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Tarar accuses PTI's Murad Saeed of leading armed protesters, hiding in CM House Peshawar

Information Minister says there is a concerted effort to create a false narrative around the protests; Dares PTI to show video evidence of straight firing by LEAs on protestors; Govt followed IHC order to ensure law and order during PTI protest: Secretary Interior

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Sunday dared the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to share the video evidence with the public which could prove that the Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) had opened straight firing on its protestors who descended on Islamabad a couple of days ago.

"I have shared the video evidence that show how a person from the protest told the protestors to open indiscriminate firing on the police. Now, I challenge the PTI to share one video of straight firing or live ammunition by the LEAs against the protestors," said the minister while addressing a news conference.

The minister was flanked by Federal Secretary for Interior Khurram Ali Agha, IG Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Ali Randhawa. Different videos were played during the press conference that shown how the PTI protestors used guns, shells and marbles against the LEAs.

Tarar categorically rejected the propaganda being peddled by the PTI on the social media regarding the direct firing on protestors, saying it was the PTI which brought professional criminals and Afghan Na-

tionals to the protest to ensure that there would be a bloodshed in the whole city. He said Murad Saeed, who was hiding in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister House, was also present in the protest and led an armed group that wielded guns, shells and glass marbles which were recovered from them later on their arrest from the frontline.

No personnel of the LEA is allowed for the live ammunition, he said, adding that the fake videos and pictures were being created to cover up their humiliation and political failure from the so called final call. He said that the Paki-

stan Institute of the Medical Sciences (PIMS) and Poly Clinic had already issued their press releases that clearly stated that no death occurred due to the firing of the law enforcement agencies.

"Likewise, we are calling them out for their fake propaganda and communicating the fact to the people through different channels," he added.

He said the armed protestors were being identified through video evidence as there were a large number of people who were directly involved in creating chaos and anarchy in the country.

The minister underlined the need for effective prosecution of those involved in challenging the writ of the state and martyring and injuring the personnel of different LEAs. We had received the intelligence reports that an attempt was being made to create chaos, anarchy and killing under the garb of the so called final call so that some political scores could be made over dead bodies."

He said the government had indicated time and again during different press conferences that they wanted the dead bodies to achieve ulterior motives and for that matter, they used tax payer money and resources of the KPK government.

The minister said the Government had proposed

them to hold the protest at the Sangjani area but they were hell bent on holding the protest at D-chowk which is just near to the red zone where the Belarussian President was staying.

He said that the PTI had a track record to stage violent protests in the country and had been giving a call for protest whenever there was a visit of foreign delegation in the country, citing the recent protests by the party at the time SCO summit which was attended by 12 countries' prime ministers.

He said the visit of the Chinese Prime Minister got delayed for seven months and the PTV came under attack just due to the PTI protests in the past. SSP Asmatullah Janejo was attacked and beaten by the PTI during 2014 protest that showed their mindset to pressurize the state by showing violence. "States never bow down before anyone," he said, adding that the government of Pakistan would maintain the writ of state and law and order at all cost by ensuring the safety of the public.

In Paris, London and Washington DC, the governments proposed the areas for protests, he said, asking whether any civilized country allowed the protestors to wield AK-47 guns and possessed shells and glass marbles during the protests.



Mr. Attaullah Tarar Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage, addressed a press conference in Islamabad.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif attending funeral of Captain Muhammed Zohaib-ud-Din Shaheed.

Info Minister slams PTI for spreading false propaganda

Officer among 2 soldiers martyred, 8 terrorists killed in separate KP operations

Eliminated militants were involved in numerous terrorist activities against security forces as well as innocent civilians; ISPR affirms forces determined to wipe out terrorism; Says "such sacrifices further strengthened our resolve."

RAWALPINDI (APP): Security Forces killed eight Khwarij terrorists and others 9 injured while a captain and a soldier embraced martyrdom in two separate operations conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from November 29 to December 1.

got injured," said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release. However, Sepoy Itikhar Hussain (Age: 29 years, resident of District Jhang), having fought gallantly, embraced shahadat.

"In another operation conducted in general area Shagai, Khyber District, three Khwarij were sent to hell, while two were apprehended by the security forces," it further said.

"An intelligence based operation was conducted in general area Baka Khel, Bannu District on the reported presence of khwarij. During the conduct of the operation, own troops effectively engaged the khwarij location and resultantly killed five khwarij, while nine khwarij

who was leading his troops from the front, fought bravely, paid the ultimate sacrifice and embraced shahadat. These khwarij were involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces as well as innocent civilians.

"Sanitization operations are being conducted to eliminate any other khwarij found in the area as security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve," the news release said.

President, PM reaffirm resolve to eliminate terrorism

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday praised the security forces for their successful operations in Bannu and Khyber districts.

They commended their bravery for eliminating eight Khwarij terrorists and arresting eleven others injured in two separate operations.

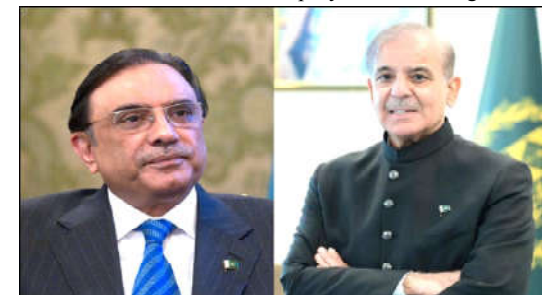
The president and prime minister paid tributes to Shaheed Captain Muhammad Zohaibuddin and soldier Itikhar Hussain, who were martyred during the operations, and acknowledged their sacrifices, President Secretariat Press Wing and PM Office Media Wing, in separate press releases said.

President Zardari emphasized that the sacrifices of the martyrs for the country's security would not be in vain and that the entire nation would remember the sacrifices of those

who laid down their lives for the motherland. He reiterated the commitment to continue operations till the eradication of terrorism and assured the nation that they would stand with their brave security forces in the fight against terrorism. The

president also prayed for the elevation of the martyrs' souls and patience for their families. The prime minister prayed for the high ranks

of the Shaheed personnel of the Pakistan Army and a grant of patience for the bereaved families. The fight against terrorism would continue till the complete eradication of this menace from the country, the press release quoted the prime minister as saying.



DPM Dar inaugurates Charity Bazaar at Foreign Office

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Sunday inaugurated the Charity Bazaar organized by the Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association (PFOWA). Cultural stalls from various foreign embassies were displayed at the event held at the Foreign Office. The Bazaar, aimed at supporting underprivileged communities, brought together diplomats and their families, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of different countries.

Speaking at the occasion, the deputy prime minister said that the bazaar provided a great opportunity to the people of Islamabad and Rawalpindi

Dar to represent Pakistan at ECO meeting in Iran

ISLAMABAD (Online): Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar will leave for Iran tomorrow to attend 28th meeting of Council of Ministers of Economic Cooperation Organization.

In his address at the meeting, the Deputy Prime Minister will reiterate Pakistan's commitment to ECO charter and highlight potential of greater connectivity in region through development of rail and road networks, liberalization of visa regimes and simplification of border procedures. Ishaq Dar will also reiterate Pakistan's concerns over hostilities in the Middle East, endangering the regional peace and security.

Talking to media persons on Sunday, he said that no decision had been made in the federal cabinet regarding imposing ban on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) or the imposition of governor's rule in KP. "Such measures have historically proven ineffective in fostering political stability," he said and urged political leaders to opt for dialogue as a path to resolve conflicts.

He condemned violent protests as counterproductive for any political party and said that democracy had no room for violent politics. While acknowledging the right to protest, he stressed that demonstrations should not disrupt

daily life. The minister highlighted the critical role of political stability in economic growth and said that without stability, Pakistan cannot achieve progress comparable to its neighboring countries.

He urged all political stakeholders to take a step back to improve the political environment. He emphasized that turmoil often hampered national development whenever the country was on the brink of economic progress.

