



Govt awaits PTI response to alternative venue offer

- Interior minister says protesting party asked to shift its protest to Sangjani
- PTI team visits Adiala jail late at night 'to consult Imran' for second time in 24 hours
- PM, govt functionaries blame protesters for cop's death, vow accountability

By Iqbal Jussaid and
Syed Irfan Haza

ISLAMABAD: As scattered groups of protesters began to trickle into the outskirts of the capital on Monday night, the government and PTI apparently opened a 'back-channel' for the sake of negotiations.

In a late-night presser, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi seemed to confirm talks with the protesting party, saying that the government had offered Sangjani, on the outskirts of Islamabad, as a venue for their protest.

PTI leaders met Imran Khan for a second time late on Monday night at a specially arranged meeting, where they reportedly laid the government's proposals before the incarcerated party founder.

The outcome of the meeting was not immediately clear, as the PTI delegation left without speaking to the media.

However, Mr Naqvi said that they were waiting for a response from the party and asked journalists, who were insistent on getting an answer, to wait for an outcome.

Earlier in the day, sources claimed that PTI and government leaders had held talks, ostensibly to finalise a venue where PTI supporters could be allowed to stage a demonstration in Islamabad

without affecting the peace.

While both sides didn't categorically confirm the talks, Interior Minister Naqvi hinted that the government was awaiting a response from the PTI.

Later, in his last press interaction of the day, he said: "As per my information, they have got permission from there [Mr Khan] as well," adding that a formal response from PTI was still awaited.

Earlier on Monday, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan held his first meeting with Mr Khan in prison, after which he told the media the PTI founder had refused to withdraw the protest call.

Late night media reports suggested that PTI leaders were trying to prevail upon Bushra Bibi, who is leading the main caravan of protesters coming from KP to Islamabad, to accept the proposal to change the protest venue.

'Extreme steps'

In his remarks, Mr Naqvi warned protesters not to expect any leniency from the government.

He said the government would deal with violent protesters with an iron hand, adding that he wouldn't hesitate to impose a curfew or invoke Article 245, which empowered the government to call armed forces for security

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ISLAMABAD: PTI supporters display gear snatched from retreating policemen during their advance towards Islamabad, as marchers clashed with security personnel deployed on the outskirts of the capital, on Monday. — AFP

Constable dies, dozens injured in skirmishes on capital's outskirts

- Police detain, book hundreds of activists; cases also lodged against Imran, Bushra, Gandapur, Omar Ayub and other party leaders over violence
- Marchers seize police equipment, remove barricades in their path amid advance towards capital
- Bushra Bibi vows to continue fight for Imran's release until her 'last breath'

By Arif Iqbal & Muhammad Azeem

TAXILA / ISLAMABAD: A policeman, injured in clashes with protesters at Jandial checkpoint near Taxila, died on Monday as PTI supporters continued to overcome roadblocks and barricades on main highways, to continue advancing towards the capital.

Separately, police registered cases against Imran Khan, Bushra Bibi, Dr Arif Alvi, KP CM Ali Amin Gandapur, Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Omar Ayub Khan and hundreds of senior PTI lawmakers, leaders and workers across Punjab over violent protests on Nov 24.

The FIRs were registered under different sections of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC), as well as the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA).

Imran, Bushra and PTI leaders booked for 'criminal conspiracy, inciting people': Page 4

Internet disruptions affect routine life, causing misery to Karachiites: Page 15

Constable Muhammad Mubashir, 46, who had travelled from Muzaffargarh to assist the Rawalpindi police, sustained critical injuries during clashes with protesters and was shifted to the DHSQ Rawalpindi, where he succumbed to injuries.

His funeral was later held at the Rawalpindi Police Lines, before his body was sent to his native town for burial.

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Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, who visited the injured officers at the hospital, extended condolences to Mubashir's family, honouring his sacrifice.

"The government stands by his family in this time of grief, and all perpetrators will face legal consequences."

In a late-night presser, Mr Naqvi revealed that a Rangers official had also sustained a bullet injury, warning protesters that they would not tolerate attacks any further on law enforcement

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Kurram death toll rises to 73 as sporadic clashes continue

Overnight firing between tribes in Lower Kurram leaves one dead, four others wounded

By Our Correspondent

KURRAM: Officials on Monday said the death toll from the recent violence that has plagued the restive Kurram tribal district had risen to 73, amid a renewed ceasefire that is interrupted by sporadic gunfire.

Officials said that overnight firing between tribes divided along sectarian lines left one man dead and four others wounded in Lower Kurram. There were also reports of an ex-

change of fire and incidents of arson from different areas in the region.

Authorities acknowledged that the two sides had taken steps to abide by the terms of the week-long ceasefire, including the release of five women held hostage by one side and the return of two dead bodies.

While officials continued to work behind the scenes to keep the situation under control and prevent further escalation, the political leadership was conspicuous by its absence, as it is supposed to take the process forward and work towards a permanent ceasefire.

Sources said that an official delegation of the provincial government on Sunday negotiated a ceasefire between the two groups, who agreed to release hostages besides returning the bodies as well. One group, how-

ever, refused to release hostages, they said.

Locals reported that incidents of gunfire continued in Alikai and Bagan areas of Lower Kurram and Khar Kelay and Balochkhal areas of Upper Kurram.

Kurram ceasefire: Editorial on Page 6

ANP sees 'well-planned intrigue' behind growing terrorism in KP: Page 8

The clashes broke out on Thursday after a convoy of passenger vehicles came under attack in Lower Kurram and resulted in the death of at least 39 people. The attack, allegedly a reprisal for an earlier assault on 48/

32, triggered a wave of violence in the district.

The number fatalities since Thursday's attack has risen due to the death of critically wounded individuals. The total number of those with injuries due to armed clashes now stands at 63, officials said.

Soon after the attack, Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur had ordered an official delegation comprising Minister for Law Afzal Alam Afridi, Advisor to Chief Minister on Information Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif, Chief Secretary Nadeem Adam Chaudhry and police chief Akhtar Hayat Khan to visit the district and assess the situation.

On Sunday, Mr Saif said that the warring groups had agreed to a week-long ceasefire, an exchange of hos-

tages and retrieval of bodies.

The district, which borders Afghanistan, has long been plagued by sectarian tensions, often fuelled by disputes over land ownership. While the government-appointed land commission reportedly submitted its findings in the past, the report remains unpublished due to sectarian sensitivities.

Meanwhile, educational institutions and markets remained closed on the fifth day of the armed conflict while annual PSC exams, being held by the Kohat educational board, were also postponed.

Head of the private school teachers' association Muhammad Hayat Khan said that the exams were postponed indefinitely and that all the educational institutions in the area were closed.

