

Independent

dailyindish@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

www.dailyindependent.com.pk

Gwadar

Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XX No. 120, Jamaadi ul Awwal 15, 1446 AH Monday November 18, 2024, Pages 04, Price Rs.15

Govt's timely efforts put economy back on track, says Finance Minister

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb says the economy has been showing signs of improvement lately due to the sincere efforts of the incumbent government. Addressing a press conference in the capital on Sunday, the finance minister said inflation had come at the single digit - seven percent - from 38 percent as the PM himself had been spearheading the efforts in this regard. The finance minister said the international financial institutions had shown trust in the country's ability to handle the economic crisis. He mentioned that the IMF staff was also aston-

ished at the success of the Pakistan's economy - which became stable in just 14 months adding the board was well aware of the government's ability to steer the country out of crisis.

The minister highlighted the cooperation by the chief ministers of four provinces adding that the government could achieve the best possible outcome by working as a whole.

As for the private sector, he said all the segments of society have to come at the forefront to create the best possible opportunities. Lastly, he also mentioned the climate change phenomenon which has been taking a heavy toll on the country.

PM Shehbaz to chair meeting of Apex Committee today

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Apex Committee on the National Action Plan (NAP) will be held on Monday under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

The meeting, to be held at the Prime Minister's House, is expected to approve significant decisions aimed at ensuring internal security.



The meeting will be attended by Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir, the Director-General of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), and heads of other intelligence agencies.

Attendees will receive briefings on counter-terrorism efforts and the overall law and order situation. The meeting's agenda includes reviewing the implementation of the National Action Plan, improving coordination between the federal and provincial governments, and enhancing the effective sharing of intelligence information.

Fazlur Rehman criticises KP for prioritising politics over public interest

PESHAWAR (INP): In a sharp critique of recent legislative changes, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has said Pakistan's 26th Constitutional Amendment has introduced laws that make citizens feel like "suspects in their own country."

Fazlur Rehman's comments came in Peshawar, where he offered condolences on the death of prominent political figure Ilyas Bilour.

"The people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are enduring severe hardships," he told reporters, alleging that the provincial

government has placed politics above public welfare. "Their entire focus is on politics rather than on maintaining peace, which is wrong," he added.

The JUI-F leader criticised the removal of Article 8 during the 26th Amendment, which he claims has opened the door for laws that infringe upon basic rights.

"Following this amendment, legislation has been rushed that violates human rights," he said. According to Rehman, these laws permit authorities to detain anyone for up to 90 days without due process.



Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar listening problems of people during his visit to Civil Hospital Zhub.

Bushra Bibi warns party members to join Nov. 24 protest or face disaffiliation

PESHAWAR (INP): Bushra Bibi, the wife of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan, has issued a stern message to party members ahead of the planned protest on 24th November.

She made it clear that any member of the National Assembly or party official who fails to attend the demonstration will have no affiliation with PTI.

The statement came after a meeting of PTI members in Peshawar, which saw the participation of members from southern districts, along with Bushra Bibi, who addressed the gathering.

She added that every provincial and national assembly member should film their journey as part of a convoy from Peshawar to Islamabad for the protest. The video should also capture PTI supporters accompanying the members in their vehicles.

Bushra Bibi made it clear that any absentee members or officials on the day of the protest would be considered as having severed ties with the party.

In her remarks, she re-



RAWLAPINDE: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti condoling with relatives of Shaheed Major Haseeb. Former Chief Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar is also present.

Condemns terrorist attack in Kalat Terrorists will not be allowed to disrupt peace of Balochistan says President Zardari

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari has strongly condemned a terrorist attack on check post in Kalat.

The president expressed deep sorrow and grief over the martyrdom of brave soldiers in the terrorist attack.

Terrorist elements are enemies of the nation, aiming to sabotage the journey of progress, he said adding that the people of Balochistan reject terrorist elements.

The president stressed that the terrorists will not be allowed to disrupt the peace of Balochistan.

He also prayed for the swift recovery of the in-

jured in the incident. Offering his heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyrs, the president prayed for their patience and strength.

The Prime Minister directed to provide the best medical facilities to the injured.

He paid tribute to the security forces for killing six terrorists and arresting four after injuring them during the gun battle.

Shahbaz Sharif said the elements spreading chaos and unrest in Balochistan are enemies of the people and the development of the province.

He, however, said such nefarious tactics cannot

shake the government's resolve for the development and prosperity of Balochistan.

The Prime Minister expressed the nation's resolve to foil the nefarious designs of terrorists.

He reiterated that the war against terrorism will continue till eradication of this menace from the country.

Earlier, the terrorists attempted to attack a security forces' post in general area Shah-e-Mardan of Kalat District.

The troops fought gallantly as a result of which six terrorists were sent to hell while four terrorists were injured.

PM greets Attaullah Lango on becoming BHCBA President

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday felicitated Mir Attaullah Lango on being elected as President of the Balochistan High Court Bar Association.

In a statement issued by the PM Office, he also congratulated other newly elected office bearers of the Bar.

The prime minister emphasized that the success of the Balochistan High Court Bar Association election will promote the welfare of the lawyers' community.

He lauded the commitment of the Bar Association to serving the Balochistan lawyers' interests, upholding the Constitution and promoting the rule of law in the province.

PM Shehbaz expressed the hope that the newly elected team would work tirelessly to strengthen the legal profession and play a significant role in advancing justice and democracy in the country.

PTI founder appoint three official spokespersons

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan on Sunday appointed three official spokespersons.

According to a notification issued by the PTI, Barrister Gohar Khan, Salman Akram Raja, and Omar Ayub have been designated as the focal persons for PTI's incarcerated leader.

This decision aims to clear any ambiguities regarding information related to the PTI founder, ensuring that all communications will now be handled through these spokespersons, as per the notification.

Pak HC calls on Singapore Defence Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan High Commissioner in Singapore Rabia Shaqiq on Sunday made a courtesy call on Minister of Defence Singapore Dr Ng Eng Hen.

"The two discussed bilateral defense relations and participation in defense exhibitions," Pakistan High Commission said in a post on X handle.

Pakistan, Netherlands agree to boost bilateral relations, cricket collaboration

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met with Netherlands Ambassador Henny De Vries on



Sunday to discuss enhancing cooperation in various sectors, including the promotion of cricket between the two nations.

During the meeting, both sides agreed to organize a bilateral cricket series next year. The Netherlands also expressed willingness to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) to support cricket development.

Ambassador Henny De Vries confirmed that the Netherlands cricket team will visit Pakistan next year and play matches with the Pakistan "A" team.

PPP's Domki wins PB-8 Sibi by-election

By Saleem Gushkori SIBI: In the by-election held in Sibi's constituency PB-8, Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) candidate Sardar Kohyar Khan Domki has emerged victorious with a significant majority, according to unofficial and preliminary results. Domki, the son of late Sardar Sarfaraz Khan Domki, a provincial minister of PPP, was fielded by the party to contest the seat left vacant after his father's demise.

The Election Commission of Pakistan had announced the election on November 17. Mir Asghar Mari of Sibi Ittehad secured



the second position despite boycotting the election, while Khan Wali Khan Marghazani of PTI and Syed Noor Ahmed Shah Khajjak of Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party secured third and fourth positions, respectively.

Khawaja Asif takes a job at PTI founder Imran Khan

ISLAMABAD (INP) - Defence Minister Khawaja Asif took a job at PTI founder Imran Khan.

In his latest post on X (formerly Twitter), the senior PML-N leader said Imran Khan should call back his children from London for the success of his upcoming rally.

Asif said Bushra Bibi



QUETTA: MPA Zarak Khan Mandokhail meeting with Provincial Minister for Agriculture Haji Ali Madad Jattak.