Reflecting on Pakistan's electoral history, Qaiser Sheikh pointed out that controversies had surrounded every election after 1970. He highlighted Chinio's central position in Punjab and its importance as a business hub. He expressed concern over Pakistan lagging behind its neighbors despite being a regional economic corridor with vast opportunities for development.

Political stability imperative for economic growth: Qaiser

PM attends funeral prayer of Shaheed Capt. Zohaib-ud-Din

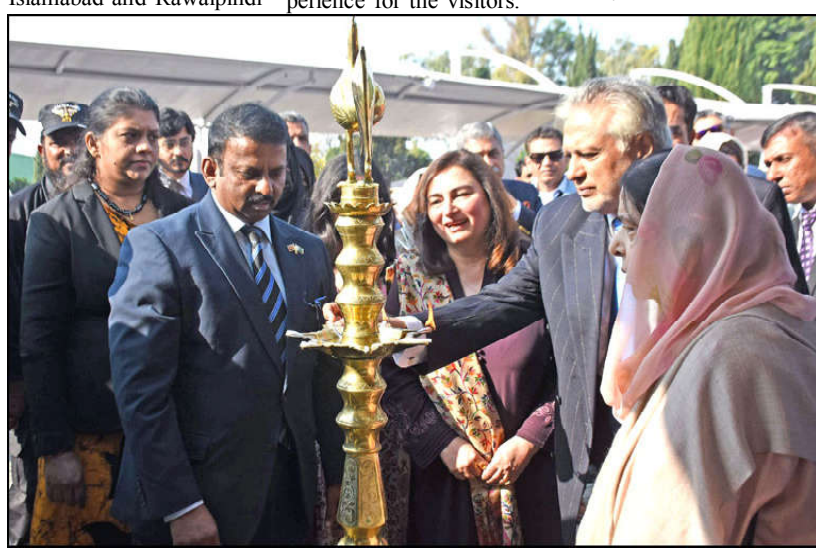
LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday attended the funeral prayer of Captain Muhammed Zohaib-ud-Din Shaheed.

OPC Punjab official meets PM in Lahore

LAHORE (APP): Vice Chairperson Overseas Pakistanis Commission (OPC) Punjab and Chief Coordinator of International Affairs, Barrister Amjad Malik, held a special meeting with Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Lahore.

During the meeting, Barrister Malik congratulated the Prime Minister for his tireless efforts in restoring investor confidence and reviving the national economy. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif congratulated Barrister Amjad Malik on assuming the position of Vice Chairperson of OPC Punjab and emphasized that the federal and provincial governments would work together to resolve the issues faced by overseas Pakistanis.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated that overseas Pakistanis are very dear to him, and the appointments in the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis, Overseas Pakistani Foundation, and the Overseas Commission serve as evidence of the government's commitment to addressing the problems of overseas Pakistanis. He also highlighted that with the retreat of disruptive groups, relief efforts for the public will gain further momentum. Barrister Amjad Malik thanked Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and assured him that OPC Punjab and OPF would collaborate to resolve the issues of overseas Pakistanis. He also congratulated the government for stimulating the economy and boosting the stock exchange to new heights.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister of Pakistan and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar is lighting traditional oil lamp at Sri Lanka stall during Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association (PFOWA) charity bazaar 2024 at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the Federal Capital.

Ministry of Interior shares details of protest fiasco orchestrated by PTI

PTI violent protests caused Rs192b daily losses to economy; Army neither came in direct clash with PTI miscreants nor they were employed for riot control, says statement; KP gov't resources used without restraint in PTI's violent protests in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on November 21 directed the federal government to take all necessary measures to maintain law and order in the federal capital, says the handout issued by the Ministry of Interior on Sunday, sharing all the details of the protest fiasco orchestrated by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

The High Court directed the Interior Minister to engage with the PTI leadership in this regard, says the handout adding that given the sensitivity of the Belarussian President

and Chinese high-level delegation visit, PTI was initially asked to postpone the protest but on their persistence to continue with the protest, PTI was subsequently offered Sngihani area as a designated location. In this regard, out of the ordinary and at odd timings, meetings were also allowed between PTI leadership and its founder. On the contrary and in spite of the extraordinary concessions extended, PTI violated the court's orders blatantly and instead of holding protest at designated place (Sangjani), unlawfully

breached entry towards the Red Zone of Islamabad.

Throughout the protest march from Peshawar to Red Zone Islamabad, violent protestors of PTI aggressively engaged LEAs repeatedly using fire arms and all sorts of other weaponry including steel slingshots, stun grenades, tear gas shells and nail studded batons to force their way to Red Zone Islamabad. This violent protest was primarily orchestrated and logistically & financially sustained and supported by the resources of the government

of KP. Alarming, PTI's protest included violent and trained miscreant elements including many illegal Afghan nationals, who spearheaded the riots and violent activities throughout the march. These miscreants, employed as violent vanguard, comprised of approximately 1500 hard core fighters working directly under absconder and proclaimed offender Murad Saeed. This vanguard group, using militant tactics violently attacked the LEAs and breached the blocks with the help of government

personnel were also grievously injured by these miscreants. This violent mob not only attacked security forces but also set multiple police vehicles on fire, showcased firearms, burnt trees and police tents, damaged properties and created terror among the common citizens.

During this, a vehicle also ran over Rangers personnel performing duty at a check post in Islamabad, resulting in the shahadat of three Rangers soldiers and critical injuries to five. Besides, during the violent protest, one policeman embraced shahadat and 232 LEAs

machinery paving the way for the second wave of vehicles and protestors to cross. It must be noted that LEAs personnel, despite sustaining grievous injuries, exhibited high degree of restraint against these violent protestors led by trained miscreants.

Pakistan Army was deployed in Islamabad under Article 245 of the Constitution only to secure key government installations and foreign diplomats in the sensitive Red Zone while ensuring secure environment for high-profile foreign dignitaries visiting the country.

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QUETTA: President National Party former chief minister Dr Abdul Malik addressing during a ceremony hosted by member Central Committee National Party Ranzan Hazara.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Flying ban reversal

The European Aviation Safety Agency has finally lifted the ban on flights of the national flag carrier to and from Europe after more than four years. Nevertheless, it will take months and potentially heavy investment in new planes before the airline can resume operations on lucrative European routes. The ban on PIA flights to the UK is yet to be revoked.

Still, celebrations are in order since the EU ban has been lifted after repeated failures of the Civil Aviation Authority since 2020 to address EASA's safety concerns. The European aviation watchdog has apparently "re-established sufficient confidence in the [CAA's] oversight capabilities". The decision to approve the resumption of commercial operations was based on the CAA's "significant efforts".

However, EASA clarified that the EU states would continue monitoring through the "prioritisation of ramp inspections of the air carriers certified in Pakistan and their crew to ensure compliance with aviation regulations and standards and identify safety concerns and trends before they become a threat".

Besides causing reputational damage, the ban, which came in the wake of a fatal PIA plane crash in Karachi, followed by a scandal over alleged fake pilot licences sparked by the claims of the then aviation minister, has cost the airline an annual revenue loss of nearly Rs40bn. It was also one of the several reasons for the government's failed attempt to privatise the national carrier a month ago when only one bidder showed up to buy the airline for a paltry Rs10bn for a 60pc stake in the company, against the asking price of Rs85bn. Undoubtedly, the resumption of flights to profitable European routes is being seen as a recovery point for the air carrier and may lead many to call for cancelling plans to sell it off and turn it around by investing in EU operations under a new management.

Similar efforts made by successive governments in the last one decade to resurrect PIA have amply exposed the futility of such exercises. There are many, including the incumbent privatisation minister, who have argued that the last attempt to sell the airline was structured in such a way as to scare away potential investors. Many influential leaders of the ruling PML-N are not in favour of disinvesting the airline. But only the naive can expect the reinstatement of European operations to help restore PIA's profitability. The reasons that have brought PIA to this pass are many, and deep-rooted. At best, the new development can only help the government fetch a better response from bidders when the airline is put up for auction again. It is, therefore, advisable that the authorities continue to focus on selling the company rather than investing public money in its fleet to resume its European operations.

