitions at PNCA.

Wafaqi Mohtasib team holds Khuli Katchery in Kotli (AJ&K)

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: Under the directions of Wafaqi Mohtasib, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, the Director General, Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat Ashfaq Ahmad accompanied by Consultant Khalid Sial, held an open court (Khuli Katchery) at Kotli (AJ&K) and heard complaints against the federal entities there. They also issued instructions to the official concerned representing the federal government organizations and disposed of many complaints on the spot, said a press release issued here on Friday.

The Khuli Katchery was attended by a large number of complainants and they aired their grievances against the Electricity, Sui Gas, Passport Office, NADRA, BISP, Pakistan Post, Postal Life Insurance and National Savings. With a view to prompt redressal of complaints, the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat officials issued on the spot instructions to the officials representing the Federal Agencies, who assured their fullest cooperation in this regard. Speaking on the occasion, DG Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat said that the officials belonging to Federal entities must discharge their responsibilities in accordance with the rules and regulations and to desist from any kind of wrong doing. The Wafaqi Mohtasib officials also met the local media representatives after the Khuli Katchery and briefed them on Wafaqi Mohtasib's initiatives.

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Diplomatic Insight, a public diplomacy organisation based in Islamabad hosted the 6th Global Ambassadors Awards ceremony here, celebrating the exceptional contributions of ambassadors, heads of international organizations, and business leaders in strengthening Pakistan's bilateral and multilateral ties. These awards, established in 2014, recognize efforts in promoting diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations while fostering people-to-people connections across the globe.

These awards are unique in presenting on behalf of People of Pakistan to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of the ambassadors and diplomats working in Pakistan, said a press release issued on Friday. The ceremony was graced by Rana Ihsaan Afzal Khan, Coordinator to the Prime Minister of Pakistan and Head of the Prime Minister's Performance Delivery Unit (PMDU), as chief guest.

In his address, he highlighted Pakistan's growing role in global diplomacy and commended the awardees for their tireless efforts in fostering stronger relationships with their respective countries and organizations.

Chairperson of the Diplomatic Insight Group, Dr. Farhat Asif welcomed the distinguished guests and underscored the organization's commitment to promoting global collaboration and diplomacy.

She emphasized the importance of recognizing those who have gone above and beyond to bridge nations, particularly in challenging times. This year's honorees included Khazar Farhadov, Ambassador of Azerbaijan, Dr. Jemal Bekker Abdula, Ethiopia's first Ambassador to Pakistan, Tapas Adhikari, Ambassador of Nepal, Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma, Chargé d'Affaires of Indonesia, Nader K. Alturk.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Representative of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Dilsad Senol and others cutting the cake during celebrate the 41th Anniversary of the proclamation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus ceremony, at a local hotel, in the Federal Capital.

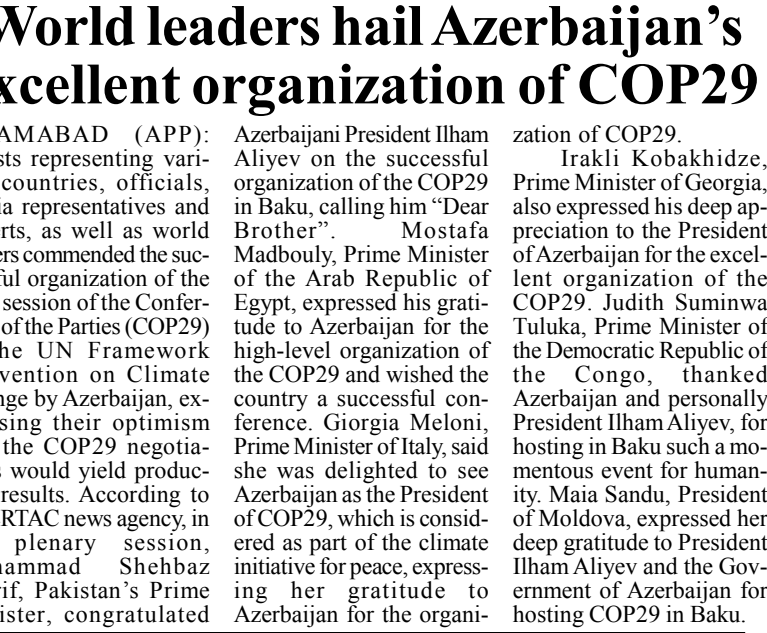
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The students visited Print Production Unit, Radio and Television Studios, Central Library, Students' facilitation center and call center of the University. Incharge Printing Press, Dr. Sarmad Iqbal briefed the students regarding the processes of designing, pasting, plating, and printing.

Dr. Sarmad Iqbal informed the students that this is the largest printing press among Asian universities, producing 2 million books each semester. He further elaborated that these machines were imported from Japan.



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Chairperson BISP, Senator Rubina Khalid, along with Secretary Amer Ali Ahmad, met with Karandaaz Pakistan's Chief Digital Officer, Sharjeel Murtaza, and Associate Director, Usman Kokab, at the BISP Headquarters Islamabad

Senator Rubina Khalid emphasizes transparency in funds transfer to women

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Friday emphasized the need to ensure transparency and dignity in transferring funds to deserving women.

She was speaking during a meeting with the Karandaaz Pakistan's Chief Digital Officer, Sharjeel Murtaza and Associate Director, Usman Kokab.

Secretary Amer Ali Ahmad was also present during the meeting. The meeting focused on key topics, including the implementation of the RAAST payment system to facilitate payments to BISP beneficiaries, biometric verification of women for enhanced security, and skill training programs aimed at providing employment opportunities to deserving families.

Speaking on the occasion, Rubina Khalid said that bilateral talks between the State Bank of Pakistan and the BISP are scheduled in the coming days to enhance transparency in the distribution of funds.

IG Rizvi holds khuli katchery to address public grievances

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Pak-China relations are of great importance at int'l level": Asma

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Ayaz greets Sikhs on Guru Nanak's birth anniversary

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has extended warm greetings to the Sikh community in Pakistan and around the globe on the auspicious occasion of Baba Guru Nanak's birth anniversary. In a statement, Ayaz Sadiq highlighted Baba Guru Nanak's teachings of love for humanity, peace, brotherhood, and equality. He lauded the Sikh spiritual leader's role in promoting religious tolerance, interfaith harmony, and peace, which continue to inspire generations.

The Speaker warmly welcomed Sikh pilgrims from across the world who have traveled to Pakistan.

6th Global Ambassadors Awards ceremony held

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Registrar SC inspects operation of various branches

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ICT admin launches campaign to combat smog

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Baba Guru Nanak birth anniversary Naqvi extends warm wishes to Sikh community

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Governor KP discusses various issues of KP with Chairman Wapda

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, held a special meeting with Chairman of Wapda, Lieutenant General (ret'd) Sajjad Ghani to discuss various issues of the province including Chashma Lift Canal project.

Ahmad Karim Kundi, Parliamentary leader of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, accompanied the Governor during the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the progress of the Chashma Lift Canal project and the Governor appreciated the role of Wapda officials in this regard.

He highlighted that under the 1991 Indus Water Accord, all four provinces were entitled to water shares, but while three provinces began utilizing their allotted water, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remained deprived of its rightful share.

Governor Kundi expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for allocating funds for the project in the federal budget.

He also thanked PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari for advocating for the province's case at the federal level.

Kundi emphasized that the completion of the Chashma Lift Canal would usher in a "green revolution" in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, contributing to the establishment of new industries, economic growth, job creation, and regional development.

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ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan is visiting at truck art stall in Punjab pavilion during Lok Mela at Lok Virsa, in the Federal Capital.

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ISLAMABAD (APP): Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev on the successful organization of the COP29 in Baku, calling him "Dear Brother".

Mostafa Madbouly, Prime Minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt, expressed his gratitude to Azerbaijan for the high-level organization of the COP29 and wished the country a successful conference. Georgia Meloni, Prime Minister of Italy, said she was delighted to see Azerbaijan as the President of COP29, which is considered as part of the climate initiative for peace, expressing her gratitude to Azerbaijan for the organization of COP29.

Irakli Kobakhidze, Prime Minister of Georgia, also expressed his deep appreciation to the President of Azerbaijan for the excellent organization of the COP29. Judith Suminwa Tuluka, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, thanked Azerbaijan and personally President Ilham Aliyev, for hosting in Baku such a momentous event for humanity. Maia Sandu, President of Moldova, expressed her deep gratitude to President Ilham Aliyev and the Government of Azerbaijan for hosting COP29 in Baku.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has extended heartfelt congratulations to the Sikh community on the occasion of Baba Guru Nanak Dev's birth anniversary on Friday. In his statement, he highlighted Baba Guru Nanak's enduring legacy, emphasizing his teachings of love for humanity, equality, and compassion, which continue to inspire millions worldwide. "Baba Guru Nanak promoted the values of humanity, equality, and empathy, which remain relevant to this day," stated Naqvi.

He further praised the Sikh spiritual leader as a symbol of religious tolerance and interfaith harmony, urging people to embody these principles to foster unity and peace.

The minister warmly welcomed Sikh pilgrims from across the globe who have travelled to Pakistan to participate in the celebrations. "We are delighted to host pilgrims from various countries for these sacred festivities," he remarked.

Naqvi also acknowledged the significance of Kartarpur Sahib, one of the holiest sites in Sikhism, located in Pakistan, as a beacon of interfaith harmony.

To facilitate the Sikh diaspora, the government has introduced an online free visa service for passport holders from the United Kingdom.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon on Friday chaired a high-level meeting with key officials to enforce stricter regulations on polluters and promote public awareness to tackle rising air pollution and smog.

The meeting was attended by the senior officials, including the SSP Traffic, Director Excise, and all Assistant Commissioners (ACs), to address the growing smog issue in the federal capital.

The meeting expressed resolve to take decisive steps against sources of air pollution. Vehicles emitting smoke would be barred from entering the Federal Capital, and strict action would be taken against factories contributing to poor air quality.

Baba Guru Nanak birth anniversary Naqvi extends warm wishes to Sikh community

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Last call

It does not seem prudent for a party of PTI's heft to have issued a 'final call' for a 'final' protest. Politics is, by its very nature, never 'final' — it requires persistence and immense patience to bear fruit.

Yet the PTI, directed by its incarcerated founder, is now ready to risk everything on a single show of force. Of course, the party is well within its rights to protest democratically and to make demands from the government on issues that it feels strongly about. It is also within its rights to hold such a protest anywhere it wishes to in Pakistan — a right that the government would do well to respect.

However, it should hardly be turning it into a 'do or die' occasion. This could create unrealistic expectations and foster unnecessary angst in the minds of the PTI's supporters, which may push them to engage in needless confrontations with the state. It may also motivate the state to clamp down even more forcefully on the protest, as it will consider the 'final' protest as a 'final' opportunity to eliminate the political threat posed to the current regime by the PTI. No side will emerge as a winner from such a situation.