Martyrs' blood would not go in vain Terrorists would have to account for every drop of blood of martyrs: CM

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti condemned the terrorist attack in the Johar area of Kalat district.

In his statement issued on Sunday, he said that the security forces are fighting on the frontline in the war against terrorism and there are anti-national elements behind the deteriorating situation in Balochistan.

He said that organized terrorism is being carried out in Balochistan to destabilize Pakistan and foreign hands are involved in terrorism saying that several proofs have been given at international forums regarding conspiracies.

"The wave of terrorism in Balochistan is a conspiracy against the state, but such conspiracy will be

foiled", he said adding that our security forces are bravely fighting the terrorists to maintain durable peace in the area.

Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that the cowardly attack by the terrorists in Kalat is condemnable, we are determined to bring the terrorists to their logical conclusion. Paying tribute to the brave soldiers who were martyred, the CM said that the martyrs' blood would not go in vain, terrorists would have to account for every drop of the blood of martyrs.

Meanwhile Governor Balochistan, Jaffer Khan Mandokhail, strongly condemned the terrorist attack in the Johar area of Kalat and reiterated the government's resolve to maintain peace and stability

in the province. He emphasized that sustainable peace is essential for economic development and political stability.

Governor Mandokhail urged law enforcement agencies to ensure the safety of citizens' lives and property. He offered prayers for the martyrs from the security forces who lost their lives in the attack and extended his condolences and solidarity to their families. He stated, "We will not allow the peace and order of our region to be disrupted under any circumstances. The sacrifices of our brave security personnel will not go in vain." The Governor's remarks reaffirmed the commitment to combating terrorism and ensuring the protection of Balochistan's people against such cowardly acts.



ISLAMABAD: Spanish Senate parliamentary delegation meeting with National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq.

NA speaker calls for stronger Pak-Spain parliamentary diplomacy through PFGs

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq Sunday emphasized strengthening parliamentary diplomacy to foster closer ties between Pakistan and Spain and advocated for the effective use of Parliamentary Friendship Groups (PFGs) to enhance inter-parliamentary relations.

He expressed these views during a meeting with a high-level Spanish parliamentary delegation comprising of Spanish Senators Vicente Azpitarte Perez, Ms. Natalia Uccero, Antonio Gutierrez Limones, Luis de la Peña and Ambassador of Spain in Pakistan Jose Antoniodo de Ory.

He said, "Enhancing Parliament to Parliament contacts are pivotal for strengthening ties between both nations."

The discussion focused on enhancing bilateral trade,

investment, and cooperation in areas such as agriculture, technology, education, and IT."

Speaker stated that Pakistan and Spain share cordial ties rooted in unanimity of views on various regional and international issues. Pakistan and Spain have enduring and strong ties.

Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq lauded the Spanish government and parliament for their principled support of the Palestinian cause. NA Speaker expressed grief over the loss of precious lives and property due to the devastating floods in Spain.

He said, "Both, Pakistan and Spain, contribute the least to climate change, yet face most of its impact."

He also expressed gratitude to the Spanish government and Spanish people for supporting Pakistan

during severe floods in 2022.

Speaker also highlighted Pakistan's untapped economic potential and geo-strategic importance as a partner for European nations. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to fostering stronger ties to promote regional stability and economic growth.

He condemned the severe human rights violations against Palestinians, noting that over 40,000 innocent children, women, and men have been martyred.

Moreover, he called for urgent global action to address these atrocities and praised Spain's unwavering advocacy for the rights of the Palestinian people.

NA Speaker also highlighted the plight of the Kashmiri people, who have been denied their fundamental rights for more than seven decades.

London High Court declares Hasan Nawaz bankrupt in UK tax case

LONDON (INP): Hasan Nawaz Sharif, son of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, has been declared bankrupt by the London High Court.

According to the court, he has been declared bankrupt in a tax and liability case of the UK government's tax and revenue department.

The details of the case has been published by the official UK Gazette, which keeps the public record.

It says that Hasan, a resident of Flat 17 Avenfield House, 118 Park Lane, and the company director has been declared bankrupt in the High Court Of Justice in case No 694 of 2023; filed on 25 August 2023. It merits mention that the bankruptcy order was issued on April 29, 2024, on a case brought by the creditors over non-payment.



QUETTA: President Central Anjum Tajir Balochistan Abdul Rahim Kakar, Nasrullah Khan Zarey, Malik Naseer Ahmed Shahwan and others addressing a Press conference.

Govt. committed to end digital gender divide: Shaza Fatima

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Sunday said that the government was committed to ending digital gender divide.

"Women's access to technology and Internet is utmost necessary, as they can be empowered through the provision of digital devices and Internet", she expressed while addressing virtually a conference titled 'Digitalization and Women in Politics' in Doha, Qatar.

She said the government was taking steps to remove hurdles in using mobile phone and Informa-

tion and Communications Technology (ICT) by women. Socio-economic hurdles impede women entry in politics, she said, adding that women could be empowered and brought into mainstream politics through digitalization.

Shaza Fatima said work is going on Gender Digital Divide Policy to facilitate women in their access to digital economy. She said the Prime Minister's Free Laptop Scheme was playing important role in enhancing access to digital tools. She said work is underway on the Smartphones for All Policy.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

IMF's concern

On Friday, the IMF team wrapped up its weeklong unscheduled talks on the Fund's ongoing \$7bn programme with the Pakistani authorities without making a customary end-of-mission statement, thus leaving most people in the dark about the outcome of the discussions. Some media reports have conjectured that the lender might comment on its findings soon. However, although we do not have all the details, it is clear from the information provided to journalists during the course of the talks that the Fund is seriously "concerned" over delays in the materialisation of foreign loans of \$2.5bn, including a Saudi oil facility of \$1.2bn, and the shortfall of Rs190bn in the tax collection target for the July-October period. The slow progress on the National Fiscal Pact, signed by the provinces and the centre, and delays in the privatisation of SOEs seem to have emerged as other areas of concern for the Fund, as the provinces have yet to align their farm and property tax rates with the federal tax regime.

It looks like the government is falling short of meeting several critical structural benchmark targets. Nonetheless, it still has some time to meet or, at least, move closer to, the targets as the first 'formal biannual review' of the bailout loan is expected to take place towards the end of February or early March. Dependent on a successful programme performance review is the disbursement of the next \$1bn tranche and, more critically, the market's confidence in the economy. The fact that fiscal deviations and delays in implementing other targets had alarmed the lender, compelling it to dispatch an early mission to protect the programme from derailment, indicates that the Fund would like to keep Islamabad on a tight leash. In spite of the strict implementation of the last short-term IMF SBA loan, Pakistan's track record has not inspired much confidence in the country's commitment to undertaking reforms. As they say, 'once bitten, twice shy' — multilateral and bilateral lenders are no longer in a mood to ignore the dilly-dallying on critical targets. The prime minister and his finance team have repeatedly pledged to make the current IMF bailout the country's last. But that appears to be more of political rhetoric than a plan, given the way they have allowed powerful lobbies — retailers, real estate businesses and others — to influence the government's economic decisions.

Black Water

Shahzad Sharjeel

The Trump victory in the recent US election has brought the subject of immigration under even greater focus. Along with forced displacements caused by wars, disasters and calamities, economic migrants in search of better livelihoods are defining politics worldwide. The UK tried sending immigrants to Rwanda under an agreement with the latter, but the scheme came to naught. Among other reasons, while Paul Kagame keeps getting elected to lead Rwanda and ensures consistency in policies, the British are becoming used to having more prime ministers in five years than most countries have in a decade or more. The scheme has thankfully failed, and with Labour having taken the reins at 10 Downing Street, it is not likely to be revived anytime soon. The good thing is that Rwanda gets to keep the money Britain paid them to get them to agree to this machination.