Belarusian president arrives on three-day visit

By Baqir Sajjad Syed

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Belarus are working to strengthen bilateral relations, with a focus on boosting trade and economic cooperation, as Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko on Monday began a three-day official visit to the country.

Flight MoUs signed with Belarus to boost trade: Page 9

President Lukashenko was welcomed at Nur Khan Airbase by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, accompanied by key cabinet ministers, including Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, and Information Minister Anwarul Haq.

The Belarusian president is being accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising government officials and representatives from leading business companies.

The 68-member delegation arrived a day earlier

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ON OTHER PAGES



Agha to head constitutional bench of SHC

The Judicial Commission of Pakistan has nominated Justice Muhammad Karam Khan Agha to head the constitutional bench of the Sindh High Court. The nine-judge bench also included justices Saleem Jussaid, Omar Sial, Younas Ali Sayeed, Abdul Moheem Lakhani, Zulfikar Ali Bangi, Sana Akram Mirhas, Khadim Hussain Soomro and Arbab Ali Hales. Page 12

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Eight journalists on bail after 'flimsy case'

By Our Correspondent

GUJRAN: Eight journalists of Haliabad are on interim bail after being booked by Karsak Police Station on Nov 20.

They were present on the lawn of the house of former MNA Mohd Hassan Bharti where his daughter MNA Ahsanah Mohd Bharti was scheduled to address a news conference when Haliabad police reached there, pushed the media persons out and did not allow them to attend the news conference.

Later on, a case was registered against eight of them, namely Arif Pervez, Hafiz Azhar Rehman, Shahbaz Qut, Sheikh Javed, Asim Shah, Javed Asad, Ehsanullah and Shafiqul Wattoo, under sections of the PPC on the report of Sub-Inspector Mushtaq Hussain.

The journalists later obtained bail before arrest from a court until Nov 29.

Journalists associations condemned the registration of a case against the journalists for performing their professional duties.

They have demanded quashing of the case; otherwise, the journalists would stage protest demonstrations.

Police alleged they raided the venue on the information of presence of former MNA Shaukat Bharti who was a proclaimed offender and some other POs but the journalists abetted them to escape from the scene and interfered with official work of police.

The journalists denied the allegations and termed the police action unjustified.

Ajoka to perform Bala King at FLF

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Ajoka will perform its entertaining and politically relevant play, *Bala King*, at the Faisalabad Literary Festival (FLF) on Nov 30, Shahid Nadeem told Dawn.

The drama is a Punjabi adaptation of German playwright Brecht's play based on Hitler's rise to power. In Shahid Nadeem's adaptation, originally directed by late Madan Lal Gaur, *Bala Pehlwan* from inner city enters politics and rises to power using intimidation, bribery and sedition.

The cast includes Usman Raj, Shahzad Saadi, Muhammad Shabbir, Asim Latif, Rai Kamran, Hafiz Ebrahim, Shujaat Haidar, Bilal Mughal, Rabit, Jazib, Anish, Meesam and Luka.

Ajoka also plans to hold a theatre award ceremony to honour theatre artists as a part of Ajoka's 40th Anniversary concluding event. A new documentary on Ajoka will also be premiered on the occasion. The event will be held at Alhamra, in the third week of December.

CM meets ADB official

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz met Dr Emma Xiaoqin Fan, country director of the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Pakistan resident mission, to discuss ongoing development projects and future collaborations.

The meeting covered strengthening the economy, improving basic infrastructure, and enhancing cooperation in agriculture, health, education, environmental protection, and digital development. The 'Jalapur Irrigation Project' and clean energy initiatives were also on the agenda.

The chief minister lauded the ADB's financial and technical support for various Punjab projects, saying, "ADB's cooperation plays a pivotal role in ensuring prosperity and economic recovery. The Punjab government is advancing under a comprehensive plan for socio-economic development. Collaboration with ADB will further strengthen these objectives."

Dr Fan praised the Punjab government's initiatives for women's empowerment and public welfare.



LAHORE: Water employees continue to sprinkle water on city roads in an effort to mitigate the hazardous effects of smog.—White Star

Govt plans to instal 30 air quality monitors across Punjab

Eases curb on heavy vehicles, allows construction activity

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: In an initiative to combat rising air pollution, the Punjab government announced on Monday the installation of 30 advanced air quality monitors across various cities in the province.

The development is coupled with eased unregulated restrictions in key districts, aiming to improve environmental conditions while supporting economic activity.

Senior Minister Maryam Aurangzeb revealed that 30 advanced air quality monitors were being installed across various cities in the province, with Lahore's monitoring capacity increasing to eight units.

She said the new monitors in Lahore are strategically placed at TPO Kahna,

Jinn Bhagga Police Station, Shahbaz Teaching Hospital, Punjab University, and Wildlife Park, Rawalpindi. Other cities benefiting from this initiative include Rawalpindi (three monitors), Faisalabad, Sheikhupura, and Sukkot (one each), as well as Multan, Gujranwala, and Bahawalpur (two each). Sangolli (two monitors) and Dera Ghazi Khan (one monitor) are expected to activate their systems by the end of this month. These devices are linked to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) central control room for real-time monitoring.

The senior minister highlighted that the collected air quality data will be integrated with the global Air Quality Index (AQI) system, providing accurate and reliable information to the public and researchers. This system is designed to facilitate timely actions against pollution and improve environmental conditions.

"This initiative is a revolutionary step to safeguard human lives. It will provide transparent data to the public and

ensure an effective solution to air pollution challenges," said Maryam Aurangzeb.

This programme is not only a significant step toward environmental conservation but also an example of utilising digital technology to enhance governance and improve public service delivery.

Meanwhile, the Punjab government had eased several restrictions imposed to combat smog in four key districts—Lahore, Multan, Faisalabad, and Gujranwala—providing much-needed relief to residents and businesses.

The EPA issued the new directives (available with Dawn), aimed to strike a balance between addressing environmental concerns and maintaining economic stability.

The restriction on the entry of heavy vehicles into these districts has been lifted, allowing smooth transportation and logistics operations. Brick kilns, previously shuttered to reduce emissions, are now permitted to operate, though it

is anticipated that compliance with specific environmental standards will be required. Construction activity has also been allowed.

During establishments, including restaurants and hotels, can now operate until 10pm, extending their previous closing hours. Markets and shopping centres must continue to close by 8pm, as per government orders, to limit emissions and conserve energy during peak pollution hours.

The government has underscored the importance of cooperative efforts in mitigating smog-related challenges. Citizens and businesses are encouraged to adopt eco-friendly practices and adhere to the revised guidelines to ensure a sustainable environment.

The decision follows a period of strict enforcement aimed at reducing pollution levels, which impact daily life and economic activity. These relaxations are seen as a step towards easing the burden on businesses while maintaining vigilance against smog hazards.