The sense of despondency that has settled over the nation needs to be eliminated, but this will not happen by a party making its final stand. A sustainable settlement can only be achieved by thoughtful deliberation and reflection on what our national priorities must be at this critical juncture in our history. Both sides have already taken matters too far while refusing to sit and talk to each other.

The PTI has remained unyielding in its vitriol and averse to engaging with its rivals to negotiate a way forward. Its founder's latest message, issued from jail, once again reiterates that the party will only negotiate with the 'handlers' of the current regime. On the other hand, the ruling coalition, led by the PML-N and supported by the PPP, has dealt a blow to Pakistani democracy and judicial independence. This has created a state of anomie and harmed chances of a rules-based negotiation.

It is, therefore, understandable why the PTI feels tempted to make one 'final attempt' to upend the current order. It may not be the right choice. Its founder chose long ago to take the difficult path forward. Such a choice necessarily demands more patience and fortitude than his party has lately displayed.

Indeed, it has seemed quite rudderless and impatient for instant gratification of its demands. Its mercurial support base does not really help: without discipline from within, the PTI cannot expect to achieve much. Perhaps it should focus on setting its own house in order first.

Zafar Mirza

If health is a human right, then the inability to pay for essential healthcare should not be a barrier. This is why financial protection for healthcare is an integral component of universal health coverage (UHC).

In poor countries with weak economies, inadequate healthcare systems, and lack of fiscal prioritisation of healthcare, the vast majority of people are not covered in terms of healthcare service coverage and financial protection. How, then, do people access healthcare? They spend out of their incomes, savings and loans; hence the term, 'out-of-pocket health expenditures' (OOPHE).

When already poor or almost poor people have to resort to OOPHE, it badly affects their household incomes and they have to make tough choices between other essentials — maybe food or children's education.

When a household ends up spending more than 10 per cent and 25pc (both thresholds are used) of its total consumption or income, the World Health Organisation (WHO) defines it as 'catastrophic

OOPHE', which hurts the poor most, especially the women, children and elderly among them. Catastrophic health expenditures push people into poverty and deepen the poverty of the already poor.

In March 2024, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics published the National Health Accounts 2021-22. The report presents the findings of the ninth round of National Health Accounts in Pakistan. NHA was initiated in Pakistan with the support of the WHO in 2005-06 and before the recent report, eight rounds had been completed for eight fiscal years.

NHA is a standard methodology for tracking national health expenditures, their sources and the way they are used, in order to develop policies to enhance the performance of national health systems. The standard methodology was jointly developed by WHO and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Together, they published A System of Health Accounts in 2011 and they maintain a database of global health expenditures and continue to produce global reports

and provide trainings to their national counterparts to undertake NHAs.

As part of the latest Pakistan NHA report for 2021-22, a special OOPHE survey was also undertaken. The survey covered 24,809 households spread over almost the whole of urban and rural Pakistan.

According to the survey, per capita annual OOPHE expenditure in FY2021-22 was Rs4,334. People spent a total of over Rs983 billion out of their pocket on healthcare. The provincial breakdown shows that out of the total OOPHE, Punjab's share was the highest (53pc), followed by Sindh (23pc), KP (17pc) and Balochistan (6pc).

A closer look at OOPHE survey data reveals that in Pakistan, around 73pc of the total OOPHE expenditures are incurred on outpatient services (primary healthcare), while only around 20pc of total OOPHE spending is incurred on inpatient care. The percentage share of outpatients is highest in Punjab (77.46pc) followed by KP (72.01pc), and Balochistan (69.06pc), while the lowest share is

that of Sindh (60.01pc). Also, 58.89pc of OOPHE takes place in urban centres and the rest in rural areas, which basically means that a sizeable proportion of people from the rural areas also travel to the urban areas and spend money to buy healthcare.

The people of Pakistan spend 82.79pc of OOPHE on buying healthcare from the private health sector, and the rest, 17.21pc, is spent in the public sector.

The breakdown of these expenditures shows that at the national level, more than half of OOPHE, that is, 50.63pc, is spent on buying medicines, followed by doctors' fee (12.93pc), and lab tests (8.22pc), while 7.7pc of it is incurred on transportation costs.

The top diseases to which OOPHE caters include heart disease (9.73pc), flu/fever (9.55pc), muscular pain — knee, backbone, etc — (7.21pc), and diabetes (7.09pc). What does all this data on OOPHE tell us and how should it feed into future health policies? Three major points can be discerned. One, OOPHE is quite high in Pakistan and

this is especially concerning with reference to the poor population, which numbers more than 110 million. This segment of the population needs financial protection for healthcare.

Second, since 73pc of OOPHE is being incurred by ambulatory patients seeking primary healthcare, it is critical that the poor segment of the population is provided financial protection for primary healthcare. Though financial protection is available for hospitalisation through the Sehat Sahulat Programme, there is a major need for financial protection at the PHC level.

Third, more than 80pc of OOPHE is made in the private sector. Combining it with the above two facts, it is clear that the people's maximum out-of-pocket expenditures on health and their need for protection from financial hardship, especially for the poor and most vulnerable, is on PHC and in the private sector.

Currently, PHC in the private sector is the most uncovered area in terms of financial protection and hence there is slow advancement of UHC.

It is also the least regu-

lated area in terms of quality of care and cost of care. Medicines, doctors' fee and diagnostics are the main areas where people are spending money out of their pocket when they seek healthcare. For the poor, these items are unaffordable.

Who provides PHC in the private health sector: individual clinics of general practitioners or family physicians and outpatient departments of a variety of private sector hospitals. If financial protection is not extended by expanding the Sehat Sahulat programme in these areas, then a vast majority of the poor and almost poor population will remain vulnerable to catastrophic and impoverishing OOPHE.

Policy makers also have to consider that the burden of disease in Pakistan has shifted to non-communicable diseases, which are chronic in nature and hence require lifelong healthcare. As this survey also shows, the top categories of diseases and conditions where OOPHEs are being incurred are non-communicable, and these are ongoing expenditures. This further necessitates financial protection. -- Courtesy Dawn

OOP health expenditures**Climate ambition gap****Aisha Khan**

As the world inches closer to catastrophe, all eyes are on the Conference of Parties (COP) taking place in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The opening speeches from the COP28 UAE presidency, COP29 Azer presidency, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) executive secretary all made the links between climate action and finance needs.

Climate finance was at the heart of the agenda, with parties eager to discuss means of implementation to support delivery of the Global Stock-take outcome. Political engagement to break the gridlock on the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) will be crucial for countries to enhance ambition on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) 3.0 to meet mitigation and adaptation targets.

The NDC announcements from the UAE and Brazil are welcome signals from two of the COP troika on their commitments to multilateral climate action. However, the

troika countries collectively plan to expand oil and gas production by 32 per cent by 2035 (Brazil 36pc, UAE 34pc, and Azerbaijan 14pc).

With a packed agenda and only two weeks to move the needle on critical and contentious issues, it is important to reflect on facts and figures to develop a better understanding of the state of play and what's at stake.

The report on Doubling Adaptation Finance, released by the developed countries, states that the developed countries provided and mobilised a total of \$32.4 billion in adaptation finance in 2022, including a total of \$28.9bn in international public finance, an increase of nearly 23pc over 2021 levels and 54pc over 2019 levels. According to the report, significant progress has been made towards doubling adaptation finance from 2019 levels in the first three years of available data, and efforts are on track to reach \$40bn by 2025.

The International Energy Agency acknowledges the momentum on

decarbonisation, with record rollout of renewable energy and a scaling-up of electric vehicles, but expresses concern that the progress is not enough to keep the 1.5 degrees Celsius threshold alive. The IEA finds that governments are still responsible for around \$1 trillion of energy sector investment today and will need to increase net-zero investments by about 40pc by 2035.

The World Meteorological Organisation report outlines that CO2 concentrations have increased 11.4pc in just 20 years, with the long lifetime of CO2 in the atmosphere locking in future temperature increase.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development reports that in 2022, developed countries provided and mobilised a total of \$115.9bn in climate finance for developing countries. This occurred with a delay of two years from the original 2020 target, but public finance accounted for close to 80pc of the total in 2022, and increased from \$38bn in 2013 to \$91.6bn in 2022. Mitigation continued to

account for 60pc of the total and public climate finance grew by 52pc following several years of stagnation.

The Biennial Assessment of Climate Finance Flows prepared by the UNFCCC Standing Committee on Finance states that global climate finance flows in 2021-2022 increased by 63pc compared to those in 2019-2020, reaching an annual average of \$1.3tr, and tracked adaptation finance increased by 28pc to an annual average of \$63bn in 2021-2022. The report acknowledges that more than half of the global climate finance was provided in the form of debt instruments, while grant finance more than doubled in absolute terms but still accounted for only 6pc of the total flow.

The UN Trade and Development report on the NCQG outlines the climate finance needed from the developed countries to developing countries to meet the Paris Agreement goals. It concludes that the developing countries require \$1.1tr in climate finance from 2025, rising to around \$1.8tr by 2030.

Based on these numbers, developed countries should anticipate a funding equivalent of three quarters of the investments needed in developing countries for climate mitigation and adaptation, as well as supporting response to climate-induced loss and damage.

Accordingly, the NCQG contribution target for developed countries should be around \$0.89tr in 2025, reaching up to \$1.46tr by the fifth year of implementation. This would imply a target for around 1.4pc of developed countries' GDP per year from 2025 until 2030, and then reviewed to make it equivalent to around 2pc of developing countries' GDP.

And finally, the United Nations Environment Programme's Emissions Gap Report 2024 raises alarm with its findings that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions grew by 1.3pc year-on-year to 57.1 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2023. The mitigation pledges for 2030-2035 are not on track and need to be 26 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide lower for a warming limit of 1.5°C.

Clearly, the ambition gap is widening, the need gap growing and the window of opportunity shrinking. GHG emissions are dangerously high and cash flows dismally small and slow. It is unlikely that COP29 will succeed in issuing a declaration that satisfies everyone. However, the goal of 1.5 still remains within reach but delay in action is not an option.

For Pakistan, the current temperature trends mean an increase in climate-induced hazards, more loss and damage, and a higher risk of sinking deeper into a debt and poverty trap.

It is time to reconcile with reality and accept the fact that total reliance on external support for success is not a gamble that the country can afford. Pakistan needs to reset its priorities and align them with the national security policy, making economics and governance reforms its top action agenda. Now is perhaps the last opportunity for making long-term strategic choices to prepare the country for a future with a new socioeconomic and political climate.

Bonding values**Zubeida Mustafa**

Time flies, and we fail to realise that someone who had departed has been gone for over a year. Then an event shakes us out of our reverie to remind us of our loss. That is how it felt when Dr Kamleshwar Lohana called to inform me that he was organising a memorial lecture in honour of his father, Vali Ram Vallabh (1941-2023), who enriched our culture and society with his translations.

He perceived his contribution as the bonds he had created between communities. For him, love was the most fundamental essence of being. Unsurprisingly, he chose 'Vallabh', meaning 'lover', as his pen name. In fact, he was a writer and poet of merit.