People like me could not understand the idea initially because we missed a significant point: we kept looking at it from a human rights lens, whereas the proponents of shipping would-be immigrants to the far-off corner of Africa looked at it from a legal perspective. Entering a country illegally or overstaying a legal permit is a crime.

What complicates the issue is that these lawbreakers do not usually try to evade the law. On the contrary, they announce their real motive for breaching the law as soon as they land on British soil and petition for asylum. In other words, those in favour of sending the aspiring immigrants to Rwanda see it just like another penal colony of yore, and the deportees as 'criminals'.

Prof Thomas Sowell noted, "Immigration laws are the only laws discussed in terms of how to help people who break them."

Of course, the evolution of international law and how countries conduct their business in modern times would not allow them to dump shiploads of people on some island and wash their hands off them as was done in the past. Australia and the Andaman Islands, more commonly known as "Kala Pani" (Black Water), are earlier examples of penal colonies.

Angola, the southern African country, is hardly ever mentioned in the same breath as other penal colonies. The Portuguese used it as one as far back as the 16th century. Unlike Australia, which received a mixed bag of lawbreakers from Britain, Angola only got the most hardened and dangerous convicts, and who turned to slave trading after serving their sentences.

Angola's woes refused to go away with time. While the out-bound human trafficking may have abated, as late as 2006, China transported shiploads of convicts to Angola as labourers and asked them to stay after serving their sentences as it did not want them back. Despite being a very densely forested country, it has no wild animals. You read it right, except for a dozen or so giant sable antelopes, the country's national symbol, this beautiful African country has no wild animals left in a reserve park. Wondering what happened? Well, they were either blown to pieces by landmines or eaten, because international politics and the resultant long civil wars did not allow any economy to take root, and people had to eat. So how come Australia grew

into a prosperous country and joined the league of other developed, primarily white, nations despite its humble antecedents? Why does Kala Pani only evoke a dreaded reminder of the subcontinent's plunder by the colonialists?

The Chinese are doing wonders worldwide, from mining rare earth to copper, running mammoth infrastructure; why haven't these 'pioneers' in Angola transformed Luanda and Huambo into a Sydney or a Perth? Well, one very pessimistic and deeply disturbing answer may be that it is geographic entities and the new arrivals who prospered in Australia, not the Aboriginal population. The native people and fauna of Angola continue to face extinction through landmines made in the US. It is anybody's guess where the AK-47s used during the bloody civil wars are made.

We have had quite a seamless transition from Kala Pani to Blackwater; only the seams are bursting now with organically grown and invasive species of predators. Residues of the Afghan wars have included not just heroin and Kalashnikovs but also landmines in erstwhile Fata; Blackwater, and other private contractors running spy ops; and fourth-rate informants and clerics enjoying state hospitality as high-value assets and guests.

Things need to change for the better and change fast, lest we become the first-ever example in the world where the natives feel as if they're condemned to a penal colony. We already have the dubious honour of being the only instance in human history where the majority ceded from a minority. Let us not create any more negative records. - Courtesy Dawn

Et tu, Maryam?

Muna Khan

How much should we know about Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's health? As a public official, should her health be up for the media's scrutiny? The media dictates so; the understanding is that politicians all over the world lose their right to privacy once they step into public office. Their health becomes an important story, especially if it threatens to impact their job.

But the Sharif family's health has received more scrutiny than others; from the brother's cosmetic surgeries to the most despicable manner in which Kulsoom Nawaz's illness was mocked as 'drama' on TV. So-called journalists said she was at a London clinic getting Botox when she was being treated for cancer in 2017. Someone also tried to break into her hospital room. Maryam Nawaz is routinely mocked for plastic surgery in the rudest of manners by the rudest of them all, Ali Amin Gandapur. Misogyny may as well be declared a national pastime. Notice how they use 'naami' as a pejorative for her. Women are wishing for Maryam to disappear, proving the feminist writer bell hooks (who uses lowercase letters to write her name) was right when she said "patriarchy has no gender".

People in power have a duty to be transparent about their health, and the media has to report to the public if leaders are not being truthful.

A part of the reason there was so much media attention on Joe Biden's visible cognitive decline was because it impacted his performance. I think people will look back at this time and ask why he was allowed to continue. There are plenty of leaders who hid their illnesses and I understand that

they did so because they did not want to be seen as weak. History shows how leaders' poor health led to poor decision-making. And when they told the truth, like Norway's prime minister Kjell Bondevik did when he admitted to having depression and taking a month off work, it was greatly respected. And helped fight stigma about depression.

Maryam Nawaz is under scrutiny for a few reasons, some of which are due to misogyny, her unpopularity and, I'm sorry to say, her high-end designer wear. Initially I thought it was petty, but when I saw her draped in fur in London, I imitated the slap-on-forehead emoji we all use. To be clear, I am not policing her clothing choices. I'm questioning the messaging it sends at a time when thousands are sick in Punjab due to the smog.

She has every right to seek medical treatment wherever she likes, especially when her mother was diagnosed with throat cancer in 2017. Much like Imran Khan wants to be examined by his doctors, she too wants treatment from her doctors. This system is so flawed that people across the political divide do not trust hospitals because everyone fears being poisoned. The irony is that every party has played a role in creating this poisonous environment.

But I digress. Ms Nawaz's health does not explain why senior minister Mariyum Aurangzeb travelled with her at this critical juncture. Or why the chief minister flew on a special air force plane, as reported in the media. This fuels the perception that the party doesn't take its responsibilities seriously. While she was in Geneva, Punjab's Minister of Information

Azma Bukhari posted pictures from her umrah trip on Instagram. There are news reports the provincial chief secretary is away too.

This is a valid question. Instead, a lot of the media and YouTube-verse has focused on inane issues like Mariyum Aurangzeb carrying Maryam Nawaz's purse in Geneva or calculating the cost of the fur the chief minister wore. Then there was the reporting on the father and daughter meeting abusive attacks in London. As a side note, abusing opponents should be de-clared a national sport. We know which team will always win.

Surely, we can do better journalism. That means asking tough questions about Maryam's plans to tackle the smog crisis, beyond the sloganeering we've seen so far. We should be spared the breakdown of the elder Sharif's platelet count that dominated the airwaves a few years ago. If her health is an impediment to doing her job, someone else must be deputized to do it. Report, do not speculate, do not sensationalise.

At the time of writing, Ms Aurangzeb had returned and announced that the smog in Punjab had "now" turned into a health crisis. The media should "now" go into overdrive and report on the actions being taken to fix this problem. This includes reporting on what is causing the toxic pollutants and what the responsible parties are doing to mitigate the crisis. In this age of connectivity, you can't fool people for political gain. There is a serious trust deficit between political leaders and the public and only transparency can mend it. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

ADB launches major initiative to build resilience to melting glaciers

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Sunday launched a new regional program, Glaciers to Farms that will promote sustainable water use and food security in Central Asia, the South Caucasus, and Pakistan amid the catastrophic impacts of accelerated glacial melt due to climate change.

Supported by the Green Climate Fund's (GCF) Project Preparation Facility, ADB will conduct risk assessments of glacial melt in Azerbaijan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan—forming the scientific and technical basis for the Glacier to Farms program, according to ADB press release received here.

With temperatures in the region projected to rise by up to 6 degrees Celsius by 2100, the loss of glacial mass threatens the fragile balance of ecosystems, jeopardizing water supply for agriculture and hydropower, and risking the livelihoods of more than 380 million people.