Deseating Imran from NA-95

Larger bench sought on plea against ECP powers

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Justice Rasool Hassan Sood of the Lahore High Court on Monday proposed formation of a larger bench to decide a petition challenging the legitimacy of section 137(4) of the Election Act 2017 invoked by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to de-seat former prime minister Imran Khan from NA-95, Minawali, in Toshakhana constituency.

The judge observed that important legal questions had been raised in the petition, which required to be decided by a larger bench.

The judge forwarded the petition to the chief justice with a request to form a larger bench on the matter.

Minir Ahmad, a lawyer, filed the petition through Advocate Arshad Siddiqui, pleading that former premier Imran Khan had been disqualified under sections 137(4) (power to prosecute for corrupt practices), 167 (corrupt practices) and 173 (making false statement or declaration) of the Act, however, in these sections, there was no mentioning of word "disqualification."

He argued that not sharing details of Toshakhana gifts and proceeds from sale did not lead to disqualification. He said it could occur only when the prosecution commenced within 120 days of filing of nomination papers.

The petitioner claimed that the prosecution under section 137 of the Act was only possible to be initiated within 120 days of the filing of false asset state-

ments. However, in the Imran Khan case, the last such statement was filed, on Dec 31, 2021.

Therefore, he said, the prosecution could have been initiated by April 30, 2022 but the same could not be commenced within the stipulated period of 120 days.

He contended that the ECP verdict disqualified Imran Khan under article 63(1)(g) of the Constitution read with sections 137 and 173 of the Election Act.

He argued that the ECP illegally and unlawfully disqualified Khan under section 137 of the Act which specifies only a three-year punishment or fine or both, and not disqualification.

The petitioner asked the court to declare the section 137(4) of the Election Act ultra vires to the Constitution.

LHC upholds objection to plea against 26th Amendment

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Lahore High Court Chief Justice Ahsan Nadeem on Monday sustained a registrar officer's objection to the maintainability of a petition against the Constitution (26th Amendment) Act 2024.

The chief justice heard the petition filed by a citizen, Nasir Ahmed Chaudhry, on which the office had previously raised objections to its maintainability.

The chief justice questioned the petitioner's lawyer about the lack of information regarding a similar petition currently under consideration in Supreme Court. She also noted that no supporting

documents were attached to substantiate the petition.

The chief justice observed that it was inappropriate to file petitions on the same issue in multiple courts across the country.

She upheld the office objection and dismissed the petition for being not maintainable.

In his petitions, the petitioner contends the amendment does not align with the preamble of the Constitution and violates the principle of an independent judiciary.

The petitioner says disregarding the principle of seniority also places a restriction on judicial independence.

He argues that preventing a Supreme

Court judge or bench from hearing cases undermines judicial independence.

He further contends that including parliamentarians and ministers in the judicial commission infringes upon the judiciary's autonomy.

He pleads that monitoring and issuing instructions to high court judges by the parliamentary committee would obstruct judicial independence.

He also assails allowing the chief election commissioner to work till the appointment of his successor contradicts the preamble of the Constitution.

The petitioner asks the court to set aside the Constitution (26th Amendment) Act 2024 for being unconstitutional.

Is it politics or terrorism, asks Azma

LAHORE: Punjab Information Minister Azma Bhatti said on Monday a policeman was killed and another 30 suffered injuries during clashes with Imran Khan's supporters.

"Constantly Molotovs are being thrown in a clash with PTI workers while 30 cops injured, of them the condition of five is critical. They (PTI) have taken police officers hostage. Is this politics or terrorism?" the minister asked at a press conference here.

She said in Attock police officers were attacked. In Sangolli, a police officer was shot in the leg and in Wah Cantt, a constable was injured.

"I want to tell Sardara Bibi that this is not a jungle. She is inviting Pakistanis to attack the state, leading armed mobs, and adding a religious veneer to the PTI aggression," she said.

She claimed the PTI and its armed factions wanted casualties to advance their disruptive political agenda.

She said Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz had ordered that police officers should remain unarmoured while the PTI had come armed from KP to wreak a havoc and instigate violence.

She said KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur's own province was burning, yet he was trying to set Punjab on fire. She said the PTI was trying to provoke the state into using force against them, while knowing the state would never do so.

"If even one of their members gets a scratch, they create an uproar domestically and internationally," she said, adding the state was under attack from the PTI which wanted negotiations as well.

Expressing concern for the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the minister lamented their "suffering" under such leadership. She noted a "dark contrast" between the crowds KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur attracted and the lack of support for Sardara Bibi.

—Staff Reporter

Police identify 35 people involved in Nishtar AIDS scandal

PMA comes out in support of 'guilty' medics, condemns govt for action

By Asif Chaudhry

LAHORE: Multan Police identified 30-35 people, including the Nishtar Hospital staff, who were behind the alleged tampering with the record of the kidney patients who tested positive for HIV/AIDS. However, police lack the mandate to investigate the health professionals.

On the other hand, the Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) has come out in the support of the medics, including the Nishtar Medical University (NMU) VC, who were suspended for negligence that resulted in infections of dozens of kidney patients with

HIV in the hospital.

Police completed the probe into the forged test reports of the patients on the directions of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz when the HIV/AIDS scandal in the nephrology unit of the hospital came to the limelight.

An official told Dawn police would submit findings of the investigation to the health department for further action.

"We have no mandate to investigate the healthcare professionals held guilty of the HIV/AIDS outbreak in the Nishtar Hospital," he said, adding that the Multan police probe was limited to the issue of patients' records that were tampered with.

During the investigation, he said, police found that the private labs had tampered with the record of dialysis patients enrolled with the Nishtar Hospital and generated new falsified test reports to mislead the authorities. He revealed that a hospital

employee was running a dialysis centre out of the government health facility and he had used in his private lab the test kits supplied officially to the Nishtar Hospital.

The police officer added that nearly 30-35 persons, including the hospital employees, were found involved in preparing bogus test reports of the dialysis patients who contracted HIV/AIDS due to negligence of the medics.

To a question, he said, the investigation was carried out under the supervision of an SSP. The PMA condemned the government's action against the NMU VC and other health professionals in the wake of the scandal.

Talking to the media at a press conference held on Monday, the PMA leaders declared the suspensions of the senior medics on the basis of an inquiry conducted by the fact-finding committee illegal, illogical and against the rules.

The reports suggested that the PMA

came to the support of the guilty NMU senior faculty members and other doctors whom a senior leader of the association from Multan was held responsible for allegedly tampering with the record of the patients who carried HIV/AIDS during the dialysis in the hospital.

Talking to the media, PMA Lahore chapter president Prof Asifur Nazam, Dr Kamran Saeed, Prof Shahid Malik, Dr Ishaq Ahmad Chaudhry, Dr Iram Shahzadi and Dr Wajid suggested to the Punjab governor to reject the resignation submitted by NMU VC Mohsin Khokhar.