The lecture was held under the aegis of the newly formed Vali Ram Vallabh Literary Society, with City Press founder Ajmal Kamal presiding over the event and HRCP's secretary general Harris Khalique being the keynote speaker. The two gentlemen are themselves eminent literateurs, and did justice to the great scholar translator and, more than that, the superb embodiment of the humanism that Vali Ram Sahib was.

The lecture was basically on the genre of translation. Multiple dimensions of the subject came under discussion. The translation of literary works enables people speaking different languages to understand each other's culture and fosters peace between them. I feel Pakistan has really not benefited from its Vali Rams because we do not have a reading culture, with only a minuscule minority of our 241m population reading books for pleasure. Of course, the high rate of illiteracy con-

tributes to this degrading feature of life.

The lecture and discussion that followed reminded me of what Vali Ram Sahib had once told me: "The higher the moral and spiritual values of a society, the more it cherishes books. When creative literature is at its peak, translation also flourishes." Here I would like to add that all literary activity is not a solitary act, as many believe. Even reading — the ultimate culmination of literary creation — involves collective work. To initiate reading, one needs motivation. That comes from another reader — maybe a sibling, friend, teacher, parent or a book group. The post-reading exchange of views on a book is the most stimulating outcome of the reading exercise. Our schools do not 'waste' their space and resources on libraries.

Can we then expect the reading culture to thrive? Similarly, writing is also an activity to which many contribute by reading some chapters or discussing a book with the author at the pre-publication stage. The lengthy acknowledgments in books vindicate my point that writing is not a solitary activity either. Of course, the final responsibility is that of the author, as they alone decide what they would like to write when brainstorming opens the floodgates of ideas. The readers' feedback is always of utmost importance for the author.

For Vali Ram Sahib, such literary activities, which he enjoyed, were a part of the process we call translation. This ultimately led to the bonding of people. In his interview with me, he dwelt considerably on the preliminary, such as the teachers who taught him in early childhood and helped him discover his talent. There was Rai Chand Rathore,

the headmaster of his school in Chelhar (Thar-parkar), who inspired his young student by giving him a copy of his own book titled Tarikh-i-Registan.

It would appear that learning and enlightenment became his passion and drove him on. Three Master's degrees in Urdu, sociology and mass communications, and an LLB, along with his love for languages (Dhatki, Sin-dhi, Urdu, Sanskrit, Punjabi, Persian and English), paved the way for the bonding process that Vali Ram Sahib la-unched. It was singularly his own effort.

Even selecting the book he would translate was a part of this process. He would not compromise on his values. Hence he never translated a book as a professional assignment that had to be done.

The books he translated were always his own choice. It had to be a book with values that he shared. What were these values? Egalitarianism, progressivism, feminism, respect for people's dignity, peace and love. It was not simply a mission to promote understanding of the culture and lifestyle of communities speaking other languages by translating their literature to create bonds between them.

He was, in this way, also propagating the ideals mentioned above, which permeate his own short stories and poetry. A poem he wrote for his daughter Ghauri on her birthday reflects his liberal views on the empowerment and autonomy of women. "The kite you are flying/ is perfectly positioned/ Now remain focused on it/ As you let your children hold it/ Keep the string firm in your hand." -- Courtesy Dawn

At the crossroads**Imran Sabir**

The girl never existed. The rape never happened. But thousands marched. Even the HRCP couldn't find 'forensic evidence and credible testimonies' to back the allegations, but the damage had already been done.

Welcome to Pakistan's new reality, where truth is whatever trends on social media, and our youth wage wars with hashtags and 'shares' instead of guns. Those protests over a fabricated campus assault weren't just about a fake story — they were a mirror reflecting our broken relationship with the truth itself.

I've spent several years studying and teaching human behaviour, but nothing had prepared me for what I witnessed at the Lahore protest. "We know this case might be fake," a young undergrad told me, "but how many real cases go unreported? That's why we were there to protest."

It's this raw anger, this deep-seated distrust, that our lawmakers seem to miss completely. While the Punjab Assembly busies itself drafting yet another law against 'fake news', they're missing the forest for the trees. Speaker Malik Ahmad Khan's recent announcement of impending legislation felt like putting a band-aid on a bullet wound.

Truth is, we're losing our kids to cyberspace. Not in the way anxious gossip aunts complain at family dinners, but in a far more insidious way. Every morning, millions of young Pakistanis wake up and dive straight into a cesspool of manipulation. TikTok and YouTube conspiracies about political rivals get more views than election policies.

WhatsApp forwards about foreign conspiracies spread faster than Covid did.

"These kids think they're immune to propaganda," says Dr Zaman, a sociologist specialising in youth behavior at Quaid-i-Azam University. "They laugh at their parents falling for fake WhatsApp forwards, then share unverified tweets because it feels right to them." He shows me a viral post about Pakistan's economy that's completely fabricated but has been shared 50,000 times. "They trust random anonymous accounts more than conventional credible sources of information now."

Meanwhile, the government's response oscillates between panic and paralysis. The recently announced 'crackdown on rumour-mongers' was just another headline in a long list of reactive measures that tackle symptoms while the disease spreads. You can't fight digital wildfires with paperwork and press releases. A junior officer at the FIA's cybercrime wing (speaking off the record) puts it bluntly: "We're fighting a fifth-generation war with first-generation thinking. By the time we trace one fake news source, 50 new ones have popped up."

The term 'fifth-generation warfare' gets thrown around a lot in Pakistan these days, usually by people in uniform or politicians looking for scapegoats. But what's happening on social media isn't warfare; it's worse. It's the systematic dismantling of our youth's ability to separate fact from fiction.

Visit any university campus today. The ethnic, religious, and ideological divisions aren't just visible — they're carved in digital stone. Students live in algorithmic bubbles so thick, two people can witness the same event and walk away with completely opposite versions of reality. The fake rape case proved this perfectly:

even after police debunked it, hashtags and shares de-manding justice kept trending. The truth had become irrelevant to the narrative.

"It's like we're living in parallel universes," said a student activist. "My newsfeed on Facebook shows me one Pakistan, my classmate's shows him another. We're not even arguing about the same facts anymore." And therein lies our real crisis. It's not just about fake news — it's about the death of shared reality. When a society can't even agree on basic facts, progress becomes impossible. Justice becomes a pipe dream.

The solution does not lie in another law or crackdown — not even in better fact-checking (though we need that). The solution lies in rebuilding trust — between generations, between institutions and citizens, between the state and its youth.

But trust is earned, not legislated. While the worthy Speaker of the Punjab Assembly announces new laws and federal agencies plan crackdowns, they're missing the whole point. Our youth aren't sharing fake news because they're foolish or malicious; they're sharing it because they've lost faith in official narratives. The protests should be a wake-up call. Young Pakistanis aren't just fighting imaginary battles online; they're screaming to be heard, to be trusted, to be taken seriously.

Until we understand this, and address the deep rot in our information ecosystem, we'll keep fighting shadows while the real war for our youth's minds is lost in the digital darkness.

The truth may be damaged, but it's not dead yet. The question is: are we brave enough to face it? -- Courtesy Dawn

CM reviews progress on 99-point public agenda

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur on Friday chaired a high-level meeting to assess the progress of his government's 99-point public agenda, aimed at improving governance and public services.

During the meeting, officials provided updates on various initiatives, highlighting significant achievements: Under the CM's Open Door Policy, 429 public forums (khuli kutcheris) have been held, including 27 for women, 17 for minorities, and others targeting farmers, persons with disabilities, and traders.

Over 7,000 waste dumps were cleared, 843 public toilets cleaned, and 590 canals, 1,066 roads, and 287 recreational areas cleaned. The province repaired 4,682 manholes

and 6,300 streetlights, while 293 illegal parking stands and 4,500 speed bumps were removed.

Drinking water was provided in 114 public parks, seating benches installed in 169 parks, and 300 trash bins placed at tourist spots.

Officials inspected 108 bus stands, cleaned 497 washrooms, and upgraded 100 waiting rooms. Fare charts were displayed at 93 bus stands.

The chief minister urged strict monitoring of ongoing projects and directed monthly public forums by divisional and deputy commissioners to engage with citizens.

He also ordered the completion of patwar khanas mapping within 51 days and immediate relocation of offices operating outside their jurisdictions.

"This agenda focuses

on public service and good governance. Any negligence in its implementation will not be tolerated," Ali Amin Gandapur said, reaffirming his commitment to the welfare of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's citizens.

Moreover, 439 sewer lines were cleaned, and 101 were repaired. During the campaign against illegal dumping sites, 368 such spots were cleared, and 226 designated sites for waste disposal were notified. A total of 4359 trash bins have been installed for public use.

In efforts to enhance recreational areas, clean drinking water has been made available in 114 public parks, while benches have been installed in 169 parks. Over 4000 advertisement boards and banners have been removed from utility poles, and 4500 ads were cleared from walls.



KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori in a group photo with participants of 41st Mid-Career Management Course.

CM Murad calls for fostering closer cultural ties between Sindh, UK

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah expressed his delight at attending the birthday reception in honour of His Majesty King Charles III's 76th birthday at the British Deputy High Commission.

He described the event as vibrant and distinctly British, emphasizing its role in fostering unity through music, art, and friendship.

In his address, the Chief Minister highlighted Sindh's rich cultural heritage and its deep-rooted traditions in music, poetry, and the arts. "Sindh is a land of deep

cultural roots, where music, poetry, and the arts have thrived for thousands of years," he said, celebrating the global impact of Sindh artists.

The Chief Minister reaffirmed Sindh's commitment to preserving its vibrant cultural legacy, mentioning initiatives such as Sindh Culture Day and programs that promote the region's arts and crafts.

He noted the similarities between the UK and Sindh, particularly their shared tradition of creativity that has influenced global music and the arts.

Reflecting on the

significance of cultural partnerships, he remarked, "Events like this create unique opportunities for British and Pakistani artists to collaborate, learn from each other, and bring new creative ideas to life. This exchange of talent and tradition reflects the friendship and mutual respect between us."

The Chief Minister extended warm wishes to King Charles III, expressing hope for a year filled with peace, health, and happiness, while emphasizing the importance of fostering closer cultural ties between Sindh and the UK.

LHC directs Punjab govt to formulate long-term policy to combat smog

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday directed the Punjab government to formulate a comprehensive and long-term environmental policy to combat smog.

The court also stressed the need for strict regulation of housing societies and directed that wastewater treatment plants be made mandatory for houses of 10 marlas and above, as well as all commercial buildings.

Advocate General Punjab Khalid Ishaq presented a report on the budget allocated for smog control measures, with 48.88 billion rupees specifically designated for electric buses. He added that funds had also been allocated for groundwater conservation and treatment plants in Faisalabad, Sahiwal, and Sialkot, with a project completion target of 2025. He noted that water storage and treatment projects in Murree are also underway, with flood prevention, water scarcity, and air quality improvement identified as top priorities.