COP29 President and Azerbaijan Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources Mukhtar Babayev; Kazakhstan Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources Yerlan Nyssanbayev; Kyrgyz Republic Minister of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision Meder Mashiev; Tajikistan Committee on Environmental Protection Chairman Bahodur Sheralizoda; and Uzbekistan Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection, and Climate Change Aziz Abdulkhakov signed a declaration of support for preserving glaciers with ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa and GCF Chief Investment Officer Henry Gonzalez.

"As melting glaciers change waterflows, disrupt lives, and destroy ecosystems, we must act now," said Asakawa.

"As Asia and the Pacific's climate bank, we are pleased to be joined by key partners to launch this program to drive international collaboration and deliver results where they matter most—on the ground, in communities at risk," he added.

Glaciers to Farms envisages mobilizing up to \$3.5 billion from ADB,

GCF, governments, development partners, and the private sector, subject to the participating institutions' board approvals.

In addition to water and agriculture investments, the program will support vulnerable communities threatened by glacial melt, particularly in fragile mountain regions.

"The GCF recognizes the regional Glaciers to Farms program as a vital initiative to enhance climate resilience and promote sustainable development," said Gonzalez.

"Recognizing the profound vulnerability of mountain communities and ecosystems, this program is instrumental in safeguarding our precious water resources and empowering those most at risk. This program embodies the essential collaboration and innovative strategies needed to address the severe challenges posed by climate change. Together, we can build a resilient and sustainable future for all—especially for the vulnerable populations who depend on our mountain landscapes."



CHINA: Ambassador of Pakistan to China H.E. Mr. Khalil Hashmi speaking at a Seminar on the High Quality Development of offshore Wind Power Supply Chain at Fuzhou, Fujian Province in China.

Governor inaugurates five newly installed TBS, gas expansion projects in DIK

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday inaugurated the gas expansion and low-pressure elimination projects in Dera Ismail Khan.

Addressing the ceremony held in this regard, the governor said all efforts would be made to reduce gas load shedding and low-pressure issues in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to facilitate and extend relief

to the people of the province.

He lamented that the province produced gas but faced the highest level of gas load shedding. He directed the officials of the Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) officials to ensure minimal gas load shedding during the winter season.

He said that to prevent low pressure and load shedding in Dera Ismail Khan, five new TBS

(Town Border Stations) were being installed, and the existing TBS would also be upgraded to ensure that residents face no difficulties during the winter.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) government had initiated several major projects for the development of Dera Ismail Khan, including the Dera Ismail Khan International Airport.

Saleem Memon for fulfilling promise of establishing Hajj office, vaccination facility in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD (APP): The President, Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders & Small Industry (HCSTSI), Muhammad Saleem Memon, has strongly urged the Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain, to fulfill the promise of establishing a dedicated Hajj Office and vaccination facility in Hyderabad for Hajj 2025.

According to a press release issued here on Sunday, HCSTSI President further stated that the HCSTSI had actively highlighted this issue during the last Hajj season by sending letters to the fed-



ISLAMABAD: Visitors taking keen interest in artificial jewelry on stall during the 10-Day Folk Festival (Lok Mela) 2024 at Lok Virsa in the Federal Capital.

Terminating PPAs – A panacea to release consumers from IPPs clutches

ISLAMABAD (APP): Switching towards Competitive Trading Bilateral Contracts Market (CTBCM) regime, liberalization and privatization of power sector will have longstanding effects on power tariff, paving way for relief to consumers and contribute to overall economic growth of the country.

Since high-power tariff had been hammering our economic growth and piling up huge circular debt, the initiative of premature termination of power purchase agreements (PPAs) with dozens of independent power producers (IPPs) will also help resolve these grave issues.

Mounting debt load, rising power prices and an astonishing Rs 1,411,669 million capacity payment made to IPPs during fiscals 2022-23 and 2023-24 made the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's government to come out with solutions to stem out this menace and lessen burden on consumers and national kitty.

The government set up a Task Force to implement structural reforms with Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari as its Chairman, PM's Special Assistant on power Muhammad Ali as co-Chairman and Lt Gen Zafar Iqbal as National Coordinator also including in it representatives from various regulatory bodies.

Initially, after detailed deliberations with IPPs, Awais Leghari announced premature termination of PPAs with five oldest IPPs to save Rs 411 billion with an impact of around 71 paise per unit on average electricity tariff. "Contracts with Saba, Lalpur, Atlas and Roush having accumulative generation capacity of 2,463 Megawatt (MWs), set up under 1994 power policy were terminated through "mutual agreement."

Leghari said, process of reviewing contracts with other IPPs and state-owned power plants would further reduce tariffs by Rs 8-10 per unit. "Termination agreement with five IPPs was one of the several measures to reduce tariffs. We also desire to convert existing clause of 'take or pay' for IPPs established under 2002 power policy, to 'take and pay.'" He also mentioned to reducing tariffs by Rs 3.5 per unit through agreements with local IPPs, Rs 3.75 per unit by re-profiling debt of Chinese IPPs, Rs 0.75 per unit through surcharges, Rs 0.72 per unit by closing five IPPs and Rs 0.16 per unit reduction by removing television fee from electricity bills.

Special Assistant to PM, Muhammad Ali also hoped an agreement with bagasse based power plants for tariff cuts and revise PPAs with 18 other IPPs within next four to six months. "Negotiations had been completed with bagasse-based IPPs for de-linking their international coal-based pricing indexed to US dollar.



TANDOJAM: Chairman IPO-Pakistan, Ambassador (R) Farukh Amil & Dr. Fateh Muhammad Marri, Vice Chancellor, Sindh Agriculture University with panelists after a productive seminar on Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge & IP.

Governor KP says: Several development initiatives afoot for Paharpur's uplift

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday said that a number of development initiatives were being taken for the socio-economic development of Paharpur Tehsil.

He expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of traders and notables from Paharpur Tehsil.

The delegation included the Chairman of the Paharpur Traders' Association, Noman Niazi, Haji Muhammad Iqbal, Haji Bagh Ali, Chaudhry Nazir Ahmed, and prominent political and social figure Junaid Tariq Qureshi, who briefed the governor on issues being faced by the area.

He said that the results of the ongoing upgradation project of the

Paharpur Grid Station will soon be visible, contributing significantly to the area's development. Moreover, he added that an interchange would be established at Paharpur-Paniala under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which will not only provide convenience to the local population but also serve as a milestone for the region's economic development.

Similarly, he said that a passport counter would be set up at the NADRA office in Paharpur and residents would not have to travel to Dera Ismail Khan for passport-related services. The governor also said that effective measures were being taken to equip the area's youth with quality education and enable them

to pursue higher studies in their own region.

As part of it, efforts were underway to establish a campus of Gomal University in Paharpur and the Higher Education Commission would be contacted in this regard.

The governor also informed that a breakthrough had been achieved about Kloorkot-Karri Khaisor Road and the Chashma Right Bank Canal project. He said those initiatives would benefit the local population, no opportunists and elements with vested interest would be allowed to obstruct the progress of the area.

Meanwhile, the governor also paid a visit to the house of late PPP worker Muhammad Akhtar at Paharpur and sympathized with the bereaved family members.



MUREEDKAY: Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain expressing solidarity with brides during mass wedding ceremony of needy families.

SAAR organizes inspiring event under Rawdari Fellowship Programme

HYDERABAD (APP): In an inspiring event organized under the Rawdari Fellowship Programme, sponsored by APCEU and organized by the SAAR Organization here at Hyderabad Press Club other day.

Around 20 participants from diverse religious groups and all genders experienced an engaging education attended the event.

The session was led by senior journalist Murtaza Siyal, who serves as a senior editor, member of the Press Club and Jai Prakash Moorani, a member of the governing party,

editor at Daily Ibrat.