Prof Nazam declared the action against the NMU VC and other health professionals a continuation of the departmental and police action against the senior doctors of the Nishtar Medical College.

"The Punjab government initiated proceedings against the NMU woman VC at a time when the world was observing an inter-

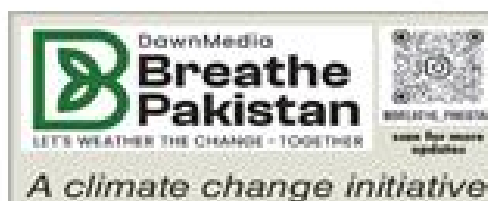
national day for the elimination of violence against the women," the PMA leader said and added that the doctors would not tolerate harassment of the health professionals and announced that a PMA delegation would meet PMEN supreme Nazam Sharif to raise the matter.

Prof Nazam also raised questions over the findings of the inquiry committee, saying that it was half-baked, incomplete and full of anomalies. He declared the standard guidelines of the Punjab Aids Control Programme controversial regarding the time period of performing the AIDS tests of the dialysis patients.

The PMA leaders put the blame on the bureaucracy, including the health secretary, for mishandling the matter, saying that the CM was not properly informed by the inquiry committee and the health authorities about the facts behind the incident.



DAWN



Hamid announces, SCBA chief rejects call for lawyers' agitation

• PTI-aligned lawyer leader claims their campaign will kick off with a convention in Lahore on Nov 30 • Rauf Atta says SCBA alone can issue call for such a movement

By Waqar Ahmad Sheikh and Nasir Iqbal

LAHORE/ISLAMABAD: PTI Senator and senior lawyer, Hamid Khan, on Monday called for a lawyers' movement from Punjab on Nov 30 against the 26th constitutional amendment. However, Supreme Court Bar Association president Mian Muhammad Rauf Atta threw the apex body's weight behind the constitutional bench formed under the 26th amendment and rejected the agitation called by the senior lawyer.

Hamid Khan, an ex-SCBA president, while addressing a presser in the Lahore High Court Bar Association auditorium, said the issue was directly related to lawyers, adding that it would be a lawyers' movement, not political.

He said the movement would be kicked off at an all-Punjab lawyers' representative convention being hosted by the LHCBA on Nov 30.

He claimed the legal fraternity had rejected the amendment as it would destroy the judicial system.

Commenting on the results of the recent SCBA election, Hamid Khan, who heads the Professional Group of lawyers, alleged interference and rigging on part of intelligence agencies. He claimed that his candidates for vice presidents — Khushal Khan from Baluchistan and Habib Qureshi from KP — were initially declared winners but defeated in the recount.

He also vowed to continue the struggle against the 26th amendment. "If they think we have fallen silent, they are mistaken," he said.

Soon after Hamid Khan's presser, the SCBA president in a statement declared, "I want to assure that this association cannot allow anyone to promote political agendas using the shoulders of legal fraternity." Mr Atta said that the legal fraternity's recommendations had been fully incorporated in the amendment,

adding that the SCBA had full confidence in the establishment of the constitutional bench and would not allow anyone to undermine the integrity and disrupt the working of the constitutional bench for petty political whims.

Describing Hamid Khan's presser as akin to aligning with a specific political stance, he made it clear that his movement does not reflect the legal fraternity's position. He regretted that Hamid Khan wrongly criticised the legitimacy of the amendment passed by a democratically-elected parliament.

"I want to make it absolutely clear that authority to make a call for any lawyers strike / protest, or movement solely rests with the elected representatives of the legal fraternity, not with any unrelated person, let alone any politically aligned personality such as Senator Hamid Khan," he said.

Such calls are only meant to create division within the legal fraternity, Mr Atta said.

Promotions in limbo as selection board meeting postponed, again

By Malik Asad

ISLAMABAD: The much-awaited meeting of the Central Selection Board (CSB), which was scheduled for Monday after a gap of 17 months, was postponed once again, stalling the promotion of top bureaucrats.

The CSB, which decides the promotion of bureaucrats from Grades 19 to 21, has to meet twice a year as per law.

A notification issued by the Establishment Division said the meeting "to consider promotion cases of officers from BS-19 to BS-20 and from BS-20 to BS-21" scheduled for Nov 25 to 27 will now take place on Dec 23, 24, 25 and 27.

While the notification did not mention why the meeting had been rescheduled, sources said it was due to the law and order situation created after PTI's march towards Islamabad.

Scores of federal secretaries, senior parliamentarians, and police chiefs of all four provinces are CSB members.

A notification about the meeting issued by the Establishment Division

last month stated that the board would consider the promotions of officials in different ministries, ISI as well as Intelligence Bureau.

All relevant federal secretaries, the FIR chairman, chief secretaries and inspectors general of police were asked to attend the meeting. However, sources said, due to the prevailing law and order situation, the police chiefs were unable to participate in the meeting.

The notification stated that the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) chairman retired Lt Gen Akhtar Nawaz Kiani, would chair the meeting. Mr Kiani's appointment, which was confirmed only last month, was the reason why the CSB couldn't meet for more than a year.

Under the Civil Servants Act, only a regular FPSC chairman can head the board's meeting. The post was vacant since the resignation of Shafiq Adnan Tahir in August 2023. A number of bureaucrats, who were eligible for promotion to grades 20 and 21 retired as they reached the age of superannuation while waiting for the CSB meeting.

The women factor in Pakistani politics

While the 'politicisation' of Bushra and Aleema flies in the face of Imran's own opinions about 'hereditary politics', it speaks volumes about what compels families of politicians to step up

By Amir Wasim

COMMENT

THE old adage "what goes around, comes around" has never been more fitting than in the case of PTI founder Imran Khan, who has found himself trapped by the irony of his own words, delivered on a number of occasions as part of the political rhetoric he has used against his opponents.

The recent entry of his wife Bushra Bibi and sister Aleema Khan into the political fray has left many wondering: is it a betrayal of values, or a necessary move in the ever-changing world of politics?

For years, Mr Khan criticised traditional politicians for promoting hereditary politics and launching their own family members, particularly women, into the political arena, specifically targeting the Sharifs for bringing Kulsoom and Maryam Nawaz into politics.

PTI members and workers, in the past, have also run smear campaigns on social media targeting the two Sharif family women over the political roles they had adopted.

Both Bushra Bibi and Aleema Khan — who had previously been playing the role of mem-

bers between the incarcerated party leader and the PTI leadership — have now become more involved in the party's leadership. The former, who was released from prison following her bail in the Toshkhani case last month, has reportedly presided over a number of meetings in the PTI stronghold of KP. She also surprised many by issuing a political statement on Thursday that caused a storm of "international proportions".