Our own PTSD

Muna Khan

I am proposing a new ailment unique to Pakistanis: Perpetual-Traumatic Stress Disorder. I am not making light of our situation. On the contrary, I'm asking we recognise how this PTSD unites us, irrespective of income or political affiliation or even a lack of interest in politics. It requires recognition and then treatment, one of which is mobilising powerful nations to impose change on social media platforms and AI companies' incentives. They will not self-regulate. And I don't want any Pakistani government to regulate them because their solution to everything is to ban it.

In almost two decades, social media has gone from being the place we (re)connected with to becoming a source of major conflict in families and societies for disinformation. It is an uncontrollable beast that no one can tame.

But this column isn't about the dollar-proliferating disinformation industry per se; it is about its impact that, along with a curb on our liberties, is making us...umm...ill. We are in a perpetual state of traumatic disorder caused by the uncertainty of when the internet will return to normal, for example. And normal wasn't even that amazing to begin with.

This state of anxiety has reached a perpetual level because we do not get good governance or balanced, fair information from the government or media. Karachi may be a better city at the moment due to "low AQI no PIT" (thank you Teepu Sahab for this joke on X) but our stress levels begin when we step out into a crumbling infrastructure. Friends in Lahore say the smog is killing them. Islamabad is in some form of

lockdown every day. Fear rules KP and Balochistan every day. And this is without them turning on screens.

Who is responsible for this constant form of anxiety? Will banning the PTI cure us of these ailments?

There are plenty of studies to show how exposure to TV following mass traumatic events — violence, war, natural disasters, disease outbreaks — leads to post-traumatic stress disorder. They can result in health issues like depression, which can be a life-long issue, says the National Institute of Health. In the last decade, studies show anxiety is heightened among people who use social media more than those who don't. Social media is responsible for young peoples' mental health troubles. It is responsible for the increasing polarity in societies the world over.

The trouble is not the studies documenting what we all know. It is a failure to address these issues that causes this perpetual state. No one paid heed to the warning signs like a 2015 study in the UK by Dr Pam Ramsden which suggested that watching gruesome videos and images online at home could lead to the same types of symptoms most associated with combat veterans. Its publication caused a lot of controversy at a time before TikTok or 'fake news' was a phenomenon.

"How could someone who merely watches events on a screen suffer the same problems as, for instance, a combat veteran," asked the BBC. One expert replied "vicious PTSD is a well-established phenomenon". The vulnerable are especially susceptible. Social media doesn't come with a warning, like traditional media, about harmful

content. In fact, it lures you in knowing the harmful consequences. Unesco said on Thursday that 62 per cent of social media influencers do not verify their content.

You see this play out on our streets every day like the controversy around the number of dead PTI protesters. No one is willing to believe anyone. Also notice how no one is even talking about the documented deaths in Kurram. Our PTSD is also selective.

The trouble is we are left to fend for ourselves in the absence of adequate services, from utility to health to information. We have limited access to resources to help us. A two-day wellness festival in Karachi offers lots of options to help you deal with a number of issues — if you can afford it. Imagine if this was offered as a national service.

For that, you'd need to have a government which prioritises the healthcare industry in the same manner it spends locking up dissidents.

Imagine living in a country where you feel cared for, secure knowing that a lockdown won't deprive you of access to essentials. Of equal import is knowing the information you receive is fair, accurate and responsible. People are turning to social media because traditional media has over the years eroded public trust. The last few months have shown us the violent consequences of disinformation campaigns. Maybe, they can be the wake-up call for journalists to unite and come up with strategies to win back public trust. I am hopeful people will return to news outlets because social media will trick them and fail them. Until then though, I fear we will remain in this perpetual state. — Courtesy Dawn

Water deficit

Naseer Memon

Rather than augmenting water productivity, our planners are obsessed with building new reservoirs and expanding irrigated areas. The reason? More structures mean more money. Barring the wet monsoon years, the Indus basin frequently endures water scarcity. For the last 25 years, the Indus River System Authority (Irsa) has declared water shortages every year and has not allocated water shares as enshrined in the 1991 Water Apportionment Accord.

Sindh has thus questioned the water availability certificate for the Cholistan irrigation scheme issued by Irsa early this year. In its summary to the Council of Common Interests, Sindh argued that Irsa's own water accounts (1999-2023) reveal that Punjab and Sindh have experienced annual water shortages of 13.7 per cent and 19.4pc respectively.

The water availability data presented by Punjab before Irsa was misleading. It left out the amount of water committed for some existing and future needs thus creating an impression of surplus water availability. It also failed to mention several current and future possible reductions. These reductions relate to the eastern river flows (2.98 MAF), India's use of the western rivers (2 MAF), the possible use by Afghanistan of the Kabul river (0.5 MAF), the overestimation of water supplies in the water accord (a shortfall of 21.5 MAF), Bhasha dam storage (6.4 MAF), Mohmand dam (0.88 MAF), Nai Gaj dam (0.16 MAF), Kurram Tangi dam (0.9 MAF), flood canals including the Kachhi, Raimee, Greater Thal, Jalalpur and the Pat Feeder extension (3.34 MAF), the Chashma

Right Bank canal (1.19 MAF), the minimum outflow to the sea (8.6 MAF) and the LBOD reclamation supplies (2.2 MAF).

Put together, these requirements mean 50.65 MAF water every year. This amount dwarfs the purported surplus flow by a wide margin. From 1999 to 2023, the average annual flow below Kotri Barrage remained 14 MAF. Altogether, there is a colossal annual deficit of 36.63 MAF water in the Indus basin.

Various reports indicate a bleak picture of future river flows due to the impact of climate change. The chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority recently shared worrying data at a moot. He revealed that the country's snow cover has decreased by 23.3pc in recent years.

He said that the glaciers are melting at an alarming rate of 3pc every year, resulting in the loss of 16pc of the glacial mass over the past five years. He warned that while the melting glaciers might result in temporary water surpluses, the long-term implications were dire.

With the cryosphere touching a precarious tipping point, planning a sprawling irrigation web for corporate farming is an impractical venture. The Greater Cholistan scheme entails the building of three dams on the Chenab river. These include the Chiniot dam, the Mid Ranjha dam and the Shah Jiwana dam, which will collectively store 3.5 MAF of water.

The scheme also entails the construction of two barrages — the Bahawal Nagar and Hasilpur barrages on the Sutlej river. Additionally, the scheme involves the 195 kilometre-long Chiniot-Hasilpur link canal with a capacity of 15,000 cusecs and two feeder canals with a capacity of 8,500 and 5,500

cusecs. The Greater Cholistan scheme is designed to irrigate a command area of over 6m acres. If we add the 1.2m acres to be irrigated through the Smaller Cholistan scheme, the ambitious proposition would require even larger quantities of water.

Overall, the scope of corporate agriculture is not confined to Cholistan. In August, during a session of the National Assembly, the minister for food security, Rana Tanveer Hussain, revealed that, under the Green Pakistan Initiative, 4.8m acres of barren land had been earmarked across the country for corporate farming.

Since corporate agriculture projects are being designed to produce grain for international trade, a reliable commodity supply is essential. This translates to the need for reliable water supplies to sustain corporate farming. According to a media report last month, Pakistan is seeking up to \$6 billion in investment from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar and Bahrain over the next three to five years for corporate farming, with the aim of cultivating 1.5m acres of previously unfarmed land and mechanising the existing 50m acres of agricultural land across the country.