During their visit, the participants were enlightened by discussions on the ethics of journalism and the historical evolution of revolutionary essays in modern newspapers.

Jai Prakash highlighted the non-discriminatory principles that guide journalistic ethics. Sharing his editorial journey, he noted his pride in publishing essays by senior Scholars on significant religious occasions such as Shab-e-Mairaj and Haj, ensuring inclusive narratives across faiths.

Siyal, provided a detailed perspective on the art of essay writing, emphasizing critical points for aspiring writers and the editorial process for refining submissions.

Both passionately discussed the role of journalism in promoting unbiased, well informed narratives and offered their mentorship to Rawdari fellows on their writing journey.

The Press Club's rich history was also shared with participants, offering them a glimpse into the legacy of free press and its role in societal transformation.

JSMU hosts MMIDSP meet: tackles 45% rise in pediatric typhoid, 25% surge in diphtheria

KARACHI (INP): The Pathology department of Jimmah Sindh Medical University (JSMU), in collaboration with Continuing Medical Education (CME) and the Medical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases Society of Pakistan (MMIDSP), recently organized the first MMIDSP Sindh Regional Research Meet at JSMU. The event focused on the theme of "Frontiers of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology."

Dr. Kausar Jabeen, a leading expert on emerging infectious diseases, highlighted the rise of threats such as a 30% increase in Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever cases over the past 5 years, as well as outbreaks of polio, dengue, and Chikungunya in Pakistan. She emphasized the urgent need for improved disease surveillance, rapid diagnosis,

and coordinated public health response to effectively manage these growing threats to public health security.

Dr. Naseem Salauddin, a renowned tuberculosis researcher and infectious disease consultant, reported that new MDR-TB drug regimens achieved over 80% cure rates, a significant improvement over the 50-60% cure rates typically seen with existing treatments. The new regimens also reduced treatment duration from 24 months to just 9-12 months, which could greatly improve patient adherence and outcomes.

While Pakistan has seen a 90% reduction in polio cases since 2014, Dr. Ali Faisal, Pediatrician at AKU noted the country still faces challenges reaching remote communities.

16 dead, 1397 injured in 1328 RTCs in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): At least sixteen persons were killed and 1397 injured in 1328 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. Out of these, 600 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 797 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by Rescue Medical Teams thus reducing the burden of Hospitals.

Furthermore, the analysis showed those 771 drivers, 49 underage drivers, 134 pedestrians, and 508 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes. The statistics show that 269 RTCs were reported in Lahore which affected 302 persons placing the Provincial Capital at top of the list followed by Multan 89 in with 95 victims.

Azma Bokhari says: IMF acknowledged Punjab govt.'s progress towards achieving targeted surplus

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has rebutted the contents of a news item published under the headline "Provinces face new targets under fiscal pact", in an English language daily on November 17, asserting that the news report falsely refers to the government of Punjab's investment in a UAE-based fund.

Contradicting the erroneous impression created in the news, the Information Minister said that the government of Punjab has not invested in any UAE-based fund. "Since there is no such investment in a UAE-based fund, this was never discussed in the meeting of the IMF with the

functionaries of the government of Punjab. Furthermore, the news item wrongly insinuates IMF's alarm over the previously incorrectly reported 1st quarter deficit of Punjab," she mentioned.

Azma Bokhari said that the IMF agreed that the Punjab government had a surplus of approximately Rs 40 billion at the end of the 1st quarter and as such the Ministry of Finance, government of Pakistan corrected its data and uploaded revised fiscal operations reflecting the Punjab government's surplus. "Lastly, the news item also misreports that Punjab fell short of its surplus target of Rs. 150 billion at the end of the 1st quarter.



KARACHI: Participants of the protest rally under Awami Tehreek Ladies Wing are raising slogans for their demands at the Karachi Press Club.

Over 7,300 candidates appear in KU entry test for academic session 2025

KARACHI (INP): As many as 7,365 candidates appeared in the entry test held for the morning session in BS, B.Ed (H), and B.E., programs, Doctor of Pharmacy (morning and evening program), and Doctor of Physical Therapy of the University of Karachi on Sunday.

The entry test was conducted for the academic year 2025 in the departments of Applied Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Applied Physics, Biotechnology, Business Administration (BBA), B.E. Chemical Engineering, Commerce, Computer Sci-

ence—(BSCS) and (BSSE) — Split 2+2 Chinese, Criminology, Education, Environmental Studies, Food Science and Technology, Human Nutrition and Dietetics, International Relations, Mass Communication, Public Administration, Petroleum Technology, Special Education, Sports Business Management and B. Ed (H) Teacher Education, and Doctor of Physical Therapy (five-year program) and Doctor of Pharmacy (five-year program) in morning and evening shifts. The written test was held for 1,527 allocated seats in these departments.

The KU in charge of the Directorate Admissions Committee Dr Saima Akhter informed that the University of Karachi had received 7,585 online admission forms for the entry test-based degree program of which 7,365 candidates appeared in the 177 examination rooms established in 22 examination centers across the campus were arranged for these candidates.

She said that the 100-minute entry test started at 11:00 a.m. and concluded at 12:40 p.m. The initial list of the successful candidates will be uploaded by No-

vember 22, 2024, on the admission portal (www.uokadmission.edu.pk). KU has conducted the entry test through its own assessment and testing service (KUATS).

Meanwhile, the acting KU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Shaista Tabassum, Registrar Professor Dr Abdul Waheed, Director Evening Professor Dr Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, Professor Dr Anila Amber Malik, Dr Saima Akhter, Campus Security Advisor Dr Salman Zubair, Senior Medical Officer Dr Wafa Altaf and others were present on this

occasion and monitored the admission test proceedings.

The staff of the KU Medical Centre along with ambulances were also present during the test proceeding. The Watch and Ward and Directorate of Admissions staff were also present for the guidance of students and separate waiting areas near the examination classrooms were established for the parents and guardians of the candidates. The KU Transport Unit facilitates candidates, parents, and guardians by providing a shuttles service from each entry point.

International News

Israel carries out wave of air strikes on Beirut

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Israel launched a wave of air strikes on Hezbollah bastions in Beirut and south Lebanon, a day after Lebanese government officials said they were studying a US truce proposal. Since Tuesday, Israel has carried out several air raids on the city's southern suburbs, a stronghold of Hezbollah. AFP TV video showed three plumes of smoke rising over buildings in the area on Saturday morning, and another around midday.

Shortly before the morning attack, Israeli military spokesman Avichay Adraee posted on X a call for residents of the Haret Hreik suburb to evacuate. "You are close to facilities and interests belonging to Hezbollah, against which the Israeli military will be acting with force in the near future," the post said in Arabic, identifying specific buildings and telling residents to move at least 500 metres away. A similar

warning was also issued before the midday strike.

An Israeli strike on neighbouring Syria earlier this week killed two leaders from Islamic Jihad, a Palestinian group which has fought alongside Hamas in Gaza, a source told AFP.

Since September 23, Israel has escalated its bombing of targets in Lebanon, later sending in ground troops after almost a year of limited, cross-border exchanges of fire with Hezbollah fighters. AFP TV footage showed fresh strikes on the southern suburbs of Beirut on Saturday, following calls from the Israeli army for residents to evacuate.

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency said Israel carried out three air raids in the morning, later reporting another attack in the neighbourhood of Chiyah. It also reported a strike on the southern city of Tyre, in a neighbourhood near UNESCO-listed ancient ruins.

Elsewhere in south Lebanon, the health minist-

ry said Israeli strikes killed two rescuers affiliated with Hezbollah and its ally Amal. Hezbollah claimed several rocket attacks on northern Israel, targeting military sites including a naval base in the Haifa area.