Many believe that Mr Khan has sought the help of his wife and sister to further his political agenda due to his frustration with the current party leadership.

There is no doubt that Bushra Bibi and Aleema Khan, with little to no political experience or aspirations, were compelled to take on the political mantle due to the prevailing circumstances, given that most of the PTI's top tier leadership is either in prison, or in hiding out of fear of arrest.

A page from history

This is not a new trend or phenomenon in Pakistani politics. Indeed, the country has seen women family members of prominent politicians playing a similar role in the past, primarily out of necessity.

However, a couple of names on this list stand head and shoulders above the rest, those of Fatima Jinnah and Benazir Bhutto. The Quaid-e-Azam's sister, who remained by his side throughout the struggle for independence and thereafter, was a seasoned campaigner. Yet, she formally wedded into the

political arena some 17 years after the death of her brother. At the time, her husband was forced by Ayub Khan, the country's first military ruler, and she had to contest a top-sect election, facing harsh and a malicious campaign that went as far as to dub her a "traitor".

The lady still referred to as a Mad-e-Millat (mother of the nation) in contemporary history books was dubbed by some to be an 'agent of Khaled' in the 1960s. It sounds hard to believe, but this was part of a high-profile newspaper advertisement campaign, sponsored by the state.

Then, following the imposition of martial law and the ouster of the PPP leadership after the deposing of then-PM Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, it was the Iranian-born Begum Nawaz Bhutto and her daughter, Benazir, who stepped in to fill the political void.

While her mother jumped into the fray out of necessity, Benazir was already being groomed for leadership by her father as she regularly accompanied him in political meetings and foreign tours.

Following his demise, his spouse and daughter had to tread a thorny road, lined with persecution and exile, before the party could mark a return to power in the first democratic elections held in the post-Zia era.

This wasn't the end of her struggle, though, and history repeated itself in the 1990s. Dogged by allegations of corruption, the dismissal of the PPP government and imprisonment of her husband, she was forced into exile once again. Although she

managed to return to the country in 2007, she wound up paying the ultimate price for championing democracy when she was assassinated after a rally in Lahore's Iqbal Park.

Forced into the limelight

Begum Nawaz Wali Khan is one of the first names that comes to mind when we look back at women who were forced into the political limelight by circumstance.

The wife of Pakistan nationalist leader Khan Abdul Wali Khan, she wedded into politics after the arrest of her husband and the banning of his National Awami Party (NAP) by the then-PPP government in 1972. She led the movement to secure her husband's release and remained active in politics for many years after his death.

She also made a history by becoming the first woman elected from then-NWFP as a general seat in the 1977 elections and later played a crucial role in the struggle against the military dictator Gen Ziaul Haq from the platform of MRD.

Then, it was the turn of Kulsoom Nawaz, the wife of three-time prime minister Nawaz Sharif, to fight for her husband while he was imprisoned by military dictator Pervez Musharraf. Who can forget those iconic photos of her car being towed by the authorities from Lahore's Canal Road, with her still defiantly seated inside.

More contemporary examples include the two sisters of President Asif Ali Zardari, Farah Talpur and Dr Aera Faal Pechaho, who have been active in politics for decades.

While Dr Pechaho has kept a low profile in internal party matters, preferring to concentrate on service delivery as a member of the provincial cabinet, Mr Talpur has risen to occupy a central position in party circles. Known as 'Abbi' (the word Sindhi for 'sister'), she also entered politics when her brother

was facing a long incarceration under the Nawaz Sharif regime in 1990s. But while most of these women had to take on a political role under the yoke of military regimes, Bushra Bibi and Aleema Khan have been pushed into a similar situation under 'civilian rule'.

Bushra's role

PTI's opponents say that Imran Khan's post criticism of traditional politicians for promoting hereditary politics now seems hypocritical, when the women from his own family have jumped into the political arena.

On the other hand, PTI supporters claim that the two women were compelled to enter politics due to the government's policy of persecuting its opponents and cracking down on the PTI leadership and workers.

The future over Bushra Bibi's recent statement also mirrors the political situation. Although she has been in the news since their marriage, due to her reported influence on Mr Khan's political decisions, Bushra mostly remained behind the scenes while the PTI was in power.

Following her husband's incarceration, she was also dragged to court in various cases and only recently secured her freedom. Her latest statement, a rare appearance via video message that sparked controversy, was also necessitated by the confusing messages coming out of the party leadership regarding the protest planned for Sunday.

While it remains to be seen how Imran Khan's supporters will react to these two women's role in the party's decision-making circles, there are already reports of resentment within some sections of the party over the new roles assumed by Imran's spouse and sister. It's nothing we haven't seen before, and Bushra and Aleema are unlikely to be the last women to wedge into politics to save the men of their family.

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CIA building declared sub-jail to accommodate arrested PTI protesters

By Munawar Azam

ISLAMABAD: The Crime Intelligence Agency's building in the federal capital has been declared a sub-jail by the Islamabad administration to detain the leaders and workers of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) during the ongoing protests.

Officials of the capital police told Dawn that during the ongoing protests, the capital police have arrested over 500 local leaders and workers.

Due to the engagements in security duties and shortage of space in the lockups of the police stations police, arrested political individuals will neither be interrogated nor transported anywhere else, they said.

"Currently, all the prison vans and other police vehicles are deployed at different locations as per the security plan. Detaining such arrested persons in the lockups of the police stations is a risk under the prevailing circumstances," the officers said.

Sources said more police stations will be declared sub-jails if required.

The arrests were made from various areas including Faisalabad, Tarnol, Sanghar, Chongli No 26, Express Chowk, Noon, Nisara, Shams Colony, and Banigala.

So far, the capital police have registered seven cases against the leaders and workers of the protesting party 'for creating unrest and undermining public safety'.

The Shikha police have booked two nominated and 325 unidentified persons, Shahzad Town 402, Banigala 362, and the Shams Colony police have booked 450 accused in multiple cases.

Similarly, the Nisara and Tarnol police have booked over 350 and over 300 individuals respectively under various charges.

According to the FIRs, the implicated individuals were armed with weapons, iron punches, iron rods, batons, stones and sharp marble pieces.

The police claimed that the accused resorted to aerial firing, pelted vehicles with stones and blocked roads, churning anti-government slogans and forcefully closing shops.

Moreover, the capital police Monday partially opened major thoroughfares where shipping containers were placed to block the flow of traffic.

At these blockade points, the barricades were partially removed to make way for a single vehicle to cross at a time.

The police officers further said that the convoy of the PTI leaders and workers coming from KP comprised over 34,000 persons. Till late in the evening, the protesters had crossed the Hada interchange.

Meanwhile, the Inspector General of the Islamabad Police (IGIP), Syed Ali Naair Iluzvi, visited D-Chowk and various other areas to inspect anti-riot measures.