Justice Shahid Karim issued these directions while hearing a set of petitions filed by Haroon Farooq and others against ineffective measures to control smog. During the proceedings, the court directed Advocate General Punjab Khalid Ishaq to discuss the long-term policy matter with the chief minister upon her return from abroad. The court further noted that significant work remains to be done on groundwater conservation, though it commended the current government's efforts to revive projects that had been stalled over the last

five years.

The court highlighted a recent study by the Punjab government, conducted in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank, to restore the Ravi River, and suggested that this research should be effectively utilized. The court also proposed a policy, similar to those in cities like Beijing, to relocate industries away from urban centers to reduce pollution.



NANKANA SAHIB: November 15- Sikh pilgrims are reciting the holy book as the community gathers in reverence, marking the 555th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev and honoring his legacy of peace and equality.

Punjab senior minister declares smog a national emergency

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, at a press conference on smog, said smog had escalated to the status of a national disaster and it was adversely affecting other districts in Punjab also.

She noted that fog had also merged with smog this season, causing health hazards. The absence of fog during other times of the year often conceals smog.

recommendations, which the government has been implementing for the past eight months. Additional gaps will be addressed so as to ensure that sectoral targets are achieved.

Agricultural interventions: For the first time, the agriculture department has provided 1,000 super seeders to the farmers at a 60pc subsidy. These are now available for rental use.

Referring to 10-year anti-smog plan initiated in March by the Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Marriyum Aurangzeb said that all departments had been given specific targets to combat the menace. She recently met members of the Supreme Court's Smog Commission to discuss ongoing efforts, expressing her intention to personally brief the judiciary.

Marriyum Aurangzeb highlighted the health issues posed by smog, citing the World Health Organization's

technological solutions: Initiatives such as the Air Quality Index (AQI), mass transit programs, and bio-refineries are underway. Factories are being assisted with emission control systems through subsidized loans.

Industrial regulation: 800 brick-kilns have been demolished, and efforts to expand Lahore's forest cover are ongoing.

Vehicle fitness: Three vehicle fitness certification stations have been established at Kala Shah Kaku and Thokar Niaz Baig.

First installment of 64 crores released for construction of 800 homes: Minister

LAHORE (APP): Chairman of Akhuwat Foundation Dr. Amjad Saqib met with Provincial Minister for Housing and Urban Development Bilal Yasin to discuss the progress of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's "Apni Chhat Apna Ghar" scheme.

DG PHATA Saif Anwar Jappa briefed on received applications. He said that over 300,000 applications have been received, which would likely be double by December.

Provincial Minister Bilal Yasin said that first installment of Rs. 64 crores has been released for

construction of 800 houses, adding that loans will be provided based on 100% merit, ensuring transparency. Interest-Free Loan Scheme offers affordable monthly installments. People received the checks of the first installments successfully, all the installments will be paid, he added.

Minister Bilal Yasin warned that the citizens should not fall prey to any government or non-government person, loans will be given on 100% merit, adding that Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz wishes to expand the scope.

PA Opposition leader calls on Sindh Governor

KARACHI (APP): The Opposition Leader in Sindh Assembly Ali Khurshedi called on the Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor House here on Friday.

They discussed the legislation related to public welfare, and other issues of mutual interests.

The Governor Tessori said that the Opposition Leader had an important position in the Assembly. He said that the suggestions of the Opposition proved to be important in the legislation process.

The Opposition Leader Ali Khurshedi said that they were trying to ensure the legislation in favour of the people and for their welfare.

14 dead, 1,387 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least 14 people were killed and 1,378 others injured in 1,311 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours.

As many as 610 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 777 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams.

The data analysis showed that 800 drivers, 57 underage drivers, 159 pedestrians, and 442 passengers were among the victims of road crashes. The statistics showed that 224 accidents were reported in Lahore, which affected 235 people, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by Multan with 95 accidents and 95 victims, and at third Faisalabad with 89 accidents and 97 victims.

According to the data 1192 motorbikes, 72 autorickshaws, 106 motorcars, 33 vans, 21 passenger

Speaker PA praises public welfare service of Hina Butt

LAHORE (APP): Speaker of the Punjab Assembly Malik Ahmad Khan praised MPA Hina Parvez Butt's public service, stating that she is fulfilling her duties diligently. Other members of the Punjab Assembly also acknowledged her initiatives with applause. The speaker highlighted that her active role in the Punjab Women Protection Authority reflected her commitment to enhancing the authority's role in safeguarding women's rights, in line with the

vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif. He appreciated the steps taken within the Authority to prevent incidents of violence and harassment against women, acknowledging Hina Butt's efforts as a positive step toward women's rights protection in the province. The speaker said, "Your direct engagement with the public and personal meetings with affected girls and their families is commendable. It is essential for public representatives to maintain connections.

1 injured in grenade attack in Kohat

KOHAT (APP): A policeman was injured on Friday in a grenade attack by unknown persons on the Mills area police post in Kohat. According to police, the incident occurred when unidentified individuals hurled a grenade at the police post, leaving one policeman injured.

Deputy Commissioner Kohat, Mr. Abdul Akram, swiftly responded to the incident by visiting the injured policeman at DHQ Hospital Kohat.

Akram strongly condemned the attack, labeling it a "cowardly act" by miscreants.



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman unveiling the plaque of Committee Room affixed in the name of Khalid Sherdil Shaheed at Home Department. Home Secretary Noorul Amin Mengal, IGP Punjab Usman Anwar and Finance Secretary Mujahid Sherdil are also present.

Sharjeel felicitates Jiyalas on by-elections victory

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon has congratulated successful candidates of the Pakistan People's Party in the by-elections. He said, "I congratulate all the PPP candidates, who succeeded in the municipal by-elections. The victory of the Pakistan People's Party candidates is proof that the people of Sindh have faith in the leadership and vision of the Pakistan People's Party."

The Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, Mass Transit,

Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon, said, "The success of the Pakistan People's Party candidates in the by-elections is not only a victory for the party but also a triumph for democracy, development, and the enduring values of the Pakistan People's Party."

He said that under the leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari and Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, the Pakistan People's Party is striving to uplift marginalized communities and support the underprivileged.

2 killed, 1 injured in Kalam car accident

SWAT (APP): Two persons were killed while another sustained injuries in a car mishap that took place near Kalam area of Swat district, tv channels quoting rescue sources reported on Friday.

According to details, a rashly driven car was crossing the Kalam area when it plunged into Swat river.

As a result, two persons travelling by car died on the spot. One injured was immediately taken to nearby hospital for emergency treatment.

ANF recovers 299 kg drugs in 10 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force while conducting 10 operations across the country managed to recover over 299 kg drugs worth Rs 20 million and arrested 10 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday.

He informed that in two operations conducted near two different universities in Jamshoro, 6 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of two suspects. 1.5 kg hashish was recovered from an accused arrested near a college in Muslim Town Faisalabad. In another operation, 180 grams hashish was recovered from a drug dealer.

Zulfikar Cheema says: Qualities of Iqbal's 'Shaheen' must be instilled in youths

FAISALABAD (APP): Qualities of Iqbal's 'Shaheen' should be instilled in the young generation so that they can overcome obstacles in the path of progress with belief, action and high character.

This was stated by Chairman Allama Iqbal Council and former IG Police Punjab Zulfikar Ahmed Cheema while addressing the students during a public lecture at University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF).

The program was organised by the Public Relations and Publications Department and the Senior Tutor Office, while CPO Faisalabad Kamran Adil and Principal Officer Public Relations & Publications Dr Muhammad Jalal Arif also spoke.

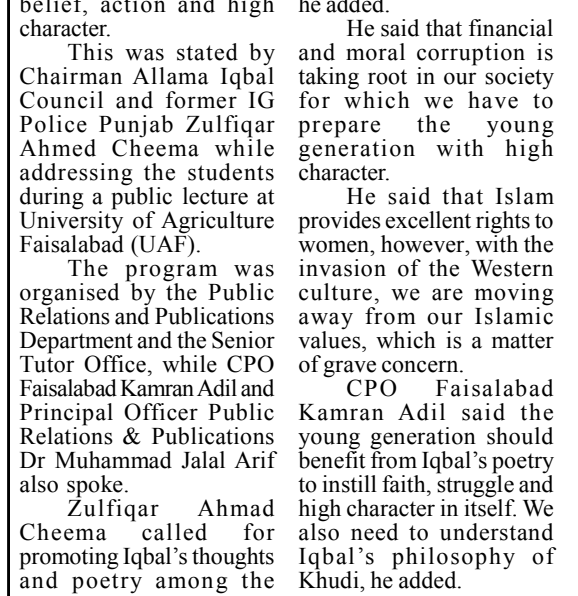
Zulfikar Ahmed Cheema called for promoting Iqbal's thoughts and poetry among the

youths and said that today's youth were facing disappointments. If they benefit from Iqbal's thought of living a dignified life, they can achieve their unique place in the world, he added.

He said that financial and moral corruption is taking root in our society for which we have to prepare the young generation with high character.

He said that Islam provides excellent rights to women, however, with the invasion of the Western culture, we are moving away from our Islamic values, which is a matter of grave concern.

CPO Faisalabad Kamran Adil said the young generation should benefit from Iqbal's poetry to instill faith, struggle and high character in itself. We also need to understand Iqbal's philosophy of Khudi, he added.



MULTAN: Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani attended the "Rasm-e-Chehnum" of the late Syed Jamshaid Abbas Shah, the brother of noted personalities Syed Qaswar Abbas Shah and Syed Iftikhar Hussain Shah.

CM's aides inaugurate facilities at central jail Mardan

PESHAWAR (APP): In a significant step towards strengthening prison reform and inmate welfare, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Prisons, Humayun Khan, and Minister for Food, Zahir Shah Toru, conducted an extensive visit to Central Jail Mardan. They were joined by MPA Abdus Salam, MPA Zarshad Khan, and Inspector General of Prisons KPK, Usman Mehsud. The visit commenced with the inauguration of a state-of-the-art interview room, symbolizing the administration's commitment to facilitating better communication between inmates and their families. Superintendent Najam Hussain Abbasi

delivered an in-depth presentation outlining the prison's operations and recent advancements, during which various questions posed by the distinguished guests were comprehensively answered. A major highlight of the visit was the inauguration of a modern computer lab by Humayun Khan. This new facility is designed to equip inmates with essential computer skills, reflecting a forward-thinking approach to prisoner rehabilitation and skill development. The delegation also toured the prison's detergent and marble production units, where they commended the administration's efforts to provide vocational training and promote.



MOHENJO DARO: A tourist delegation from Italy are visiting and expressed keen interest in the historical ruins of the World Heritage Monuments of Mohenjo Daro.