Cultivating such an enormous land mass would require a massive irrigation network. Such an extensive infrastructure and investment of several billion dollars cannot be left at the mercy of erratic flood flows. An uninterrupted water supply is possible only through perennial rivers and canals. Punjab's own share of water is already committed for existing canals. Therefore, it makes sense when Sindh, the lower riparian expresses concern at the development of new command areas.

Commerce News

Shaza Fatima pledges to revamp Internet infrastructure

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecoms Shaza Fatima Khawaja Sunday pledged to revamp the country's internet infrastructure, vowing to restore optimal internet speeds and bolster the telecom sector's infrastructure.

"My ministry is leaving no stone unturned to ensure seamless continuity in the industry. The recent surge in cyber attacks has put us on high alert and we are taking swift and decisive action to address these challenges and fortify our digital defenses," she said in an interview with a private news channel.

Shaza Fatima Khawaja also reaffirmed the government's commitment for protecting the IT and Telecom industry, citing it as a top priority. To achieve this goal, the government is upgrading

existing systems and focusing on key areas, including enhancing tower intensity, broadening broadband internet access and tackling pressing cybersecurity concerns to provide better coverage, boost economic growth and ensure a secure online environment for citizens, she added.

Responding to a query, the minister said that the Ministry of Interior will instruct the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) to probe and resolve issues faced by citizens when sending videos while ensuring overall 100% internet speed remains unaffected.

The minister revealed that in the event of any issues, the Interior Minister reaches out to the P a k i s t a n Telecommunication Authority (PTA) for assistance. She

acknowledged that challenges exist, but assured that the government is diligently working to address them.

She emphasized that every citizen has the right to express their opinions and while digital platforms provide ample opportunities for self-expression, their temporary unavailability does not stifle citizens' freedom of speech.

Responding to another query, the minister stated that the government is currently upgrading its web management system, with a focus on enhancing cybersecurity measures to effectively counter and control cyber attacks and terrorist activities.

The minister also announced that the government plans to expand 4G and 5G internet services across Pakistan by April.

Agri. dept achieves surplus wheat sowing in Lodhran dist

LODHAN (APP): The agriculture department has achieved a surplus wheat sowing target as wheat was sown over 398,000 acres of land against the set target of 396,000 acres for district Lodhran this year. Talking to APP here on Sunday, Deputy Director Agriculture Malik Zafar said that wheat sowing of 'Grow More Wheat' campaign remained successful. He said the teams of department were present in the field to guide and motivate farmers for maximum sowing to meet food security in the country.

He further informed that 16.5 million acres wheat sowing target was set for Punjab province during the current year. The agriculture official further informed that the provincial government,



ISLAMABAD: German Ambassador to Pakistan Alfred Grannas participate in Annual Christmas Market under the auspices of the German embassy in Islamabad at a local hotel in the Federal Capital.

Diversification vital for growth: Iftikhar Malik

LAHORE (APP): SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik has said that diversification of economic activities across various sectors including technology, renewable energy, agriculture, healthcare, and manufacturing can shield Pakistan from the uncertainties of global markets.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, he said as

Pakistan continues to navigate the complexities of the international economy, diversification can prove to be a pivotal strategy for sustainable growth and resilience. He said in today's interconnected world, economies are increasingly interdependent. "By investing in diverse sectors, we can mitigate risks associated with economic downturns in specific industries," he

added. He said more over, diversification fosters innovation and entrepreneurship. Encouraging a wide range of industries not only creates job opportunities but also nurtures a culture of creativity and adaptability, adding that innovation is a driving force behind economic progress, and diverse industries provide a fertile ground for new ideas and inventions.

'FDI in corporate farming vital for food security'

LAHORE (APP): Convener of the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Regional Standing Committee on Food, Shahid Imran, emphasised the importance of foreign direct investment (FDI) in corporate farming as a means to counter food insecurity and meet the population's staple food needs.

Talking to a delegation of progressive farmers led by Chaudhry Shaheer Asif Arain from Sahiwal, here on Sunday, he underscored the critical need for FDI to bolster Pakistan's agriculture sector and foreign exchange reserves. "Pakistan requires substantial foreign

investment to bridge its current investment gap, improve agricultural and industrial production, create jobs, increase exports, and generate additional tax revenues," he stated.

He cited examples from countries like India and Indonesia, where public-private partnerships with foreign collaborators have enhanced local production of high-yielding seeds.

These partnerships circumvent the lengthy process of developing new cultivars while ensuring affordable access to high-yield seeds, ultimately boosting crop productivity and farm incomes.



ISLAMABAD: Vendors displaying seasonal fruits to attract the customers at Sunday Bazaar, Peshawar Morr.

WFP in partnership with govt ensures people have access to safe, health food: Ms Coco

ISLAMABAD (APP): World Food Program Country Director Ms Coco Ushiyama has said that the WFP in collaboration with the government and other partners is working to ensure that people have access to safe and healthy food.

"Access to nutritious and affordable food remains a critical issue in Pakistan, especially in rural and underserved areas and the World Food Program (WFP) is working to address these challenges, focusing on food accessibility and

affordability as part of its broader efforts to support the fundamental right to food," she told APP in an interview.

Elaborating on her organization's work, she said WFP's approach is rooted in partnerships and by joining forces with organizations like the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), WFP works on both policy and community levels.

This includes contributing to food security and nutrition

policy discussions and advocating for stronger social protection systems, she said, adding that at the community level, WFP collaborates with local governments to ensure that people have access to safe, nutritious food.

She said that one of WFP's key initiatives is the Benazir Nashonuma Program—a nationwide effort to prevent stunting.

She said this program combines health and nutrition services to support mothers and children, especially those under two years old, adding that through this

initiative, WFP is seeing promising results in tackling stunting and improving nutritional outcomes. WFP is also working on school meal programs and has recently launched a new initiative in Balochistan, she said, adding that this program provides schoolchildren with locally grown, nutritious meals, improving their health and supporting their education. These meals not only keep children in school but also enhance their ability to learn, contributing to long-term human capital development, she added.

WFP brings decades of experience in school meal programmes, implemented in over 100 countries. These initiatives are effective in increasing school attendance, retention, and learning outcomes. The impact goes beyond education, as better health and nutrition are directly linked to a child's ability to focus and succeed academically.

She said by integrating school meals with broader health and hygiene efforts, WFP ensures a comprehensive approach to child development.



ISLAMABAD: Vendors displaying dry fruit to attract the customers at Sunday Bazaar, Peshawar Morr.

Pakistani food exporters extend Malaysian visit amid positive response

LAHORE (APP): Encouraged by the enthusiastic response from Malaysian buyers, a delegation of Pakistani food exporters has extended their two-week visit by an additional week to capitalize on the growing interest and finalize trade agreements.

According to a message received on Sunday from Kuala Lumpur, Saif Ur Rehman, the delegation leader, shared that the group has been successfully showcasing Pakistan's diverse and high-quality food products, particularly varieties of Nimko, which have garnered significant attention. "By the grace of Allah, Pakistani products meet international standards and are exceptional in taste," he remarked.

We must resolve our own issues; no other country or province can do this for us

Governor Kundi chairs 'grand jirga' to restore peace in Kurram

KOHAT (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, expressed his commitment to restoring peace in Kurram district and stressed the need for local efforts in resolving the region's security challenges.

Speaking at a grand jirga of political leaders and tribal elders in Kohat, Kundi said, "I am ready to go to Kurram and sit with the jirga for as many days as they ask. We must resolve our own issues; no other country or province can do this for us."

The grand jirga was attended by various political figures, including Federal Minister Engineer Amir Muqam, Awami National Party's Mian

Iftikhar Hussain, PPP Provincial President Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha, Jamaat-e-Islami's Professor Ibrahim, Qaumi Watan Party's Sikandar Hayat Khan Sherpao, National Democratic Movement's Bushra Gohar, former Federal Minister Sajid Hussain Tori, Kohat Mayor Qari Sher Zaman, Ibn-e-Ali, Ahmed Ibrahim Pracha, Asif Pracha, Haji Noor Jat, Maulana Abdullah Wahid, and other tribal elders.