He met the officials of Islamabad police and other law enforcement agencies to boost their morale, who according to him were performing duties in order to maintain peace in the federal capital.

On the occasion, IGIP Islamabad instructed the officials to be highly alert to deal with any emerging law and order situation.

"We shall take every possible measure to protect the lives and property of citizens and threat adventurism," he said while addressing the officials.

He further said officials were performing their duties, putting their best efforts to maintain peace in the capital.

All the officers have been directed to stay vigilant in their respective areas and brief the personnel to deal with any untoward situation.



(CLOCKWISE from top) Police officials disputed on Kamal Sher Khan Road stop motorcyclists from heading towards Islamabad Expressway, vehicles turn around on the other lane of Islamabad Expressway due to road blockade and a family seen walking on Faisalabad Bridge towards Rawalpindi in absence of public transport on Monday. —Photos by Muhammad Asim

Imran, Bushra and PTI leaders booked for 'criminal conspiracy, inciting people'

Number of PTI supporters arrested in last four days reaches 170 in Rawalpindi; two police officials beaten up and injured by protesters

By Muhammad Asghar

RAWALPINDI: Police have registered two FIRs against PTI founder Imran Khan, his wife Bushra Bibi, central leadership and over 300 workers of the party on the charges of criminal conspiracy and inciting people to protest.

In the first FIR registered at the District police station on Sunday, the police accused Imran Khan, his wife, KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gharapoor, former president Dr Arif Alvi, Omar Ayub, Sheryar Riaz, Arif Riaz, Haroon Ashtar, Khurshid Khan and Asad Qasir of refusing to withdraw the call for the November 24 protest.

Police also detained 26 supporters of the PTI, including Agha and Nayyar Abbas of Chakral, five of the detainees, who were teenagers, were discharged while the remaining 21 were remanded in police custody for five days.

Likewise, the Sadiqabad police arrested 27 PTI supporters who were later remanded in police custody for three days. The number of PTI supporters detained by the police has reached 170 during the last four days.

In Sadiqabad, two police officials were injured and beaten up allegedly by PTI supporters who also tore their uniforms, smashed their anti-riot tools, including helmets, jackets and gurnies containing cash and CNICs. A tear gas gun carried by Farid Abbas, head constable, was broken after being smashed by the mob. However, the police narrowly escaped a mob attack.

Islamabad and Rawalpindi had already been put under a lockdown since Sunday with all highways and link roads leading to the federal capital blocked and thousands of police and paramilitary personnel deployed in an attempt to prevent the PTI supporters from marching to Islamabad.

Imran Khan, imprisoned in the Central Jail Adiala, has made a 'final call' to his supporters to descend on Islamabad to demand his release and protest against amendments to the constitution and changes in the judiciary.

Police said Azeema Khan, sister of Imran Khan, while talking to media outside the Adiala jail on November 22 called upon people to come out for their 'Andi' on November 24.

On November 19, Bushra Bibi issued a video message and delivered Imran Khan's direction to party MNAs to bring 5000 participants each and MPAs 1000 protesters each for the march to Islamabad.

"Despite the Punjab government's imposition of Section 144 on Nov 22, Imran Khan Niaz, founder of PTI and its central leadership, Bushra Bibi, Ali

Amin Gharapoor, Dr Arif Alvi, Azeema Khan, Omar Ayub, Sheryar Riaz, Arif Riaz, Haroon Ashtar, Khurshid Khan and Asad Qasir refused to withdraw the protest call," said the FIR.

It added that on the conspiracy of Agha Sabir Raja, Chaudhry Ameer Akmal, Chaudhry Muhammad Naeir, Zaid Khaliq Kiani and Tariq Aziz Bhatti, who were leading the protesters, Chaudhry Javed Kamran, Farukh Mahmood - Sial, Shahzade Khan, Khawaja Muhammad Aslam, Raja Sohail Kiani, Rashid Mahmood Mirhas, Chaudhry Tukka Khan, Raja Asghar, Chaudhry Shahid Hamid, Raja Saqib, Muhammad Taseer, Babar Shaukat, Asghar Abbas, Muslemar, Afraz Khan, Muhammad Irfan, Tajamal Iqbal, Nayyar Abbas, Adnan Abbas, Nigah Hussain, Saleem Manzoor, Matsoom Hassan Dada Iqbal, Saqib Riaz, Tawveez Iqbal, Imshadullah, Mehmoos Khan, Alshabbah Amin and Muhammad Usama along with 100 to 200 unidentified people blocked Dhamial Road by setting oil tyres on fire.

Police said a police team was on duty when armed PTI workers started shooting slogans, "Khan Nabeer to Pakistan Nabeer" etc. The protesters blocked the road causing problems, disrupting and endangering public life.

The protesters were told that gathering of the public had already been banned as the government had imposed Section 144, but they ignored and instead of dispersing started stuffing with police and opened fire on the police, but

the officials escaped unhurt.

However, a police van was damaged due to firing which also created panic and fear in the area. The protesters dispersed while pelting stones on the police.

The District police registered the FIR on the complaint of Muhammad Asif, SI, under 15 sections of the law, including section 7-A, criminal conspiracy, obstructing police from performing duty, blocking road and other relevant sections of the law.

Another FIR was registered with the Sadiqabad police on the complaint of Chaudhry Mustafa, sub-inspector, against the PTI founder in which the KP chief minister, Bushra Bibi and Azeema Khan were booked under section 7 of Anti-Terrorism Act.

In the FIR, the police accused the PTI founder of inciting people and launching a criminal conspiracy. The police said local PTI leaders Raja Basharat, Sardar Nasir Ali Khan, Zubair Khan, Malik Tahmeel, Babar Kamal Raja, Seemab Tahir, Rashid Hafiz, Zafar Akmal Satti, Zain Satti, Sheryar Riaz, Asad Abbas, Malik Taimoor Aslam Raja, Raja Shahid and others appeared in Daska Raja Khan and around a chicken market.

A reinforcement of police was called when about 100 PTI supporters led by Seemab Tahir shouting slogans appeared on the road and pelted police with stones injuring two officials.

The police recovered batons, catapults, stones and party flags from those detained.

Three dead, five injured in Neelum Valley jeep accident

By Our Staff Correspondent

MUZAFFARABAD: At least three people were killed and five others injured, three critically, when a passenger jeep plunged off a steep road in Neelum Valley on Monday evening, police said.

The jeep, carrying around 10 persons, including the driver, was heading to Soval village via a steep link road branching from Kundal Shahi, located some 73 kilometres northeast of here.

While negotiating a sharp bend in the second cut, the vehicle rolled backward out of the driver's control and plunged into a lower section of the same road around 5:30 pm, said SP Neelum Khawaja Siddique.