Sufficient fertilizer stocks available for Rabi season

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Fertilizer Review Committee (FRC) on Friday expressed complete satisfaction with the country's current fertilizer reserves, ensuring adequate supplies of both DAP and urea for the upcoming Rabi season. The committee met under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for Industries, Production, and National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain to assess the stock position of DAP and urea fertilizers for the Rabi season 2024-25, said a news release. The minister highlighted

the increasing demand for DAP fertilizer in the country, with a 44% surge in DAP off take. This rise in demand is attributed to the Punjab government's Kisan Card initiative. The DAP offtake estimate for October 2024 was 215,000 tonnes, which has increased by 44% to 309,000 tonnes. This increase is mainly due to the disbursement of Rs 75 billion by the government of Punjab as an interest-free loan through the Kisan Card (Rs 30,000 per acre for seeds, phosphorus, and nitrogen) for 500,000

farmers, each with up to 5 acres (Rs 150,000 per farmer). So far, farmers have drawn Rs 18 billion to procure fertilizer. This initiative by the Punjab government is expected to encourage the farming community to apply more DAP for balanced fertilizer use. The trend of increased DAP off-take in October is expected to continue through November and December 2024. Rana Tanveer assured that additional fertilizer stocks are available to meet farmers' needs, helping them achieve higher yields during the

Rabi season. He emphasized that farmers' prosperity is crucial for the country's progress and urged provinces to take stern action against hoarding and price manipulation. The meeting was also attended by the Secretary Ministry of Industries Saif Anjum, the Secretary Ministry of National Food Security Ali Tahir, senior officials from the Ministry of Finance, Commerce, Food Security, Industries, and representatives of provincial governments and other stakeholders.



ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain chairs meeting of the Fertilizer Review Committee (FRC).



ISLAMABAD: Sardar Dr Rashid Ilyas Kahn President the Centaurus Group Ayesha event organizer and Senior Management of the Group jointly inaugurated Three Day Gems and Minerals exhibition at Centaurus Mall.

PSX continues with bullish trend, gains 571 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Friday, gaining 571.75 points, a positive change of 0.61 percent, closing at 94,763.64 points as compared to 94,191.89 points on the last trading day. A total of 893,170,249 shares were traded during the day as compared to 1,084,344,207 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 30.811 billion against Rs. 32.680 billion on the last trading day. As many as 473 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 204 of them recorded gains and 204 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 65 companies remained

unchanged. The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 77,999,077 shares at Rs 1.34 per share, Fauji Foods Limited with 70,721,702 shares at Rs 11.61 per share and Hascol Petrol with 55,501,231 shares at Rs 8.24 per share. Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 279.82 per share price, closing at Rs 19,185.00, whereas the runner-up was Pakistan National Shipping Corporation with Rs 29.88 rise in its per share price to Rs 337.99. Hallmark Company Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 42.47 per share closing at Rs 720.23 followed by Khyber Textile Mills Limited with Rs 39.19 decline to close at Rs 376.87.

SCCI demands immediate abolishment of 2 percent provincial cess on expo

PESHAWAR (APP): Members of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Executive Committee on Friday demanded of the provincial government to abolish two percent cess on export. The EC members also called for reviewing the property and professional taxes, otherwise, business, trade and economic activities will end in the province, generating unemployment. A maiden meeting of the newly elected SCCI executive body was held under chairmanship of President Fazal Moqem Khan here at the chamber house. The meeting was attended by former FPCCI president Ghazanfar Bilour, the chamber senior vice president Abdul Jalil Jan, vice president Shehryar Khan, member of the SCCI executive committee Ziaul Haq Sarhadi, Nadeem Rauf, Aftab Iqbal, Ashfaq Ahmad, Adnan Nasir, Hassan Zahideen, Sabir

Ahmad, Saifullah, Gul Zaman, Saddam Hussain, Aafia Walayat, former SCCI presidents Zahidullah Shinwari, Haji Muhammad Afzal, Malik Niaz Ahmad, Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Faiz Muhammad Faizi, Husnain Khurshid Ahmad, Fuad Ishaq, former SCCI SVPs Inran Khan Mohmand, Sanaullah Khan, former VPs Javed Akhtar, Ejaz Khan Afridi, Shuja Muhammad, and Saraf Association president SherFarzand, former president IAP Malik Inran Ishaq, Pervez Khan Khattak, Sohail Javed, Aftab Ali Khan, Saddam Gul, Faiz Rasool, Fazle Wahid, Ishtiaq Muhammad, Farhad Asfandyar, Ihsanullah, Husnain Sheraz, Syed Ejaz Ali Shah, Secretary General Muqtasid Ahsan and others. Members of the EC committee termed the imposition of 2 percent cess on export from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as an unjust and cruel step of the provincial government.



BAHAWALPUR: Laborers pile up cotton during the arrival of the new crop at cotton market.

Finance body approves Rs 8bn IUB budget

BAHAWALPUR (APP): The Finance and Planning Committee of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB) has approved budget recommendations worth Rs. 8013.903 million for the financial year 2024-25. The committee meeting was held at Abbasia Campus under the chairmanship of Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kamran. Treasurer Dr. Abdul Sattar Zahoori presented the financial year 2024-25 budget. The budget focuses on the construction and development of the university, the promotion of research activities, employee welfare, and student scholarships. An amount of Rs. 35 million has been allocated for scholarships.

The Islamia University of Bahawalpur is facing a deficit of Rs. 2190.077 million in the budget for the financial year 2024-25. The meeting was attended by committee members Dean Faculty of Engineering Prof. Dr. Muhammad Amjad, Chairman Department of Commerce Prof. Dr. Abdul Majid Makki, Registrar Muhammad Shaji ur Rehman, Divisional Director Local Fund Multan Shah Sawar, Director Finance Higher Education Commission Dr. Samina Durrani and Additional Secretary Universities Zahida Akhtar.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Six ships, GFS Ruby, Wan Hai-316, Tolten, Bentley-I, Hafnia Excellence and Al-Diab-II carrying Container, Palm oil, Mogas and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Liquid Cargo Terminal, FOTCO oil Terminal and Sui Southern Gas Terminal respectively during last 24 hours. Meanwhile two more ships, Solar Catie and Al-Jini carrying Palm oil and Coal are also arrived at outer anchorage during last 24 hours.

Pakistan, Algeria to boost ties in IT, Telecom sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Friday said that Algeria can benefit from Pakistan's experiences in the field of technology.

During a meeting with the Algerian Ambassador to Pakistan, Brahim Romani, Shaza Fatima said that Pakistan greatly values its relations with Algeria, as the ties in the IT and telecom sector between the two countries are vital.

Matters of mutual interest, such as IT and telecommunications, start-ups, and cybersecurity,

were discussed in the meeting. The two sides agreed to enhance ties in the IT and telecommunication sectors.

Shaza Fatima said the exchange of students, start-ups and entrepreneurs will be beneficial for both countries, adding that Pakistan can organise IT training programs for the youth of Algeria.

Emphasising the need to form a joint working group regarding IT and Telecom, she said Pakistan wanted the hold of joint seminar of both countries' tech companies and start-ups.



ISLAMABAD: Vendor displaying used jackets for selling near Kuri road in the Federal Capital.

Pakistan's solar & EV sectors open up with unique perks for China

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan is set to attract Chinese investors with exclusive incentives in the booming solar and electric vehicle (EV) sectors, said Pakistan's Trade and Investment Counsellor to China Ghulam Qadir.

Addressing the 4th Beijing International Engineering Procurement Conference & Exposition for Engineering Construction Supply Chain (EPC Expo), focused on sustainable trade between China and Pakistan, Ghulam Qadir emphasized that the Pakistani government has introduced special incentives designed to strengthen bilateral

cooperation in green technology. These sectors are pivotal for Pakistan's sustainable future and present lucrative opportunities for Chinese businesses," Qadir noted.

He highlighted the potential for collaboration on high-impact projects, including streamlined licensing processes, tax breaks, and favorable import policies aimed at reducing setup costs and accelerating the transfer of EV and solar technology to Pakistan. China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Friday, Pakistan offers a consistent 10-year policy framework of tax exemption for import of plant, machinery.



ISLAMABAD: Woman selecting artificial jewelry from a stall during ten days Folk Festival Lok Mela at Lok Virsa in the Federal Capital.

Weekly inflation up by 0.55 percent

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), went up by 0.55 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on November 14, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 321.94 points as compared to 320.17 points during the past week.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 13.89 per cent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential

items for all expenditure groups.

SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732 witnessed increase of 0.83 per cent and went up to 315.52 points from last week's 312.93 points.

The SPI for consumption groups of Rs 17,732 to 22,888; Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175, increased by 0.74 percent, 0.62 percent, 0.59 percent and 0.44 percent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 21 (41.18%) items increased, 10 (19.61%) items decreased and 20 (39.21%) items remained stable.

The items, which recorded major decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week basis included pulse gram (2.51%).

Commerce minister pledges support for textiles sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Friday pledged support for textiles and apparel industry amid mounting challenges.

During a meeting with the delegation of All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA), he reiterated the government's commitment to facilitate textiles and apparel sector to promote value-addition and product/market diversification and boost exports, said a press release issued here Friday.

In a meeting with the APTMA representatives, led by its Chairman, Kamran Arshad, the minister emphasized the importance of the textiles and apparel industry vis-a-viz socio-economic development and growth.

The delegation of APTMA included Aamir Fayyaz Sheikh, Chairperson Textile Council (Kohinoor Mills), Anees Khawaja (Mahmood Group), Rahim Nasir (Ayesha Group), Naveed Ahmad (Indus Dyeing), Naveed Gulzar (Crescent Mills), Asad Shafi (Cross Stitch), Ali Ahsan (Ashiana Cotton), Shahid Sattar (Executive Director,

APTMA), and Raza Baqir (Secretary General, APTMA North).

Kamran Arshad outlined the critical challenges facing the textiles and apparel sector and their implications, including potential disconnection of gas supplies to industrial captive power plants, high electricity prices, high taxes and liquidity crunch which may erode the industry's competitiveness and adversely impact exports.

The representatives of APTMA also raised their concerns on withdrawal of sales tax exemption on local procurement for exporters under Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS) of Federal Board of Revenue, introduced in the Finance Act 2024.

They explained that, while imports of the same inputs remain tax-free, locally procured materials are now subject to 18 percent sales tax. Delays in refunding these taxes through the FASTER system have further strained exporters, pushing them toward imports and jeopardizing the domestic supply chain.

Arshad urged the

government to renegotiate its commitment to the International Monetary Fund and reconsider the decision of cutting off captive gas supply by end of January 2025 so that sector could be able to regain the lost grounds and enhance exports.

Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan reaffirmed the government's support, recognizing the textiles and apparel sector a cornerstone of Pakistan's exports and economy.

"The textiles and apparel industry is the established sector, and government will extend maximum support for its sustainability and growth," he stated.

The minister expressed optimism about increasing textiles and apparel exports through collaborative efforts and supportive policies. He encouraged to focus on potential in existing markets, explore new markets and diversify more to new value-added finished products. "The Ministry of Commerce is committed to addressing these challenges. I will personally engage with the relevant authorities to find solutions," the minister assured.