Lebanese authorities say that more than 3,440 people have been killed since Israel launched its offensive. In a rare claim of responsibility for a strike on Syria, Israel said it targeted the Islamic Jihad group on Thursday. A source from the group told AFP on Saturday that Abdel Aziz Minawi, a member of Islamic Jihad's political bureau, and the group's foreign relations chief Rasmi Abu Issa were killed in the strike on Qudsaya, in the Damascus area. Islamic Jihad still holds several Israeli prisoners taken during the October 7 attack on southern Israel. Earlier this week, the group released two video clips of Sasha Trupanov, a 29-year-old Russian-Israeli prisoner.



U.S. President Joe Biden meets with China's President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the APEC Summit in Lima, Peru.

Russia targets Ukraine's power grid in 'massive' missile strike, officials say

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Blasts rang out across Ukraine's capital Kyiv and other cities early on Sunday, as Russia staged its biggest missile attack since August and targeted power facilities with the winter setting in, officials said.

Ukrainians have been bracing for a major attack on the hobbled power system for weeks, fearing crippling damage to the grid that would cause long blackouts and build psychological pressure at a critical moment in the war Russia

launched in February 2022. "Another massive attack on the power system is under way.

The enemy is attacking electricity generation and transmission facilities throughout Ukraine," Ukrainian Energy Minister German Galushchenko wrote on Facebook.

Air defences could be heard engaging drones over the capital in the night, and a series of powerful blasts rang out across the city centre as the missile attack was under way in the morning.

Russia cuts gas supplies to Austria

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian gas giant Gazprom (GAZPMM), continued to pump steady volumes of gas to Europe via Ukraine on Saturday, but supplies to Austrian energy company OMV were halted hours after Vienna said Russia had given notice it would cut off flows.

Russia, which before the Ukraine war was the biggest single supplier of natural gas to Europe, has lost almost all of its European customers as the EU tried to reduce its dependence and the Nord Stream gas pipeline to Germany was blown up in 2022.

Iran denies report on UN envoy's meeting with Musk

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Iran's foreign ministry spokesman on Saturday "categorically" denied The New York Times report on Tehran's ambassador to the United Nations meeting with US tech billionaire Elon Musk, state media reported.

In an interview with state news agency IRNA, spokesman Esmail Baghaei was reported as "categorically denying claims made in some

American media about a meeting between Elon Musk and Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations in New York, expressed surprise at its wide coverage by the American media".

The Times reported on Friday that Musk, who is a close ally of President-elect Donald Trump, met earlier this week with Iran's ambassador to the UN, Amir Sa'eed Iravani. It cited anonymous Iranian

India's successful test of hypersonic missile puts it among elite group

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India successfully tested a domestically developed long-range hypersonic missile, it claimed on Sunday, attaining a key milestone in military development that puts it in a small group of nations possessing the advanced technology. The global push for hypersonic weapons figures in the efforts of some countries, such as India, which is striving to develop advanced long-range missiles.

China ready to work with Trump team, Xi tells Biden in Peru

Monitoring Desk
LIMA: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Saturday vowed to work with the incoming US administration of President-elect Donald Trump as he held his final talks with outgoing President Joe Biden on key conflicts from cyber crime to trade, Taiwan and Russia.

Biden met Xi for about two hours at a hotel where the Chinese leader was staying, on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in Lima, Peru, for their first talks in seven months.

"China's goal of a stable, healthy and sustainable China-U.S. relationship remains unchanged," following the election, Xi said, acknowledging "ups and downs" between the countries.

"China is ready to

work with the new U.S. administration to maintain communication, expand cooperation and manage differences."

Biden told Xi that the two leaders haven't always agreed but their discussions have been "frank" and "candid."

The talks come two months before Trump assumes office. He has vowed to adopt blanket 60% tariffs on U.S. imports of Chinese goods as part of a package of "America First" trade measures.

Beijing opposes those steps. The Republican president-elect also plans to hire several hawkish voices on China in senior roles, including U.S. Senator Marco Rubio as secretary of state and Representative Mike Waltz as national security adviser.

Trump attends UFC championship fight in New York, taking a break from Cabinet picks

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: President-elect Donald Trump walked out to a roaring standing ovation just ahead of the start of the UFC pay-per-view card at Madison Square Garden, combining two things close to his heart: fierce battles inside the octagon and New York City.

Trump was accompanied by UFC President Dana White and the pair headed to their cageside seats to Kid Rock's "American Bad Ass."

UFC aired a video package of Trump's road to reclaiming the White House, calling it, "The great comeback in American History," while fans stood and applauded. Trump, wearing a suit and red tie, pumped his fist toward the crowd when the video ended.

The president-elect also had his clenched fists pumping back and forth and briefly danced to the Village People's "YMCA" just outside the cage. He later again thrust his fist skyward as "Takin' Care of

Business" played.

Elon Musk, picked by Trump to lead a new Department of Government Efficiency, and House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., joined the president-elect and White at the Garden, as did Robert Kennedy Jr., Trump's choice to lead the Department of Health and Human Services in his incoming administration.

Trump was flanked on his front-row seat by White on his right and Musk on his left and politely applauded the fight winners. Besieged by photographers and nearby fans, Trump stood to pose for pictures with White, Musk and other associates in breaks between fights. Trump even had a brief conversation with country singer Jelly Roll after the pair shook hands. What to know about Trump's second term: Staffing the administration: Here are the people Trump has picked for key positions so far. Plus, a look at recess appointments and how could Trump use them to fill his Cabinet.

Raisani stresses youths' vital role of in fight against tuberculosis

BALI (INP): Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani, Member of the National Assembly and leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party, (PPP) on Sunday stressed the vital role of youth in the fight against tuberculosis through community-driven initiatives, awareness campaigns and the adoption of modern technology. Pakistan's cuisine from Australia.

He stressed the importance of involving youth in policy formulation and practical initiatives. "Young people should encourage their peers to adopt healthy lifestyles and address public misconceptions to ensure timely treatment," Raisani stated. He added that early diagnosis of TB is possible through local-level screening efforts and collaboration with global organizations. Raisani also underlined the need for effective community campaigns to achieve complete eradication of TB.

Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani acknowledged the efforts of First Lady Aseefa Bhutto in the fight against TB. He said her vision has mobilized youth across Pakistan, including in Balochistan. He also praised Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's dedication to eradicating TB and polio from Balochistan and ensuring youth are provided opportunities in health and education sectors.



QUETTA: Chairman Public Accounts Committee, MP Aasghar Ali Tareen enquiring about health of Parliamentary Secretary Urban Planning and Chairman QDA Afsandiyar Khan Kakar.

Hafiz Naem urges all political parties to unite for peace in country

KARACHI (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Hafiz Naem Rehman urged all the political parties to unite in order to establish peace in the country.

He was addressing a press conference in Karachi on Sunday.

The JI Emir strongly condemned the killing of party's general secretary of Bajaur chapter.

"It is the responsibility of federal and provincial governments to ensure security of the citizens. Jamaat-e-Islami is the largest political party of Bajaur," said Hafiz Naem.

He said that Pakistan should avoid to fight any proxy war in the region.

The Afghan government should also play a responsible role to achieve peace in the region, he added.

The JI Emir also highlighted the need to address the issues in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

"All the political parties should sit together and resolve the country's problems collectively," he said.

Hafiz Naem also grilled the government for its handling of the economy and national issues.

The deteriorating law and order situation is also affecting our economy badly, he added.

KP govt lost writ in province: Sherpao

PESHAWAR (APP): Senior politician and Chairman Quami Watan Party (QWP) Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao has said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has lost its writ in the province. Talking to media at Charsadda on Sunday, Aftab Sherpao said the rulers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were busy in taking out protest rallies and sit-ins after losing its writ and hold in the province.