He said that according to an initial report, three people identified as Gohar Ali, 22, son of Kammat Shah (driver), Anwar Bibi, 40, wife of Abdul Hameed, and Mujahid Shah, 33, son of Imdad Shah, had died on the spot.

Five injured passengers were identified as Syed Rafique Shah, 23, Chaudhry Abdul Hameed, 47, Fiaz Kazmi, 11, and Ishaq Ismail. Of them, Mr Ismail was allowed to go home due to minor injuries, and the rest were hospitalized, the SP said.

Mushaal slams world community's silence towards abuses of Kashmiri women

By Itikhar A. Khan

ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussain Mellick, wife of incarcerated Kashmiri leader Yasin Malik, has expressed her utter dismay and frustration over the "deal and dumb approach" adopted by the international community and women's rights organisations towards the horrific use of sexual violence as a weapon of war to quell the Kashmiri freedom movement.

Mushaal, Chairperson of the Peace and Culture Organization in a message to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women regretted the lack of action to stop the epidemic of violence against women and girls in the occupied valley.

She said that the occupation forces crossed limits of barbarism and inhuman acts to silence the dissenting voices, as the human rights and women rights organisations watch the situation like silent onlookers.

Mushaal applauded UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for his call to observe the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. She urged him to raise awareness about the violence and harassment faced by women in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) and to take concrete steps to put an end to these inhuman acts.

She emphasised that the violence against women in Kashmir is a stark example of how rape is being used as a weapon of war to crush the will of the Kashmiri people and deny them their fundamental right to self-determination.

She stressed that it is essential to acknowledge the severity of this issue and work towards creating a safer and more just environment for the women of Kashmir.

Mushaal highlighted the devastating impact of the Indian forces' brutal actions in Kashmir, which have left over 30,000 women widowed and more than 90,000 children orphaned.

Furthermore, she added, several thousand Kashmiri girls and women have been victims of sexual violence.

The Chairperson recalled that the Indian army's atrocities have severely impacted the lives of over 50,000 women in Kashmir since 1990.

Mushaal pointed out that as documented by Amnesty International and other human rights organisations, these atrocities include gang rapes of young girls and elderly women, abductions by military and paramilitary forces, and sexual abuse, sometimes in the presence of male family members, adding that these heinous acts are used as a weapon of war, perpetuating a cycle of violence and trauma.

Furthermore, the presence of over 900,000 Indian military and paramilitary forces in the Kashmir

Valley has significantly heightened the sense of insecurity among women and children.

The Chairperson expressed her deep disappointment that the situation in the occupied valley has drastically deteriorated, primarily due to the international community's inadequate and unconvincing response to the plight of the Kashmiri people, particularly women.

Mushaal pointed out that the armed forces in Kashmir have been granted impunity to exploit women's rights and freedoms, often through sexual violence.

She cited a report by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, highlighting the Kashmir-Poonch mass rape as a significant example of the state's failure to investigate and prosecute allegations of sexual violence.

This incident occurred 27 years ago, on February 23, 1997, soldiers from the Indian Army's 4th Rajputana Rifles regiment gang-raped around 23 women from Kunan and Poonch villages in Kupwara district and despite attempts to seek justice, the authorities have consistently denied and blocked them.

Mushaal called upon the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch to press the Indian notorious government to stop the worst ongoing women rights violation and hold accountable the perpetrators of these heinous crimes.

Pakistan, Belarus discuss enhancing ties in matters of legal affairs

By Malik Asad

ISLAMABAD: A meeting between Minister for Law and Justice Senator Asim Naveer Tarar and Belarusian Minister of Justice Kovalenko Evgeny took place on Monday, setting the stage for enhanced bilateral relations in the field of justice and legal affairs.

The meeting was conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation, with both leaders expressing a strong commitment to strengthening ties between their nations.

According to the statement issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice, discussions covered an array of critical issues, including the digitalisation of the legal system, capacity building for legal professionals, legislative drafting and fostering international cooperation.

Minister Kovalenko Evgeny outlined the scope and responsibilities of Belarus' Ministry of Justice, identifying opportunities for collaboration.

The dialogue centred on several shared interest including development of International Mediation and Arbitration Centres (IMAC), Implementation of Case Assignment and Management Systems (CAMS), exchange programmes for law students and legal professionals, enhancing legal education and awareness.

Both sides acknowledged the importance of these initiatives in modernising their respective legal systems and facilitating a more robust framework for international cooperation.

The meeting culminated in several noteworthy developments.

An invitation extended by the Belarusian minister for a delegation from Pakistan to visit Belarus was warmly welcomed by Tarar.

A comprehensive review of previous treaties and agreements was presented, laying the groundwork for future partnerships.

Both ministers expressed eagerness to collaborate on capacity building and legal education initiatives, envisioning an active exchange of expertise and resources.

Meeting of journalist body ‘disrupted’ in D. G. Khan

District police officer says organisers didn’t seek prior permission

By Iqram Junaid

ISLAMABAD: The district administration in Dera Ghazi Khan last week forced an early end to a meeting of journalists discussing threats to their lives and the state of media freedom in Punjab’s Sarai-i-Bel, according to a press release of the Freedom Network.

A local official said the district administration did not allow the event to go ahead because the organisers had not obtained permission, a requirement under the law.

The press release said Iqbal Khattak, the representative in Pakistan of Reporters Without Borders (RSF), and a team of Freedom Network was expelled from Dera Ghazi Khan.

“Stop the meeting and leave the district,” an official who introduced himself as “Tehsildar [sub-district officer] Chaudhry Hameed” told Mr Khattak.

The official was accompanied by Younus, the SHO of D.G. Khan’s Kotli police station. The incident took place on Thursday (Nov 21), according to the press statement.

Mr Khattak is also a member of the Punjab Journalists Protection Coordination Committee, set up by the provincial government last year to investigate crimes of impunity against journalists. A Punjab police DIG heads the committee.

Journalists from Dera Ghazi Khan, Muzaffargarh, Rajanpur and Layyah attended the meeting.

Chaudhry Hameed or Younus did not show any order in writing, nor did they cite any legal provision allowing them to force an early end to the meeting, the statement said.

“Instead, they gruffly asked the RSF Pakistan representative, Freedom Network team members and local journalists, including a woman media practitioner, to ‘wind up the meeting and leave the venue at once.’

“Ironically, the local journalists had been lamenting about widespread intimidation, enforced censorship, self-censorship and threats and violence they face from intelligence agencies’ personnel and district officials before the meeting took place.”

Neither was any charge sheet framed nor any citation of violation of law given by the ruling team, according to the statement.