Commissioner Kohat, Motasim Billah Shah, moderated the event.

Governor Kundi emphasized the need to end the use of social media to spread hatred and called for identifying the elements responsible for disturbing

peace within the community.

He urged public cooperation with security forces to carry out joint operations aimed at disarming the province. "We cannot bring food and medicine to the area, but I issued instructions to the Red Crescent Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to provide all possible aid while I was on my Umrah trip," he added. Praising the Kurram Peace Jirga members, Kundi acknowledged the political leadership for coming together despite differing ideologies.

He pointed out that, for the sake of peace and stability in the province, political parties must unite, regardless of differences.

Two killed in separate violent incidents in DI Khan

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Two people were killed in separate incidents of violence in different areas of Dera Ismail Khan, police said on Sunday.

According to details, the first incident took place on Dera-Chashma road where a man was killed by unknown armed men in the limits of Shorkot police station. Amjad son of Muhammad Afzal, a resident of Himmat, reported to police that he along with his two brothers namely Aziz Ullah alias Bugti and Sana Ullah were travelling from Dera city towards their home on a motorcycle when two unknown men riding another bike intercepted them and opened fire. As a result, his brother Aziz Ullah alias Bugti died on the spot. The assailants escaped from the scene.



KOHAT: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi speaking at a grand jirga of political leaders and tribal elders in Kohat.

KP CM inaugurates CTD investigation, Intelligence block

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur on Sunday visited the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Headquarters here and inaugurated the newly constructed Investigation and Intelligence Block.

The facility is equipped with state-of-the-art amenities, including an auditorium, conference rooms, a library, offices, and advanced technological infrastructure.

During the visit, CM Gandapur received a detailed briefing on the provincial government's

initiatives to enhance CTD's capacity. CM Gandapur praised the progress made in forensic labs, with advanced equipment and expert personnel now in place.

He said that CTD has also been provided with bulletproof vehicles, jammers, drones, night vision devices, and thermal guns to effectively seal with terrorists. On the occasion it was said that CTD's significant achievements include a 50 percent increase in convictions and a rise in remand durations from an average of 1.4 days to 25 days.

GCU campus to be inaugurated in Chiniot this month: Minister

FAISALABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh said that GC University campus will be inaugurated in Chiniot this month to provide quality education to people.

Addressing the 8th convocation of FAST University Chiniot-Faisalabad Campus on Sunday, he said that quality education was prerequisite for progress and prosperity. "Therefore, the government is concentrating on the provision of quality

education to materialize the dream of national progress and prosperity," he added.

He said that Pakistan was bestowed with huge resources. "There is immense potential in the country due to which Pakistan remained ahead of India for 40 years in national progress. Now a temporary break occurred in national development but this issue would be resolved very soon," he added.

He said that national unity was imperative for

development of the country. "We should end our personal vendetta and prefer to national interests," he added.

He said that Pakistan was passing through a crucial stage as more than 100 million people were living near or below the poverty line. However, the government under dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will overcome this issue by promoting quality education and providing this facility at doorsteps of the masses, he added.



LAHORE: Citizens visiting parks on holiday in the provincial capital.

PTI leaders at new heights of cowardice: Azma

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has said that the current leadership of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is at the lowest level of cowardice.

In a statement, she said the PTI is hiding its disgrace and infamy behind fake news and rumours. She said, "Those who ran away, leaving the workers behind,

now have no shame in talking about their workers?" She said that attacking the federation with mobs does not lead to an NRO. The real culprits behind PTI's downfall are Gandapur and Bushra Bibi, she added. The media around the world witnessed how Ali Amin Gandapur and Bushra Bibi's vehicles were attacked.

Harnessing youth potential for nation building

MULTAN (APP): With approximately one third of country's population falling in 15-29 years bracket out of total 64% below 30 years, the coming years will pose serious challenges to governments for harnessing this potential amidst fluctuating economic situation.

As the lesser education and employment opportunities make the youth easily lured by vested interests and extremists to sabotage activities. So, this bulge can only be fruitful if political parties ensure continuity of policies, cordial atmosphere to education and employment and an overall political will for a strong democracy in the country.

Statistics and findings of experts reveal that out of over 60 million young Pakistanis between 15-29 years of age, a vast majority either is illiterate or left schools and colleges prior to reaching 12th standard with a marginal number out of whom more than half still searching for jobs.

Like many other parts of the world, being young in Pakistan is also both exciting and frustrating. The space for young in Pakistani society is vast and full of possibilities if the potential in different sectors of economy is fully exploited. But there are fears as well in view of a major chunk generally being intolerant as recently seen in protests of political parties.

The youth bulge can have positive impact if economy is strong enough to absorb new entrants in the labor force. Otherwise, the idle and frustrated youth would raise the incidence of crime, violence and embrace radical political and religious views.

"Our educated youth is mostly zealous in pursuit of career building and excelling in practical life," stated Prof. Anwar Ahmad Khan, Former head of National Language Authority.

"They become mature once in practical life and like to be productive, if groomed properly. Earning livelihood and leading a respectable life is always their foremost priority."

"But, when they have limited resources and opportunities amidst growing poverty, they detract from their mission and engage in different unhealthy activities," Prof. Anwar said. "Therefore, we need comprehensive strategies to harness this potential through access to education and employment."

Before exploring the significance of youth involvement in nation-building, the challenges of formulating better strategies and policies must be addressed. For fostering their participation in fruitful activities, we must heed youth's demand of justice and merit in all arena of life.

"Youth are often less

constrained by established norms and more open to creative solutions that may lead them to innovative ideas in technology, climate change, education, healthcare and social justice," noted Senior Lawyer Chaudhry Waqas Anjum.

"Democracy also thrives when its citizens especially youth actively engage in political process. But, this needs awareness that emanates from literacy otherwise they can be swayed by any extremist political entity or sectarian factions," he pleaded. "Empowering them through education, entrepreneurship and employment would help them contribute directly to nation's economic development," Waqas said.

International News

Syria launches counterattacks in an attempt to halt insurgents' surprise advance

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: The Syrian military rushed in reinforcements and struck Idlib city Sunday in an attempt to push back insurgents from advancing farther after seizing Aleppo and surrounding strategic locations in an adjacent province in a surprise offensive.

The insurgents led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham took over most of Aleppo on Saturday and claimed to have entered the city of Hama. There was no independent confirmation of their claim.

The swift and surprise offensive is a huge embarrassment for Syrian President Bashar Assad and raises questions about his troops' preparedness. It also comes at a time when Assad's allies — Iran and groups in Russia — are preoccupied with their own conflicts.

Turkey, a main backer of Syrian opposition groups, said its diplomatic efforts had failed to stop

Syrian government attacks on opposition-held areas in recent weeks. Turkish security officials said a limited offensive by the rebels was planned to stop government attacks and allow civilians to return, but the offensive expanded as Syrian government forces began to retreat from their positions.