The current circumstances, he said, demand a national dialogue between all the political parties rather than agitation and conflicts. The wheel of progress in the province has come to a standstill position as its rulers were busy with conflictual and agitational politics, he maintained. To a query about ongoing terror incidents, Aftab Sherpao said foreign hands were behind these activities adding that limited actions were not enough to cope with the situation rather it needed a large-scale operation. "We have to address the root causes of this menace", Aftab Sherpao said, adding that adopting democratic means and a conflictive attitude will not help in the release of any jailed politician as there were the courts.



SINGAPORE: Pakistan's High Commissioner to Singapore, Rabia Shafiq called on Dr Ng Eng Hen, Minister of Defence.

Silent humming protests shake COP29, climate activists demand climate justice

BAKU (APP): A silent yet powerful protest unfolded at COP29, as climate activists from over 100 countries aligned along the plenary halls to voice their demand for climate justice. The demonstrators used humming as a symbolic form of protest against what they perceive as the multilateral forum's bias towards oil-producing developed nations, which they accuse of stalling crucial climate finance mobilization.

Talking to APP on the sidelines of the protest, Hemantha Withanage from Sri Lanka's Centre for Environmental Justice emphasized the urgent need for developed countries to take responsibility for financing climate action. "The rich countries, who are the historical polluters, need to pay for climate finance instead of blocking its mobilization. The current contributions, like the \$700 million for the loss and damage fund, pale in comparison to the over \$1 trillion required by developing countries for adaptation, climate-resilient agriculture and infrastructure," Withanage stated.

Protesters criticized the calls for developing nations to seek climate finance from private sectors and carbon markets, insisting that public funding from developed countries is essential to support vulnerable nations. Many civil society organizations (CSOs) feel sidelined in forums dominated by wealthy polluting industries, such as oil and coal mining companies.



DOHA: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja addressing virtually a Conference titled 'Digitalization and Women in Politics'.

Education central route to development: Khalid Maqbool

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui has said, education is the sole path to Development of the country.

He expressed these words while addressing as chief guest at the convocation of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU), Sindh Chapter, held in Karachi on Sunday.

The minister emphasized that education is not only a necessity of the times but also the first commandment of our religion.

He warned that if we fail to align ourselves with the demands of the present era and do not strive to change ourselves, external forces will impose their changes upon us.

Federal Minister for Education and Vice-Chancellor AIU has distributed degrees to passed out students and the students with outstanding performance were awarded gold medals.

Congratulating the graduates, the Federal Minister emphasized that their success is a testament to their dedication, hard work, and the quality education provided by Allama Iqbal Open University, along with the efforts and competence of its teachers.

He remarked that the fast-changing world has transformed everything, and those who fail to adapt are left behind, as even divine intervention does not aid those unwilling to change themselves.

Highlighting Pakistan's youth as both an opportunity and a challenge, he noted that 65% of the country's population comprises young people, equating to approximately 180 million youth.

He urged them to adapt to contemporary changes to contribute effectively to the country's progress.

The Minister gave special congratulations to the gold medal recipients, stating that their medals are a source of pride for the nation.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Nasir Mahmood mentioned that AIU has 10 regional campuses in Sindh, with around 44,000 students currently enrolled.

He revealed that approximately five million students have graduated from the university to date, claiming that there is hardly a household in Pakistan without a student or graduate of AIU.

Sikh pilgrims to visit Kartarpur

LAHORE (APP): Sikh pilgrims from India and around the world have arrived in Pakistan to celebrate the 555th birth anniversary of Baba Guru Nanak. They observed their rituals at Gurdwara Panja Sahib in Hassan Abdal.

The Sikh pilgrims will visit Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur on Monday (tomorrow).

The pilgrims have expressed immense satisfaction with the arrangements made by the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB). Commending the facilities, including security and accommodation, they described the efforts as "commendable."

He said that such nefarious tactics cannot shake the determination of the government for the development and prosperity of Balochistan. Neither the cowardly attacks of terrorists can lower the morale of the brave Pakistani nation.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that the nation will continue to destroy the evil intentions of Pakistan's enemies with the security forces and the country of the monster of terrorism. We will continue the war against it until its complete elimination. He paid tribute to the brave Pakistani who sacrificed their lives while protecting the homeland in the attack and said that the sons of nation who sacrificed their lives for the sake of the homeland will always be alive in the hearts of the nation.

Ali Hassan condemns attack on Kalat's Shah Mardan Check Post

QUETTA (APP): The cowardly attack by terrorists on the Shah Mardan check post of Kalat district of Balochistan is highly condemnable.

The elements spreading chaos and unrest in Balochistan are enemies of the people of Balochistan and its development. These views were expressed by the central senior leader of Pakistan Peoples Party, Spokesperson of President Asif Ali Zardari and Provincial Advisor for Industry and Crafts Mir Ali Hassan Zehri in his condemnation statement.

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Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that the nation will continue to destroy the evil intentions of Pakistan's enemies with the security forces and the country of the monster of terrorism. We will continue the war against it until its complete elimination. He paid tribute to the brave Pakistani who sacrificed their lives while protecting the homeland in the attack and said that the sons of nation who sacrificed their lives for the sake of the homeland will always be alive in the hearts of the nation.



CHINA: Ambassador of Pakistan to China H.E. Mr. Khalil Hashmi had a useful interaction with Ms. Guo Ningning, Party Secretary of Fuzhou, Fujian Province in China.

Winter arrives in AJK, first snowfall brings relief and chill

MIRPUR (APP): The long-awaited winter has finally arrived in Azad Jammu Kashmir, bringing relief and a chill to the region.

The first snowfall of the season, coupled with rains, hit the upper reaches of AJK on Saturday, ending a two-month dry spell.

Neelum and Leepa Valleys received heavy snowfall, with mercury plummeting and night temperatures becoming intolerably chilly, when approached, APP Correspondent was informed by reliable sources on Sunday.

Smog severely impacts health of sensitive citizens across Punjab

LAHORE (INP): Smog has severely impacted the health of sensitive citizens across Punjab, with approximately 1.93 million people visiting hospitals over the past 30 days for respiratory and related illnesses, according to the Punjab Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department on Sunday.

In the last month, hospitals in Punjab received 124,660 asthma patients, 62,908 cases of ischemic heart disease, 5,953 stroke patients, and 12,694 cases of conjunctivitis. The department further reported that in the past seven days alone, 452,567 respiratory disease cases, 31,707 asthma cases, 13,768 ischemic heart disease cases, 1,695 strokes, and 47,224 conjunctivitis cases were treated. Over the last 24 hours, hospitals handled 53,377 respiratory disease cases, 3,509 asthma cases, 883 ischemic heart disease cases, 104 strokes, and 656 conjunctivitis cases.

Lahore, the city most impacted by smog, reported 132,558 respiratory disease cases, 5,954 asthma cases, 14,869 ischemic heart disease cases, 583 strokes, and 2,395 conjunctivitis cases over the past month. In the last seven days, the city saw 34,168 respiratory disease cases, 2,321 asthma cases, 1,835 ischemic heart disease cases.

AI Summit declares East Jerusalem a red line, reaffirms two-state solution as key to Mid East peace

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman, deputizing for King Salman bin Abdulaziz on Sunday condemned Israel's actions in Palestine, describing them as 'genocide' impacting over 150,000 individuals, including women and children.

Inaugurating the Extraordinary Arab and Islamic Summit recently held in Riyadh, he decried violations of Al-Aqsa Mosque's sanctity, impediments to humanitarian aid, and Israeli military actions in Lebanon, reaffirming Saudi Arabia's support for Lebanon's sovereignty and stability.