SUKKUR: Sindh Minister Agriculture Department, Muhammad Bux Khan Mahar distributes Benazir Hari Card among participant during distribution ceremony held in Sukkur.

Gold prices up by Rs.1,300 to Rs.267,700 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs.1,300 and was sold at Rs.267,700 on Friday against its sale at Rs. 266,400, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also went up by Rs.1,115 to Rs.229,510 from Rs. 228,395 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold increased to Rs.210,384 from Rs. 209,362.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs.3250 and Rs.2,786 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$13 to \$2,565 from \$2,552, the Association reported.

SBP injects over Rs3 trillion in the market

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) injected Rs3,089.9 billion in the market through reverse repo purchase and Shariah Compliant Mudarabah based Open Market Operation (OMO) on Friday.

According to OMO results issued here, the SBP conducted Open Market Operation, Reverse Repo Purchase (Injection) on November 15, 2024.

Punjab achieves surplus of Rs40 billion in Q1: Finance Ministry

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Finance endorsed the views of Punjab government on achievement of a provincial surplus of Rs40 billion during first quarter of the fiscal year 2024-25.

"The Ministry of Finance endorses the views of Government of the Punjab on achievement of a provincial surplus of Rs.40 billion during Q1 for FY 2024-25," finance ministry said in a press release issued here.

The press release said that government of the Punjab remained one of the

most important contributors to provincial surplus during recent years adding for FY 2024-25 it has budgeted a provincial surplus of Rs630 billion as agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The statement highlighted that the ministry shared the updated Q1 fiscal operations figures with the IMF on November 14, 2024. With concurrence of the Fund, MoF has updated the revised figures at its web-site, showing a provincial surplus of Rs40 billion for Punjab.

LCCI promises full support to marriage halls business

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) would take up all issues being faced by the owners of marriage halls with the top officials of the government.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad and Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman stated this while talking to a delegation of Marriage Halls Association, led by Junaid Zia here Friday. Former LCCI Senior Vice President Ali Hussain Asghar, Yousaf Shah, Raja Hassan Akhtar,

Ilyas Majeed Sheikh, Huma Junaid, Tajammul, Ashfaq Ashraf, Khalid Idrees, Abdul Rehman and Jahanzaib Zia also attended the meeting.

The meeting was particularly arranged by the former LCCI Senior Vice President Ali Hussain Asghar. The purpose of the meeting was to address the pressing issues faced by the marriage halls business including the recent restrictions on operational timings and their broader implications for associated businesses.

Sri Lankan president's coalition wins majority in snap election

Monitoring Desk
COLOMBO: Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake's leftist coalition won a thumping victory in a snap general election, gaining the power to push through his plans to fight poverty and graft in the island nation recovering from a financial meltdown. The sweeping mandate, which included surprise backing from the north and east of the country which is home to the minority Tamil people, is an unprecedented vote for change and indicates that Sri Lanka is in sync on moving ahead, analysts said.

While the strong showing will strengthen political stability in the South Asian country, some uncertainty on policy direction remains due to Dissanayake's promises to try and tweak terms of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) rescue programme that bailed the country out of its economic crisis, they said.

The new government is also expected to face a talent challenge as the coalition has few leaders with governance and policy-making experience.

Dissanayake, a political outsider in a country dominated by family parties for decades, comfortably won the island's presidential election in September.

But his coalition had just three seats in parliament, prompting him to dissolve it and seek a fresh mandate in Thursday's snap election.

Sri Lanka typically backs the president's party in general elections, especially if voting is held soon after a presidential vote.

"The president has a huge mandate now to carry through the reforms but also huge expectations from the people," said Bhavani Fonseka, a researcher at Colombo think tank Centre for Policy Alternatives.

"People are looking beyond the issues of the past [...] people want to see a direct impact on the cost of living," she said.

Dissanayake's Marxist-leaning National People's Power (NPP) coalition won 159 seats in the 225-member parliament, the election commission said on Friday, a massive two-thirds majority and one of the biggest in the country's history.

NPP secured almost 62 per cent or almost 7 million votes, up from the 42pc Dissanayake won in September, indicating that he had drawn more widespread support including from minorities.

The Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna party of the Rajapaksa family, whose cohort of brothers gave Sri Lanka two presidents during a dozen years in power and had 145 seats in the outgoing legislature, was virtually wiped out, winning just three seats.

"We see this as a critical turning point for Sri Lanka.



Sri Lanka's President and National People's Power (NPP) party leader Anura Kumara Dissanayake meets his party supporters after casting his vote on the day of the parliamentary election in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Fragile countries make \$20bn climate finance push at COP29, letter says

Monitoring Desk
BAKU: A group of conflict-affected countries is pushing at COP29 to double financial aid to more than \$20 billion a year and combat the natural disaster and security crises facing their populations, a letter seen by Reuters showed.

The group is one of several pitching at the climate talks in Azerbaijan this week for funds to better prepare for the impacts of extreme weather as countries seek to agree to a new annual target on financing.

Island nations, for example, argue climate change threatens their very existence as seas rise, while rainforest nations say they need more money to protect their vast carbon sinks.

Countries mired in conflict and its aftermath say they have struggled to access private investment, as they are seen as too risky. That means UN funds are even more critical to their populations, many of whom have been displaced by war and weather.

In response, the COP29 Azerbaijan Presidency on Friday will launch a new 'Network of Climate-vulnerable Countries', including a number of countries that belong to the G7+, an intergovernmental group of fragile countries.

Israel says it hits military sites in Damascus, Syrian media says 15 killed

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Fifteen people were killed in Israeli strikes on residential buildings in Damascus on Thursday, Syrian state media reported, and Israel claimed the attacks targeted military sites and the headquarters of the Islamic Jihad group.

The buildings targeted were located in the suburbs of Mazzeh and Qudsaya, both in the west of the Syrian capital, SANA news agency reported, citing a Syrian military source.

Fire kills at least ten elderly people in Spanish retirement home

Monitoring Desk
MADRID: At least 10 elderly people were killed when fire ripped through a retirement home in the northern Spanish town of Villafranca del Ebro early on Friday, authorities said.

The blaze started in one of the rooms, Fernando Beltran, the national government's top official in the region, told reporters. All the victims were elderly people living in the "Jardines de Villafranca" residence, he added. The fire started at around 5 a.m. (0400 GMT) and it took around two hours for firefighters to put it out.

EU fines Meta \$840m for 'abusive' practices on Facebook platform

Monitoring Desk
BRUSSELS: The European Union fined online giant Meta almost 800 million euros (\$840m) on Thursday for breaching anti-trust rules by giving users of its Facebook social network automatic access to classified ads service Facebook Marketplace.

The European Commission said the US tech titan also abused its dominant position by imposing unfair trading conditions on other online classified ads service providers that advertise on its platforms.

"This is illegal under EU anti-trust rules. Meta must now stop this behaviour," the bloc's competition chief, Margrethe Vestager, said in a statement. Meta said it would appeal, alleging the decision ignored "the realities of the thriving European market for online classified listing services." "Facebook users can choose whether or not to engage with Marketplace, and many don't.



South Korea's main opposition Democratic Party leader Lee Jae-myung arrives at a court in Seoul, South Korea.

Palestinians say north Gaza destruction is widespread as rights group warns some may never return

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Palestinians displaced from northern Gaza said Israeli forces had inflicted widespread destruction on their home districts in their latest six-week-old offensive and a rights group raised concerns Israel might put some areas permanently off-limits.

Jabalia, one of the largest of Gaza's eight historic refugee camps, as well as the towns of Beit Lahiya and Beit Hanoun and nearby villages, were among the first targets of Israel's ground offensive in October 2023 after Hamas attacked Israel.

Tanks have gone in several more times in what Israel says are necessary operations against fighters there who still pose a threat. On Thursday, it said its troops had killed dozens of "terrorists" and found a large quantity of weapons.

Former construction contractor Abu Raed, who was displaced from Jabalia, said Israeli forces were blowing buildings up remotely after booby-trapping them or sending in robots.

"The destruction before Oct 5, 2024 was big, but what happened in the past month can't be described in words. Most of the camp was destroyed this time," he told Reuters via chat app.

"I have friends and relatives in Beit Hanoun, there are hardly any building standing there, Beit Lahiya also," the 75-year-old said.

Trump's divisive picks show he prefers loyalty to expertise

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: All eyes were on Donald Trump's transition team on Thursday, after a series of provocative and startling cabinet choices that showed the president-elect's preference for absolute loyalty above experience or expertise.

Trump has been rapidly rolling out his foreign policy and national security picks, but he is expected to shift focus over the coming days to key figures to enact his domestic agenda.

The Republican leader has yet to select treasury and commerce chiefs to help set tax and trade policy, a health secretary to oversee abortion, transgender care and a host of other potential flashpoints, or someone for education — a department Trump wants to abolish.



A training session involving some 2,000 Ukrainian conscripts and veterans takes place in the muddy fields of the Champagne military camp in eastern France.

French prosecutors seek a 2-year prison sentence and ineligibility period against Marine Le Pen

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: Paris prosecutors requested a 2-year prison sentence for far-right leader Marine Le Pen and an additional 5-year period of ineligibility to run for office, in a trial over the suspected embezzlement of European Parliament funds where her ability to participate in the 2027 presidential race is at stake.

The National Rally party and 25 of its officials, including Le Pen, are accused of having used money intended for European Union parliamentary aides to instead pay staff who worked for the party between 2004 and 2016, in violation of the 27-nation bloc's regulations. The National Rally was called the National Front at the time.

Prosecutors asked the court to declare Le Pen guilty and impose a 300,000-euro fine and three more years of suspended prison sentence. They requested that the period of ineligibility be declared effective immediately, independent of whether Le Pen files an appeal or not.

The nine-week trial is scheduled to finish Nov. 27, with a verdict at a later date. Defense lawyers are to speak in the next couple of weeks.

Le Pen did not show any emotion in the courtroom as she listened to the prosecutors' demands.

Le Pen said she felt prosecutors were "only interested" in preventing her from running for president in 2027. "I understood that

All primary schools shut in New Delhi due to smog

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India's government banned non-essential construction in New Delhi, the world's most polluted capital, and urged residents to avoid burning coal for heating, to combat worsening air quality that has disrupted flights and obscured the Taj Mahal.

The new measures, which include sprinkling water with dust suppressants on roads, as well as mechanised sweeping that would help settle dust, will come into effect from Friday morning, Delhi's Chief Minister Atishi, who uses only one name, also directed all primary schools to shift to online classes.

Indonesia's VP visits area hit by Mount Lewotobi Laki-laki volcano eruptions

Monitoring Desk
INDONESIA: Indonesia's vice president visited areas hit by multiple eruptions of the Mount Lewotobi Laki-laki volcano on Thursday, as some international airlines resumed flights to the resort island of Bali, officials said.

The first eruption of Mount Lewotobi Laki-laki in East Nusa Tenggara province on Nov 3 killed at least nine people, damaged more than 2,000 houses and forced the evacuation of 13,000 residents.