Syrian opposition fighters got on a motorcycle as opposition supporters stand on top of a captured army armoured vehicle in the town of Maarat al-Numan, southwest of Aleppo, Syria, Saturday Nov. 30, 2024. (AP Photo/Omar Albarm)

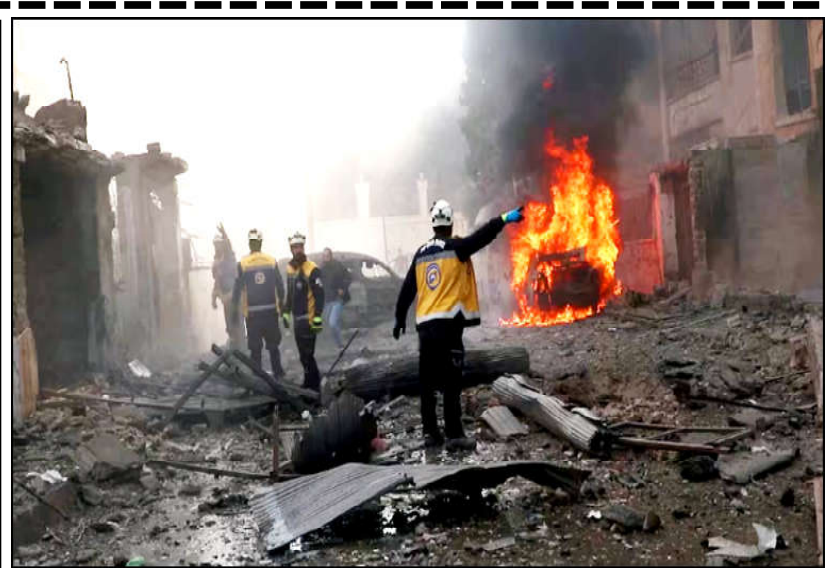
The insurgency, led by Salafi jihadi group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham and which includes Turkey-backed fighters, launched their offensive on Wednesday with a two-pronged attack on Aleppo and the Idlib countryside, before moving toward Hama province.

In Aleppo province, they captured a strategic

town that lies on the highway linking Aleppo with Damascus and the coast.

Rebel commander Col. Hassan Abdulghani said that despite the government counteroffensive, his fighters were making gains in Aleppo. He says they took control of Sheikh Najjar, also known as the Aleppo Industrial City, Aleppo's military academy and the field artillery college. Abdulghani said 65 Syrian troops were taken prisoner in eastern Aleppo. Elsewhere, he said the insurgents advanced in the Idlib countryside, putting all of the province under their control.

The United Nations special envoy for Syria said the shock push by the rebels poses a risk to regional security and called on resuming diplomatic efforts to end the conflict. "I have repeatedly warned of the risks of escalation in Syria, of the dangers of mere conflict management rather than conflict resolution," Geir Pedersen said in a statement.



White Helmets members work at the scene of what the organisation says is a strike, in Idlib, Syria.

War has no winners, Taiwan president says in visit to Hawaii

Monitoring Desk
HONOLULU: War has no winners and peace is priceless, Taiwan President Lai Ching-te said on Saturday in Hawaii after visiting a memorial to the attack on Pearl Harbor on a trip to the United States that has angered Beijing.

Lai is making a sensitive two-day trip to Hawaii that is officially only a stopover on the way to three Pacific island nations that maintain formal ties with Taiwan, which China claims as its territory.

Speaking to members of the overseas Taiwan community and Hawaii politicians, including members of Congress Ed Case and Jill Tokuda, Lai referred to his visit to the USS Arizona Memorial earlier in the day and laid a wreath in memory of those who died in the 1941 Japanese attack.

"Our visit to the memorial today in particular reminds us of the importance of ensuring peace. Peace is priceless and war has no winner."

Russia, North Korea agree to boost military ties

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: Russian Defence Minister Andrei Belousov met with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and agreed to boost military cooperation between the two isolated nations, Pyongyang state media said on Saturday. The United States and South Korea have accused the nuclear-armed North of sending more than 10,000 soldiers to help Russia fight Ukraine, with experts saying Kim is eager to gain advanced technology, and battle experience for his troops, in return.

Ex-defence minister accuses Israel of ethnic cleansing

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Israel's former defence minister Moshe Yaalon on Saturday accused the Israeli army of ethnic cleansing in the Gaza Strip, sparking an outcry in the country.

"The road we are being led down is conquest, annexation and ethnic cleansing," Yaalon said in an interview on a private TV channel. Pressed on the ethnic cleansing appraisal, he continued: "What is happening there? There is no more Beit Laha, no more Beit Hanoun, the army intervenes in Jabalia.

Israeli strikes kill 15 in Gaza, Cairo holds fresh talks with Hamas

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Israeli military strikes killed at least 15 Palestinians in Gaza on Sunday, medics said, as Israeli forces kept up bombardments across the enclave and blew up houses on its northern edge.

In the central Gaza camp of Nuseirat, an Israeli airstrike killed six people in a house, and another attack killed three in a home in Gaza City, medics said.

Two children were killed when a missile hit a tent encampment in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip, while four other people were killed in an airstrike in Rafah, near the border with Egypt, medics told Reuters.

Residents said the military blew up clusters of houses in the northern

Gaza areas of Jabalia, Beit Lahiya and Beit Hanoun, where Israeli forces have operated since October this year.

Palestinians say Israel's operations on the northern edge of the enclave are part of a plan to clear people out through forced evacuations and bombardments to create a buffer zone — an allegation the army denies.

The military says it has killed hundreds of Hamas militants there as it fights to stop the faction regrouping almost 14 months since the war in Gaza started.

Hamas's armed wing says it has killed many Israeli forces in anti-tank rocket and mortar fire attacks, and in ambushes with explosive devices since the new operation started.

Georgian protesters clash with police for a second night after EU talks are suspended

Monitoring Desk
TBILISI: Thousands of demonstrators protesting the Georgian government's decision to suspend negotiations to join the European Union rallied outside the parliament and clashed with police for a second straight night on Friday.

The night before, police used water cannons, pepper spray and tear gas to disperse protesters who took to the streets of Tbilisi, the Georgian capital, after Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze of the ruling Georgian Dream party announced the suspension. The interior ministry said it detained 43 people during the protests.

On Friday evening, protesters again swarmed the parliament, with some trying to break the metal gates to the building. Riot police used water cannons to push them away from the building and later moved to force them further back along the Rustaveli Avenue, the

city's main boulevard. Some of the protesters used garbage bins and benches to try to build barricades.

Clashes between police and protesters also erupted late Friday in the Black Sea port of Batumi.

Georgian Dream's disputed victory in the Oct. 26 election, which was widely seen as a referendum on the country's aspirations to join the European Union, has sparked massive demonstrations and led to an opposition boycott of the parliament. The opposition said the vote was rigged under the influence of Russia seeking to keep Georgia in its orbit.

The year will test even the most robust democracies. Read more on what's to come here.

Take a look at the 25 places where a change in leadership could resonate around the world. Keep track of the latest AP elections coverage from around the world here.

Serbia to cooperate in investigation over Kosovo explosion, President Vucic

Monitoring Desk
BELGRADE: Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic pledged on Sunday his country would help investigate after an explosion in Kosovo that disrupted water supplies and that the government there blamed on Belgrade.

The explosion on Friday evening hit a canal that sends water to Kosovo's two coal-fired power plants — accounting for most of the country's power production. It also caused water supply cuts in some parts of the country, but there were no power cuts.

The incident inflamed longstanding tensions between Kosovo and Serbia. The Kosovo government called the explosion an act

of terrorism by Serbia, which Serbia denied.

"Finding out the truth is in the best interest of our country," Vucic told reporters on Sunday. "We are ready to share information with everyone even with Pristina."

He reiterated that Serbia had nothing to do with the explosion. He also accused Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti of using the incident to firm up his grip in the north of the country, where a Serb majority refuses to recognise Pristina institution and sees Belgrade as their capital.

The Kosovo government has not said why it believes Serbia was responsible for the explosion.

Trump announces loyalist Kash Patel as choice to lead FBI

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US president-elect Donald Trump aims to make loyalist Kash Patel the next director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), he said on Saturday, in a move that would mean replacing the agency's current leader.

Trump announced the former advisor and Pentagon official, who has been critical of the bureau and is known for his controversial views on a so-called government "deep state", as his choice for the post on his Truth Social network.

The FBI's current director, Christopher Wray, was appointed to a 10-year term in 2017, meaning he would either need to step down or be fired.

Biden's long-awaited Africa trip to tout a win against China

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Joe Biden sets off for Angola on Sunday on a trip that will deliver on a promise to visit Africa during his presidency and focus on a major US-backed railway project that aims to divert critical minerals away from China.