The crown prince urged global action to halt aggression and reiterated the Kingdom's commitment to a two-state solution, calling for an independent Palestinian state along 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. He also highlighted Saudi efforts to mobilize international cooperation through the Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan emphasized that a two-state solution is the only viable path to lasting peace in the Middle East. Speaking after the summit, he highlighted Arab and Islamic unity in addressing the escalating crisis in Palestine.

Prince Faisal called for immediate de-escalation, an end to Israeli violations, the easing of humanitarian aid restrictions, and international pressure on Israel to halt aggressive measures, including withholding Palestinian tax revenues.

Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Secretary-General, Hissein Brahimi Taha condemned Israeli violence in Palestine and Lebanon as 'atrocities and genocide' during the summit. He criticized attacks on UNRWA and warned of escalating risks of an all-out war, calling Israel's actions a 'blatant violation' of international law and UN resolutions.

Taha urged immediate global action, emphasizing the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2735 for a ceasefire and humanitarian aid access in Gaza. He also called for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories and the empowerment of Palestinian governance in Gaza, essential steps for stability.

On Lebanon, Taha urged adherence to Resolution 1701, advocating a halt to hostilities and protection of the country's sovereignty. He reaffirmed the OIC's demand for international intervention to safeguard Palestinian and Lebanese rights and ensure humanitarian aid, stressing the summit's unified call for peaceful resolutions to the crises. Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit accused Israel of pursuing a strategy to dismantle Palestinian society in Gaza through forced or voluntary displacement, warning this approach aims to erase the prospects of a future independent Palestinian state.

Speaking at the summit, he said Israel's actions undermine coexistence and obstruct peace efforts based on justice. He stressed the region's unwavering demand for an independent Palestinian state along the 1967 borders.

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LAHORE: Spanish Parliamentary delegation led by Vicente Azpurrata Perez visiting Badshahi Masjid.

Saghar says: Jailed Hurriyat leaders dedicated entire life for Kashmir cause

ISLAMABAD (INP): All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-AJK) chapter leader Mehmood Ahmed Saghar has said that illegally detained Hurriyat leaders have dedicated their entire life for the Kashmir cause and better political future of the oppressed people of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Mehmood Ahmed Saghar in a statement issued in Islamabad said people in Indian occupied territory know it well that Hurriyat leaders, including Shabbir Ahmad Shah, Massrat Aalam Butt, Muhammad Yasir Malik, Aasiya Andrabi.

Spanish delegation tours Lahore's historical sites

LAHORE (APP): A delegation of the Spanish Senate Foreign Affairs Committee toured several historical landmarks of the city to explore its rich cultural heritage, here on Sunday.

The distinguished guests visited several key sites, including the Lahore Museum, Badshahi Mosque, Royal Fort (Shahi Qila), the tomb of Allama Iqbal, and the Samadhi of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. They deeply explored the city's rich cultural heritage, connecting with its history and traditions.

The delegation's visit began at the Lahore Museum, where the Director of the Lahore Museum, Nabeela Irfan, warmly welcomed the guests and presented them with souvenirs.

On arrival, Research Officer Ihtisham Aziz Choudhry guided the delegation through the museum's various galleries. The visitors explored the Art Gallery, Historic Gallery, and the Indus Valley Gallery, where they were briefed on key archaeological finds from Mohenjodaro, Harappa, Cholistan, and other significant sites in the region.

Museum's keeper then led the guests through the Islamic Art Gallery, China Art Gallery, Gandhara Art Gallery, and Jain Temple Gallery, offering in-depth explanations of the exhibited artifacts. The delegation expressed great interest in the rich history showcased within the museum's walls.

The Spanish delegates also visited the mausoleum of Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal. Upon arrival, the delegation was greeted by a ceremonious salute from the Rangers, who stood in formal guard. The guests paid their respects by placing a floral wreath at Mazar-e-Iqbal and signed the guest book with their impressions of the visit.

Ilyas Bilour laid to rest in Peshawar

PESHAWAR (APP): Senior politician and veteran industrialist, Ilyas Ahmed Bilour was laid to rest at his ancestral graveyard after his Nimaz e Janaza was offered here at Wazir Bagh on Sunday.

The funeral prayers of the ANP leader and well known business personality, Ilyas Bilour was attended by the former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali, former Governor, Sardar Mehtab Abbasi, provincial minister, Sayyed Qasim Ali Shah, Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, former chief minister, Amir Haider Khan Hoti, senior ANP leader, Mian Ifthikhar Hussain, Haji Ghulam Bilour, people from political parties and business community across the country and large number of people from different walks of life.



PESHAWAR: People are offering funeral prayer of Ilyas Ahmed Bilour, at Wazir Bagh in Peshawar. Prominent industrialist and leader of Awami National Party (ANP) Ilyas Ahmed Bilour passed away in Peshawar at the age of 84.

Pak-Syria direct flight to start from today: Envoy Ramez

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic in Pakistan, Dr. Ramez Alraee on Sunday said that the direct flight between Pakistan and Syria will start from today, November 18th and the first flight will land in Lahore tomorrow morning.

Earlier, Syrian Air Line had started its flight operations from Karachi since 2019 and tomorrow this will be the first flight of Syrian Airline to Lahore, for which the Foreign Affairs Ministries and Embassies of both countries have made great efforts.

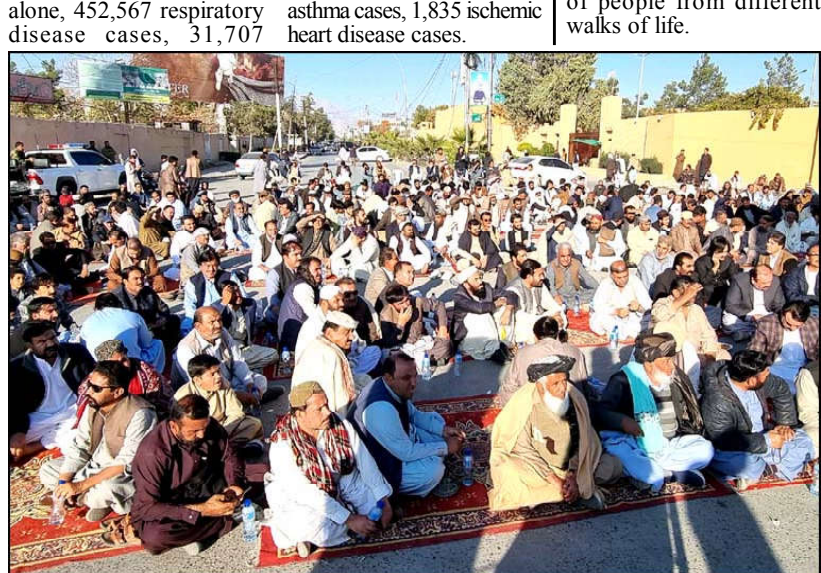
Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic in Pakistan, Dr. Ramez Alraee told APP here.

The Ambassador said that tomorrow morning at 6:30 am, the first direct flight of Syrian Airline first flight will land in Lahore, which will promote bilateral relations between the two countries.

He said that at this time, this direct flight will promote economic and trade relations between the two countries, and as the connections between the people of both countries will be established.

The ambassador said that with the start of flight operations, where the business communities of both countries will be facilitated, tourism will also increase and mutual economic and trade relations will be promoted.

Dr. Ramez said that at this time, the business communities of both countries need to strengthen bilateral relations so that both sides economic relations can develop, and trade can increase.



QUETTA: A sit-in has been held at the Provincial Assembly Chowk against the abduction of the businessman's son, in Quetta.