It has since erupted repeatedly, belching ash up to 10 km (16 miles) into the air. East Nusa Tenggara is located about 800 km (497 miles) from Bali.

Vice President Gibran Rakabuming Raka visited temporary shelters in the East Flores area. He gave toys to children and talked with some residents, who were still being treated for their injuries, a statement from the vice president's office said.

Elon Musk's meeting with Iran's UN ambassador talk of the town

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Billionaire Elon Musk, who is an adviser to US President-elect Donald Trump on government efficiency, met Iran's ambassador to the United Nations Amir Saeid Iravani.

The meeting revolved around how to defuse tensions between Iran and the United States, say media reports.

Iravani invited Musk to initiate his businesses in Iran and demanded the lift of US sanctions on Iran.

Protests erupt in breakaway Georgian region Abkhazia over deal with Russia

Monitoring Desk
SUKHUM: A truck rammed the gates of parliament in the Russian-backed breakaway Georgian region of Abkhazia on Friday as hundreds protested against an investment agreement with Moscow that some Abkhaz fear will price them out of the property market.

Two people were injured in the clashes, Russia's RIA state news agency cited local emergency services as saying. Russian media showed a truck ramming into the gates surrounding the parliament in the capital, Sukhumi. Russia recognised Abkhazia and another breakaway region, South Ossetia, as independent

Families gather at South African mine shaft where hundreds are feared underground

Monitoring Desk
STILFRONTEIN: Desperate family members of illegal miners believed to number in the hundreds waited outside a disused mine shaft in South Africa on Friday in the hope of their loved ones emerging from the hole in the ground.

The miners are in a standoff with police, who have blocked their supplies of food and water and are trying to force them out to arrest them for illegally entering the abandoned mine in search of leftover gold — a common problem in South Africa.

Trump says Russia-Ukraine war has 'gotta stop'

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US President-elect Donald Trump said on Thursday that his administration will work hard to end the Russia-Ukraine war, adding that the conflict needs to come to an end.

"We're going to work on the Middle East, and we're going to work very hard on Russia and Ukraine. It's gotta stop.

Russia and Ukraine's gotta stop," Trump said at a gala for the America First Policy Institute at the Mar-a-Lago Club in Florida.

"I saw a report today. Thousands of people over the last three days were killed. Thousands and thousands were killed. They happened to be soldiers, but whether they're soldiers or they're people sitting in towns, we're going to work it," he added.

Turning to his election victory last week, Trump said the American people delivered "something very, very amazing".

"The biggest political sweep in 129 years... We won the popular vote," he said. He stressed that the country is "doing good" since he was elected on November 5.

"Now the only thing is, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important, maybe you should pass a bill — you have to start my term from November 5, OK? Or November 6 if you want. November 5, because the market's gone through the roof, enthusiasm's doubled in the last short while," he said.

Republicans secured a majority in last week's election, assuming control of the House and Senate and the White House.

Xi inaugurates South America's first Chinese funded port in Peru

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday inaugurated Latin America's first Beijing-funded port in Chancay, Peru — a symbol of the Asian superpower's growing influence on the continent as it prepares to face off with a new Donald Trump administration.

The \$3.5 billion complex, about 50 miles (80 kilometres) north of Lima, is meant to serve as a hub for Chinese trade as the country is under threat of major tariff hikes once Trump reenters the White House for a second term.

The port was officially opened in a ceremony overseen virtually by Xi and Peruvian counterpart Dina Boluarte from Lima, where they will attend an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit on Friday and Saturday.

"China plays a major role in the growth of our economy," Boluarte said at the event, even as a US official warned Latin American nations should be vigilant on Chinese investment.

"We believe it is essential that countries across the hemisphere ensure that PRC (People's Republic of China) economic activities respect local laws as well as safeguard human rights and environmental protections," Brian Nichols, the top US diplomat for Latin America, said in Lima.

Xi, for his part, said the port would help "promote connectivity" between South America and China. "We are witnessing the birth of a new land-sea channel between Asia and Latin America in the new era," Xi said. US President Joe Biden also arrived Thursday to attend the APEC summit in Peru, which Nichols described as a "crucial ally."

Peru — one of Latin America's fastest-growing economies over the past decade — is China's fourth-largest Latin American trading partner, with bilateral flows of nearly \$36 billion in 2023.

Chinese defence firms to attend Vietnam arms fair as ties deepen

Monitoring Desk
HANOI: Chinese defence firms will participate in an arms fair in Vietnam next month, a Vietnamese defence official said on Friday, a possible sign of deepening military ties between the two neighbours.

Vietnam will hold an international defence exposition in Hanoi from Dec 19-22, two years after it organised its first-ever military fair. The Southeast Asian nation seeks to boost domestic production as well as diversify their sources of military hardware, which have been heavily drawn from Russia for decades.

Chinese firms will be among the roughly 140 companies exhibiting equipment at the expo, defence ministry official Le Ngoc Than told a press conference. It is unclear which and how many Chinese companies will be in attendance. No Chinese gear was on display at the 2022 exposition.

"China's participation in the Vietnamese military expo is an important sign of new security cooperation between the two countries," said Nguyen The Phuong, an expert on Vietnam security at the University of New South Wales, Australia. The two Communist neighbours have repeatedly said in recent months that they want to boost security and defence industry ties, and signed preliminary agreements on the matter.

The Vietnamese and Chinese militaries also regularly exchange high-level visits and their respective coast guards have held joint patrols in the Gulf of Tonkin.

Brazil launches global anti-hunger alliance before G20 summit

Monitoring Desk
RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil launched the Global Alliance for Hunger and Poverty on Friday at the G20 Summit in Rio, a Brazilian government official said, with an initial 41 participating members pledging to lift 500 million people out of poverty through cash transfers and social protection systems.

The initiative brings together developed nations, NGOs, and financial institutions to donate money and expertise to countries in need. The intention is to remove all nations from the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) hunger map by 2030.

Leaders of the G20 group of largest economies meet in Rio de Janeiro on Monday and Tuesday for their annual summit hosted by Brazil, whose government has made fighting world hunger a priority along with climate change and reforming multilateral governance.

Brazilian Minister of Social Development Wellington Dias told Reuters on Thursday that the alliance is likely to reach its 100-country target in the coming months, with more than 50 nations currently preparing plans to join.

"They have to present a plan with efficient, well-known projects that effectively reduce poverty," Dias said. The official acknowledged existing mistrust between donors and recipients, citing concerns over concrete results and broken promises. "There's a mistrust of UN bodies," he said, adding that developed countries are perceived as doing too little. "So we need to create a buzz, and that's what we're doing," he added.

Dias said the issue was not lack of funds, as the world invests around \$100 billion a year to fight poverty and hunger.

The problem is that investments are too fragmented and inefficiently allocated, he said. The World Bank estimates \$179 billion will be needed to reach the target by 2030, he added.

Proposed initiatives include expanding cash transfer programs to reach 500 million people, providing school meals to an additional 150 million children and assisting 200 million children up to age 6 and pregnant women with health programs.



Global environmental activists protest against the gas industry during the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29), in Baku, Azerbaijan.

AJK President says: Modi's communal policies to bring India on verge of disintegration soon

MIRPUR (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry Friday said that India would disintegrate soon because of the Modi government's communal policies, which have an abysmal track record of persecuting religious minorities.

He expressed these views while addressing a reception meeting in Dhirkot town of Poonch Division of AJK. He said, "The Modi regime, while pursuing its Hindutva agenda, is committing serious crimes not only against Kashmiris in Occupied Kashmir but also persecuting people elsewhere in India on the basis of faith." The AJK President said that India, under the BJP role, has emerged

as a terror-sponsoring nation in the world.

"I salute Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for exposing India's ugly face before the world by presenting evidence of Indian involvement in terrorist activities in Canada," Barrister Chaudhry said, adding that Indian spy agencies were also involved in terror activities in Pakistan and other countries. The president also reiterated his commitment to expose the Modi government's nefarious designs. Referring to continued bloodshed and violence in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), Barrister Sultan said that after August 5, 2019, India has broken all records of barbarism.



ISLAMABAD: Manuel Frederico Pinheiro Da Silva Ambassador of Portugal called on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters.

SC still can take suo motu notice, says Justice Mazhar

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) constitutional bench has remarked SC can take suo motu notice now too but its hearing can be conducted only by constitutional bench.

Justice Mazhar Ali Mazhar remarked sabb only procedure has changed after 26th constitutional amendment. SC can still take suo motu notice. The difference is only that now suo motu notice will run in constitutional bench. It should be kept in mind too that constitutional bench too can take suo motu notice. Justice Jamal Mandokhel remarked we will hear this issue in some other case when it comes. The court wrapped up the case.

These remarks were expressed by Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar in reply to Munir Paracha plea wherein he had said that SC cannot take suo motu notice after 26th constitutional amendment.

A 6-member constitutional bench presided over by Justice Amin ul Din Khan took up for hearing suo motu notice case in connection with Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) case Friday.

Munir Paracha coun-

Marri accuses Govt. functionaries of favoritism in bye-elections of PB-8

Independent Report QUETTA: The leader of Sibi Ittehad, Mir Asghar Marri has charged that the

people from different tribes were also present. Mir Asghar Marri said that we thought that our



provincial government including the ministers as well as the divisional and district officers are running election campaign of our opponent candidate in the bye-election of PB-8, Sibi cum Lehri, scheduled to be held on November 17.

divisional and district administrative officers would have learnt some lesson after the February 8 elections, but the government machinery is being used for the opponent candidates on behalf of the provincial government.

Mir Asghar Marri was addressing a crowded press conference in his election camp in Sibi on Friday.

The leaders of Sibi Ittehad, Maulana Muhammad Idrees, Sardar Ibrahim Barozai, Malik Asfand Silachi, Mir Aslam Gishkori, Yar Muhammad Bangulzai, Saeed Khan Khajak, Mir Abdul Ghaffar Domki, Mir Saleem Marghazani, Mir Zafar Baghrani, Mir Inayatullah, Talal Luni and others were also present.

He appealed to the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Chief Election Commissioner, Chief Justice Balochistan High Court, Corps Commander, Sector Commander Frontier Corps and other concerned high ups to take notice of the situation and play their role for ensuring transparency in the bye election.

Besides, President of All Pakistan Marri Ittehad, Mehr Din Marri, Mir Shafiqat Marri, Mir Mazhar Jabbar and large number of

He alleged that despite the written applications, the provincial government are involved in running election campaign of the opponent candidate, which is unfair. He stressed that let people decide and elect their favorite candidate in the election.

5 hawkers given motorcycles through lucky draw under Hawkers Welfare Fund

Independent Report QUETTA: The draw of motorcycles was held for the hawkers under the Hawkers Welfare Fund here on Friday.

as to create easiness in their daily lives.

The draw of motorcycles was arranged under the auspices of Information Department.

The Director General of Public Relations Balochistan, Muhammad Noor Khetran conducted the draw.