The project, partly funded with a US loan, links the resource-rich Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Zambia to the Angolan port of Lobito on the Atlantic

Ocean, offering a fast and efficient route for exports to the West.

At stake are vast supplies of minerals like copper and cobalt, which are found in Congo and are a key component of batteries and other electronics. China is the top player in Congo, which has become an increasing concern to Washington.

China signed an agreement with Tanzania and Zambia in September to revive a rival railway line to Africa's eastern coast.

Pakistan's youth to get global recognition through PM's youth skill program: Rana

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Prime Minister's Youth Program, Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan Sunday reiterated the government's resolve to empower Pakistan's youth, emphasizing the importance of skill-based education in enabling young girls and boys to gain global recognition.

In an exclusive talk with PTV news channel, the Chairman said Pakistan's youth are poised to gain global recognition through the Prime Minister's Youth Skill Development Program (PMYSDP).

This initiative aims to equip young people with market-driven conventional and high-tech skills required for career progression, ultimately bringing their capacity at par with international standards, he added.

This initiative aligns with the Prime Minister's vision to equip the youth

with market-driven skills, thereby enhancing their employability and contributing to the country's economic growth, Rana Mashhood Ahmad said.

The PM skill program promotes inclusivity, striving for gender equality, inclusiveness of differently abled young individuals, marginalized youth and empowering youth workers engaged in the informal sector. The Prime Minister's Youth Programme is taking a significant step forward by introducing international certifications for various skill programs, he said, adding that these programs include artificial intelligence, digitalization e-gaming or e-sports electrician, plumbing, solar system, UPS installation mechanics, marketing, repairing, beautician courses and digital marketing all designed to boost global recognition and consumption of Pakistani youth.

This initiative aims to empower young Pakistani girls and boys with market-driven conventional and high-tech skills, bringing their capacity at par with international standards, he added.

This move is expected to increase the employability of Pakistani youth, both locally and internationally, he mentioned.

Responding to a query, Rana Mashhood highlighted that Pakistan is becoming a hub for skill-based education, attracting students from over 20 countries. These international students are visiting Pakistan to acquire high-end skills in various fields, including technology, vocational training and entrepreneurship, he added.

This influx of international students is a testament to the quality of education and training being offered in Pakistan, he mentioned.



ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, presides over important meeting at CPO, regarding maintaining peace and tranquility, improving the investigation system.

IGP Islamabad orders swift arrest of fugitives, enhances security measures

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, presided over an important meeting on Sunday at Central Police Officer, Islamabad regarding maintaining peace and tranquility, improving the investigation system, and ensuring the arrest of wanted suspects in ongoing cases.

A public relation officer told APP that the meeting was attended by DIG Headquarters and Security Jawad Tariq, AIG Establishment Abdul Haq Umrani, and AIG Investigation and Complaints Syed Inayat Ali Shah.

During the meeting, IGP Islamabad reviewed the investigation system and examined pending cases. He directed officers to make investigations more effective and ensure the arrest of fugitives in ongoing cases.

IG Rizvi said that, in line with modern demands, the investigation process is being equipped with advanced techniques. All officers are directed to resolve

ongoing cases based on merit.

The purpose of renewing the investigation wing is to ensure timely and merit-based completion of investigations, improve the handling of criminal cases, and tighten the noose around criminals, aiming to eliminate crime from society, he added.

Additionally, during the meeting, the IGP Islamabad emphasized enhancing security measures to maintain peace in Islamabad. He directed that checks at the city's entry and exit points be made more effective.

The security of the city will be further reinforced by ensuring surveillance and monitoring through the high-tech Safe City cameras.

Moreover, officers stationed at security checkpoints were instructed to improve security, maintain a strict watch on suspicious vehicles and individuals, and ensure the use of all safety gadgets, including bulletproof jackets and helmets.

Mehwish becomes PIA's first female flying spanner engineer

ISLAMABAD (APP): Mehwish Anwar has made history by becoming the first female flying spanner engineer in Pakistan International Airlines (PIA).

According to a PIA spokesperson, she completed her inaugural flight coverage, marking a significant milestone in the national carrier's history, private news channel reported.

The groundbreaking flight took place from Islamabad to Sukkur, where Mehwish ensured seamless engineering operations during the journey.

"Mehwish Anwar's unwavering dedication, hard work, and consistency have set a remarkable example for others", he said and added that her achievement has been hailed as a beacon of progress for women in the aviation industry.

Speaker NA condoles death of Former MNA

ISLAMABAD (Online): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has expressed deep shock and grief over the tragic death of Makhdoom Syed Hasan Gilani, member former National Assembly, and father of Makhdoom Samiullah Gilani MNA in a road accident. The Speaker National Assembly paid rich tributes to the services of late former MNA. The Speaker in a condolence message to the family of late former MNA prayed for highest place of the departed soul in Jannah.



ISLAMABAD: Students pose for group photo during the Alumni Evening of Model College for Girls G10/4.

HSA completes screening for over 150,000 paramedical candidates in five hospitals

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Health Services Academy (HSA) has completed its first large-scale recruitment drive for paramedical staff across Islamabad's five major teaching hospitals, marking a significant milestone in the city's healthcare sector.

Over 150,000 candidates participated in skill and written tests during this historic initiative, setting new benchmarks for transparent and effective recruitment. The recruitment aimed to fill critical positions at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), District Health Office (DHO) Islamabad, Federal Medical College (FMC), Federal Government Polyclinic, and the National Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine (NIRM). The screening process began with skill tests in early November, followed by written tests, completing all stages within three months of meticulous planning and

execution, showcasing HSA's dedication to fairness and precision. Approximately 48,000 candidates underwent specialized evaluations for typing and shorthand skills, while over 100,000 candidates completed written tests, demonstrating the vast scale of the recruitment initiative. This unprecedented achievement underscores HSA's ability to efficiently handle large-scale recruitment while upholding high standards of accuracy and reliability. Reflecting on this achievement, Chief Examiner and Director of Quality Assurance at HSA, Nadeem Sajjad Kayani lauded the exceptional teamwork across sections, including secrecy, verification, venue management, and security. He expressed gratitude to Professor Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan, Vice Chancellor of HSA, Professor Dr. Abdullah Khan and the Ministry of National Health Services for their unwavering support throughout the process.

Interfaith dialogue to bring scholars from seven religions on one platform

ISLAMABAD (Online): Despite the general perception of religion as a source of division, it holds immense transformative potential to address global challenges and promote unity in a divided world. In this regard, interfaith dialogue and cooperation remain essential for countering polarization. By working toward common goals, religious communities can demonstrate the enduring relevance of faith in tackling issues of inequality and conflict.

Aimed at fostering this understanding, Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) is collaborating with Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), University of Management & Technology (UMT), Lahore, Gift University, Gujranwala, Islamic Foundation, UK, and The Markfield Institute of Higher Education, UK, in holding an international seminar on 'The Role of Religions in Fostering Peace, Harmony, and Justice' on December 4, 2024.

The event will bring together prominent international and local speakers representing seven major faiths, i.e. Islam, Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism, Judaism, and Baha'ism, alongside scholars, religious leaders, policymakers, and civil society representatives.

The seminar is timely as the contemporary global landscape, marked by fast-paced changes in lifestyles, thought patterns, and decision-making criteria, is witnessing a growing skepticism toward religiosity. Since the dawn of the industrial age and now entering the Fifth Industrial Revolution, the relevance of religion has been overshadowed by modernism, post-modernism, and the dominance of science and technology. In this environment, religion is often viewed as unnecessary or divisive.

However, while societal advancements promise



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of China to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong giving a donation check to Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar during Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association (PFOWA) charity bazaar 2024 at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the Federal Capital.