Under the Hawkers Welfare Fund, five lucky hawkers are provided the motorcycles every year so

Speaking on the occasion, Director General Public Relations said that the basic objective of Hawkers Welfare Fund is to help out the labourers who play important role in timely dissemination of news and information.

He also said that the present government is determined for welfare of the people associated with the journalism under leadership of the Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives (PDSI) and Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Ahsan Iqbal chaired the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) meeting and approved three major development projects worth Rs. 58.857 billion.

Pakistan warns of 'chaos' in war-hit Palestine following Israel's ban on UNRWA

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has told a UN panel that the Israeli legislation to shut down UNRWA, the main lifeline for Palestine refugees in Gaza, will plunge millions of Palestinians into chaos, and called on the international community to throw its weight behind the U.N. agency. "The demonization of UNRWA must be halted and we must take concrete measures to ensure that UNRWA remains operational and carries out its humanitarian work in accordance with its mandate," Pakistani delegate Anwar Shah said during a debate in the General Assembly's Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization) on Thursday. The Israeli Parliament, known as the Knesset, adopted two bills earlier this month banning the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian

Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) from operating in its territory and prohibiting authorities from having any contact with it.

"The international community must uphold the principles of justice, human rights, and international law to restore hope and dignity to the Palestinian people," Anwar Shah, a first secretary in the Pakistani Mission to the UN, said. Pakistan had strongly condemned the Israeli attempts to dismantle the operations of the UNRWA as "flagrant violation of the UN Charter, international law, provisional measures: set by the ICJ (International Court of Justice) and the Court's Advisory Opinion of 19 July.

Shah highlighted the grave concerns of millions of Palestinians' that the Israeli move would cutoff essential public services on which their lives depend such as education, health, and social support.

"The entire population of Gaza fears that their only remaining lifeline will be cut. Without the intervention by Member States, UNRWA will collapse, plunging millions of Palestinians into chaos.

"We have to answer the call of Palestinian people," the Pakistani delegate added.

He warned that the international order built on the basis of the UN Charter could collapse if the international community did not take concrete actions to uphold the Charter and the international law.

Reaffirming Pakistan's steadfast support for Palestinians and their inalienable right to self-determination, he said, "The international community must uphold the principles of justice, human rights, and international law to restore hope and dignity to the Palestinian people.

IHC set aside dismissal of PTI founder's acquittal plea

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday set aside the verdict for dismissal of acquittal pleas of PTI founder and Bushra Bibi in 190 million pounds reference and instructed the trial court to decide the matter again.

A two-judge bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb heard the appeals of two accused against the verdict of trial court.

The court said that the NAB prosecutor has adopted the stance that at this stage acquittal pleas couldn't be heard. The IHC issued instructions to the accountability court on the appeals.

Ruling coalition becomes symbol of hatred: Rashid

ISLAMABAD (INP): Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said on Friday that ruling coalition had become a symbol of hatred in the country.

Speaking to media outside court, Ahmed claimed that the establishment had used these parties and the ruling coalition was of no more use to them.

He criticised the government for being subservient to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), adding that the IMF loan had made the life of a common man miserable in Pakistan.

Responding to a question regarding India's refusal to play Champions Trophy 2025 matches in Pakistan, Ahmed said Pakistan should also avoid inviting India here. He said former premier Nawaz Sharif wanted to ingratiate with India.

While the Minister ordered to the concerned authority to dismiss the doctors, who were absent from their duties for long time, he ordered for placing services of other nine absentee doctors under suspension.

Bakht Kakar expressing his displeasure over poor cleanliness situation in the hospital directed to Medical Superintendent to improve its state of affairs within a week. Meanwhile, he went round of different sections of the hospital and met the patients there. The patients complained to the Minister Health about poor health services at the hospital.

During the visit, he found some 16 doctors and other health staff absent from their duties in the hospital. Of them, seven doctors were absent for long time, as informed to the Provincial Minister.



QUETTA: Relatives of Muhammad Masoor are blocking road and burning tires as they are holding protest demonstration against his kidnapping, at Provincial Assembly Chowk in Quetta.

Education Minister launches next generation 'Pakistan Learning Festival'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Friday inaugurated the Next Generation Pakistan Learning Festival.

The mega learning festival in the history of country, have multiple learning activities like knowledge sharing, storytelling, documentaries, movies, books fair, books reviews, Ed-tech and skills activities, he mentioned.

Besides the Education Minister, the inauguration ceremony was also attended by the Federal Minister of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, Supreme Court Judge Justice Athar Minallah, and Education Secretary Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani. Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Federal Education Secretary Mohyuddin Wani hoped that 2 to 3 lakh children will participate in the three-day learning festival.

He said that thousands of students of federal public and private educational institutions and specially from the Gilgit-Baltistan and Karachi are also participating in the three-day academic fair organized by the Federal Ministry of Education.

Addressing the learning festival, Justice Athar Minallah said that the youth of today has a lot of potential.

He said that the limit of the development is sky, adding such a festival increases the learning of children.

During his address, Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the importance of organizing such festivals across all districts of Pakistan. He highlighted how these events provide students with opportunities to meet successful individuals and learn from their experiences.

Ahsan Iqbal reflected on Pakistan's history, calling it a "precious nation built through immense sacrifices."

He noted that skeptics at the time of Pakistan's creation doubted its survival.

CDWP recommends three energy sector projects worth Rs 58.857b to ECNEC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives (PDSI) and Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday chaired a meeting of the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) that okayed and recommended three major development projects in the energy sector worth Rs58.857 billion to ECNEC for final approval.

The project is proposed to be financed through Asian Development Bank (ADB). The project envisages conversion of 4 No 66 kV Grid Station into 132 kV Grid Station, installation of 50,000 No. of AMR meter on 3-phase meters having load more than 5 kW, installation of APMS on 1200 No. general duty DTs in SEPCO and bifurcation of 40 No. feeders having load above 300 Amps and high technical & administration loss. The forum forwarded the second project namely "Power Distribution Strengthening Project (LESCO)" worth Rs 27,613.00 million to ECNEC. The project is proposed to be financed through ADB (Rs. 20,317 million) & LESCO Own Resources (Rs. 7,296 million).

Under the project, construction of 05 new 132 kv grid stations and 04 Aug/ Extension of 132 kv grid stations will be carried out, besides installation of 1600 APMS, 1328 km AB cable and 131901 Nos AMI/ AMR meters in LESCO to improve electricity supply, operational efficiencies and modernize operations and management of the LESCO.

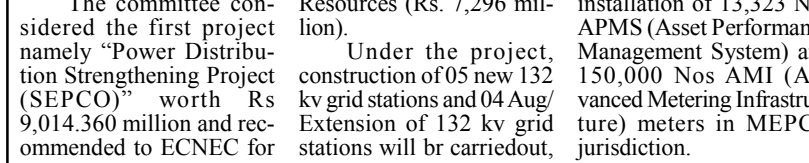
The meeting was attended by Awais Manzoor Sumra, Secretary and Additional Secretary Planning, Joint Chief Economist (Operations), members of the Planning Commission and representatives from the Ministry of Energy and the Power Division, a news release said.

The committee considered the first project namely "Power Distribution Strengthening Project (SEPCO)" worth Rs 9,014.360 million and recommended to ECNEC for

The CDWP recommended the third project namely "Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Asset Performance Monitoring Systems (APMS) for 100kVA & 200kVA General Duty Distribution Transformers and deployment of AMI Meters in MEPCO" worth Rs. 22,229.810 million to ECNEC for further consideration.

The project is proposed to be financed through Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The project envisages installation of 13,323 Nos APMS (Asset Performance Management System) and 150,000 Nos AMI (Advanced Metering Infrastructure) meters in MEPCO jurisdiction.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Spanish Senators called on Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization & Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan.



ISLAMABAD (APP): The Cabinet Committee on Privatisation (CCOP) rejected the bid of Rs10 billion submitted by the Blue World City for the divestment of 60% shares of Pakistan International Airlines, accepting the recommendations of the Privatisation Commission Board.

The CCOP met here under the chair of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar on Thursday which considered the proposal of the PC Board whereby it had recommended rejection of the bid.

Recognized as one of the most climate-vulnerable countries, Pakistan has pioneered initiatives like the Loss and Damages Fund since COP27, advocating for nations facing similar environmental risks.

In his interview with Baku TV regarding COP29, Chairman NDMA highlighted Pakistan's longstanding vulnerability to climate change impacts, including floods, earthquakes, heatwaves, and droughts. Despite limited resources, Pakistan has developed a responsive and resilient disaster management approach, in alignment with global frameworks.

The Chairman highlighted NDMA's shift to a proactive approach, with advancements including a new early warning system predicting disasters up to 10 months in advance, and collaborations with academia to build disaster management strategies tailored to Pakistan's diverse landscapes. COP29 saw Pakistan deepening its engagement with regional and global disaster management counterparts, promoting unified resilience efforts.

NDMA's participation at COP29 underscores Pakistan's commitment to addressing climate change and enhancing resilience through international cooperation and support.

PTA continues crackdown on illegal issuance of SIMs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Zonal Office Peshawar, in collaboration with the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Cyber Crime Wing Peshawar conducted successful raids on telecom franchisees in Barakahu, Islamabad, and Shinkari, District Mansehra.

According to news release both franchisees were involved in the illegal issuance of SIMs by deceitfully obtaining fingerprints of underprivileged women from various villages in Orakzai Agency.

Delegation from National Defence varsity, Saudi Arabia visits NUST

ISLAMABAD (APP): A fifteen-member delegation of the National Defence University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, led by Commandant War College, Major General Badar Bin Muneef Al-Otobi, visited the National University of Science and Technology (NUST). The delegation was warmly received by the rector of NUST, Lt General Javed Mahmood Bukhari.

During one-day visit, the delegation was given a detailed briefing on various dimensions of NUST, including an overview of the university, the academic governance, quality ecosystems of NUST.

Romina lauded for bringing together global judicial fraternity for climate justice

BAKU (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister for Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam has emphasized the need for vulnerable countries to come together and unite in the fight for climate justice.

She made these remarks in the context of a high-level 'Judicial Pathways Towards Climate Justice: Judicial Approaches for Addressing Climate Change Through Global Analysis' held on Friday at the Pakistan Pavilion on the sidelines of the UN-led global climate summit.

The Prime Minister's climate aide revealed that it was basically her initiative to establish a platform for international judges dedicated to climate justice as a part of Pakistan's push for climate finance for global

south and today's event was an step towards that objective.

Alam explained, "I am pleased to have successfully organised a panel discussion that brought together judges to explore the crucial and expanding role of courts in tackling climate change in the Asia-Pacific region." She further highlighted the growing importance of judicial systems in the face of escalating climate impacts, noting that courts have become vital spaces for addressing climate justice. These judicial bodies are tasked with balancing the urgent environmental challenges with the socio-economic and developmental needs, particularly in the Global South, where such issues are especially pressing.



QUETTA: Director General Public Relations Balochistan Muhammad Noor Khetran balloting of motor cycles for hawkers under Hawkers Welfare Fund.