'PCB, BCCI agree on hybrid model for Champions Trophy and future ICC tournaments'

LAHORE (INP): The Pakistan Cricket Board and the Board of Control for Cricket in India have retracted from their earlier stance, agreeing to play their future matches in ICC tournaments on a hybrid model and easing the way for next year's Champions Trophy to be held.

The two boards held dialogue on Saturday after the International Cricket Council had convened a meeting on Friday and came to a consensus on a hybrid model for the Feb 19-March 9 Champions Trophy after the Indian government refused to allow its team to travel to Pakistan but the PCB has stressed that it will also like the same model to be applied for its team when tournaments are held on the other side of the border in the next three years. The final approval to the plan will have to be given by the ICC Board to ensure it is implemented fully. The PCB had been sticking to its stance of not accepting the hybrid model after the Pakistan team went to India for last year's ODI World

Cup. It expected India to do the same for the Champions Trophy — the first ICC tournament in Pakistan since it co-hosted the 1996 ODI World Cup — but has now sounded the BCCI not to expect any future favours. "Yes the past experience is bitter for Pakistan and the ICC has to give a solid guarantee that the hybrid model will be implemented in letter and spirit in future and no Pakistan team will go to India to play any matches of the ICC events and on the same pattern the Indian team will not come to Pakistan," a source in the PCB told. The source added that the ICC had asked the two cricket boards to reach at a decision with mutual understanding, before its Board takes any decision. The ICC had convened a meeting online in Dubai on Friday but it was postponed for Saturday. On Saturday it was again not held because the two cricket boards were in the discussion.

"As there will be holidays in the UAE till Tuesday due to the country's

national day, the meeting could be held at any time to announce the decision," the source informed.

The PCB had asked the BCCI to show a letter from the Indian government in which it had disallowed its team from touring Pakistan due to security reasons and the source informed that no such letter was shown.

"Indirectly, in the backdoor channels, the BCCI had been warned that as it has no letter from its government and had also agreed with the PCB's Master Security Plan for the Champions Trophy, presented in the ICC's meeting on Oct 21, it would have a weak case if the PCB was to approach the Court for Arbitration in Sport."

India remains the most influential member of the ICC, earning a lion's share from the income of cricket's governing body, and the source added that Pakistan could ask for a greater share as the bulk of the earnings comes from matches involving the two rivals.



CHARSADDA: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar attending the funeral of father of Muhammad Saleh Khan, Senior Officer of Information Ministry.

Civil society activists condemn escalating state terrorism in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): Civil society activists have strongly denounced India's use of state terrorism as an official policy in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, stating that the Modi-led Indian regime has intensified repression to suppress the Kashmiri struggle for right to self-determination.

According to Kashmir Media Service, activists argue that IIOJK has been gripped by a new wave of state-sponsored oppression since Narendra Modi

came to power, particularly following the revocation of Article 370 on August 5, 2019. They highlight that the killings, arrests, torture, property seizures, and dismissal of employees have become routine in the territory.

Since the revocation of Article 370, more than 940 Kashmiris have been martyred by Indian troops, with over 25,365 individuals arrested and 2,449 tortured. The Modi regime has also targeted public and private properties, using dra-

conian laws to stifle dissent.

"The Hindutva-driven policies of the Indian government aim to erase Kashmir's identity and subdue its people's legitimate demand for the right to self-determination," said the activists. The activists called on the international community to hold India accountable for its crimes against humanity, emphasizing the need for global action to protect the rights and dignity of the Kashmiri people.

Muqam announces compensation for Parachinar victims

PESHAWAR (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan, and SAFRON, and President of PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engineer Amir Muqam has announced compensation for all victims of recent incidents of violence in Parachinar on behalf of the federal government.

He has directed the Kohat Commissioner to prepare a detailed report on

praying for the departed souls and the swift recovery of the injured. Muqam emphasized that the issue transcends politics, urging all stakeholders to unite for a common resolution.

"This is not just a provincial issue; it concerns the entire nation," he said and highlighted his efforts to foster unity, including visits to the Chief Minister's House and collaboration with the Gov-



ISLAMABAD: Indonesian artists performing during Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association (PFOWA) charity bazaar 2024 at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the Federal Capital.

the damages, said a press release issued on Sunday.

Speaking at a grand jirga in Kohat, the minister stressed the importance of restoring peace in Parachinar for the greater good of the country and its people. He expressed condolences on behalf of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the federal government over the tragic incidents,

error of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The minister reiterated that lasting solutions can only be achieved through dialogue, not conflict.

He promised to personally discuss the compensation package with the prime minister and present the matter to the federal cabinet.



ISLAMABAD (APP): PML-N Senator Dr Afnan Ullah Khan Sunday stated that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was damaging the country's reputation with false claims and prioritizing their agenda over the country's well-being.

Afnan Khan slams PTI's chaotic politics

ISLAMABAD (APP): PML-N Senator Dr Afnan Ullah Khan Sunday stated that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was damaging the country's reputation with false claims and prioritizing their agenda over the country's well-being.

He suggested they should not compromise the country's national interests over their personal gains.

Dr. Afnan Ullah Khan, while speaking to a private news channel, accused the PTI of blackmailing the state by politicizing dead bodies, despite having no video evidence to support their claims.

Afnan Ullah further criticized the PTI leadership for abandoning their supporters during a recent protest in Islamabad, adding that the PTI leadership, including Bushra Bibi and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin

Gandapur, were accused of retreating from the scene, leaving their supporters to face the consequences alone. Senator urged the PTI to shun its chaotic approach to politics and re-focus on restoring Pakistan's reputation with false narratives and work towards the betterment of the country. Pakistan's economy is on the path to recovery, but the PTI's nefarious agenda may jeopardize this progress, potentially leading to the country's downfall, he added. Senator accused the PTI of promoting a culture of violence and intolerance in the country.

He further added that the PTI's leadership is responsible for inciting violence and hatred among their supporters, which is damaging the country's social fabric and democratic values.

Pakistan's Northern regions transformed into winter wonderland: report

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's northern regions have transformed into a breathtaking winter wonderland, mesmerizing tourists and locals alike where Naran and Kaghan, two popular tourist destinations, received heavy snowfall, turning them into a paradise for winter sports enthusiasts and nature lovers.

A report aired by a private news channel said that the snow-clad mountains, trees and roads presented a picturesque view, attracting a large number of tourists from across the country.

The recent snowfall in the northern regions has transformed the area into a winter wonderland, with snow-capped peaks, frozen lakes and picturesque valleys.

Popular destinations like Naran, Kaghan, Hunza and Skardu are now more alluring than ever, offering a range of activities such as skiing, snowboarding, trek-

king and ice skating.

The temperatures in the region dropped significantly, with some areas experiencing temperatures as low as -10°C.

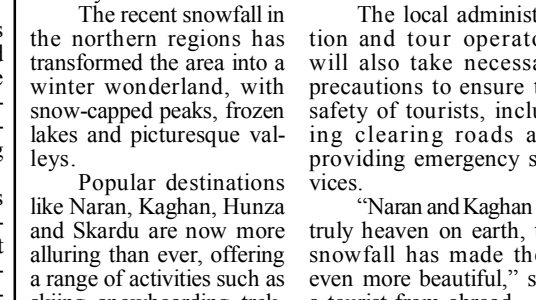
"It is a dream come true to see Naran and Kaghan covered in snow," said a tourist.

"The scenery is breathtaking, and we are having an amazing time here," he added.

Another tourist commented, "We have never seen snowfall before, so this is a thrilling experience for us. The roads are slippery, but the scenery is totally worth it."

The local administration and tour operators will also take necessary precautions to ensure the safety of tourists, including clearing roads and providing emergency services.

"Naran and Kaghan are truly heaven on earth, the snowfall has made them even more beautiful," said a tourist from abroad.



ISLAMABAD: People making drawing on the cheek during their visit to different stalls in Annual Christmas Market under the auspices of the German Embassy in Islamabad at a local hotel.