Tehsildar Hameed’s terse reply to the journalists’ protest was “The AC [assistant commissioner] has ordered us.” When the two officials were pressed to produce any written order from the assistant commissioner, the tehsildar said: “We have verbal orders. You know how the system works.”

The tehsildar continued taking “instructions on the phone from unknown sources”. The officials also kept pressing the hotel administration to compel the participants to leave by turning the lights off.

“We met Additional Inspector General Muhammad Kamran Khan in Multan on Nov 19 to discuss how the Punjab Journalists Protection Coordination Committee could play its role to protect journalists in the Sarai-i-Bel,” Iqbal Khattak said.

“We also met former Punjab governor Malik Rafiq Raza to seek support of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-N in Lahore and he was obliging. We also met senior lawyers and civil society leaders in the region to discuss measures that can help stakeholders combat impunity for crimes against journalists in the region,” he added.

The authorities had that the D.G. Khan Press Club in June after opposition leaders held a press conference and sent the club’s president, Sher Afghan Baidar, and Ghulam Mustafa Lashari, president of the local journalists union, to jail under the Maintenance of Public Order. Both alleged they were severely tortured in custody.

“The closure of Dera Ghazi Khan Press Club is a grave violation of the government’s commitment to freedom of expression, and we hope Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz will look into the issue and help reopen the club at the earliest,” Iqbal Khattak said.

DPO denies claim

Syed Ali, the D.G. Khan DPO, told Dawn that the event was stopped since the organisers didn’t have permission from the local administration.

Any international organisation holding an event in D.G. Khan was bound to seek prior permission, the DPO explained.

He said officials of the local administration and police visited the hotel after receiving information about the organisers to show the permission letter granted by the authorities, which they failed to produce.

The officials requested them [journalists] to end the meeting and the representative of the organisation agreed to disperse peacefully,” the DPO said.

In reply to a question, he denied the allegation that the participants were not allowed to leave from the hotel.

“We allowed the NGO members and others to leave the pre-arranged bus,” the DPO said.

Azif Chaudhry in Lahore also contributed to this report

Constable dies, dozens injured

Continued from Page 1

personnel.

He also said that it was easy for the government to prevent marches from advancing if they used force, but added that they were showing restraint because the government did not want to give the PTI more fuel for their agitation in the form of dead bodies.

Protesters reach Islamabad outskirts

Meanwhile, a pitched battle erupted at Chungi No 26 — on the outskirts of the capital — on Monday night between police and PTI protesters after an advance team of the party’s caravan reached the area.

Following the PTI caravan’s passage through Hakra, additional police and paramilitary forces were called in to reinforce security at both Chungi No 26 and Nicholson Monument near Taxila.

An advance party of over 500 PTI protesters arrived at Chungi No 26 after 8pm, leading to a massive confrontation with law enforcement personnel. The police used rubber bullets and tear gas, while the protesters retaliated by throwing stones and chanting slogans.

At the time of going to press, scattered clashes were reported from various areas on the outskirts of Islamabad. Footage shared on social media platforms also showed KP CM Ali Amin Gandapur’s vehicle, surrounded by marchers, present at Chungi No 26.

‘Fight for Imran’s release to go on’

Addressing charged PTI supporters and workers from atop a container at Barhan Interchange in Taxila, Bashra Bibi vowed to continue her fight for Imran Khan’s release until her “last breath”, urging the crowd to remain united in their efforts.

“Until Imran Khan is with us, we will not end this protest. I will remain here until my last breath, and I ask all of you to stand by us,” she declared, rallying the supporters. “This isn’t just about my husband, it’s about the future of our country and the leadership we deserve.”

Bashra Bibi praised the bravery and resilience of the Pakistan community, calling them “a proud and honourable nation” and expressing confidence in their steadfastness in the fight for justice. “I know the Pakistan people will stand by us till the end,” she said. “They will not

allow PTI’s protest and hold the party responsible for the death of a police constable.

In a statement on Monday, PM Shehbaz condemned the death of Constable Molashir and ordered the immediate arrest of those responsible for it.

He held the protesters responsible for the incident and said the entire nation, including him, paid tribute to the martyred constable.

The prime minister expressed his condolences to the bereaved family, the PM Office media wing said in a press release.

He also directed to provide the best medical facilities to police personnel injured in clashes with the protesters.

He said the perpetrators involved in the May 9 riots were “once again resorting to violent acts”.

The “attack on police personnel” in the name of a so-called peaceful protest was condemnable, the PM said, adding the cops and law enforcement personnel were doing their duty of maintaining law and order.

Whenever the country moved on the path of progress, “those miscreants resorted to acts of burning and laying siege throughout the country”.

PM slams PTI

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and other government leaders criti-



A PROTESTER throws back tear gas shells fired by riot police during PTI’s march towards Islamabad, near Hasanabad on Monday. —AFP

abandon this cause in the face of adversity.”

Clashes on M-1

In Attock, which saw some of the heaviest clashes between protesters and law enforcers on Monday, police claimed that 80 personnel, including a sub inspector, were injured.

Two others were critically wounded due to alleged firing by PTI workers marching towards Islamabad on the Islamabad-Peshawar Motorway (M-1), a police spokesperson said.

The spokesperson said that protesters threw stones, assaulted officers and fired directly at police present at Katti Pahari — located between the Barhan and Hakra interchanges on M-1 — resulting in injuries to around 80 personnel.

Constable Wajid, on special duty from Faisalabad, sustained a gunshot wound to the neck and remains in critical condition. Similarly, Constable Samuallah from Sargodha is also in serious condition after suffering a bullet injury.

Meanwhile, PTI workers also clashed with Punjab policemen at Panjgur, off the M-1 near Hasanabad despite heavy tear gas shells, they managed to remove the shipping containers placed in their path, forcing police contingents to retreat and seek shelter.

The charged protesters also seized a prisoner van, using it to transport their supporters from one barricade to another near Barhan, before setting it ablaze. They also painted anti-government slogans on the vehicle.

Earlier, Information Minister

Armadilla Tahir called out PTI for once again pursuing the politics of “chaos and anarchy”.

Talking to the media at the Nar Khan Airbase, the minister said people wanted politics of progress and wellbeing, which is manifested by the people-friendly initiatives of the government.

He said the protest is taking place when the economy is “taking off” and the country is “attracting foreign investment”.

US urges restraint

Meanwhile, the United States appealed for restraint from Pakistani authorities and thousands of protesters marching on the capital to call for the release of jailed opposition minister Imran Khan.

“We call on protesters to demonstrate peacefully and refrain from violence and, at the same time, we call on Pakistani authorities to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to ensure respect for Pakistan’s laws and constitution as they work to maintain law and order,” State Department spokesman Matthew Miller told reporters at a press briefing on Monday.

‘Targeted operations’ underway to destroy terrorist camps: Bugti

CM seeks alternative solutions to tackle issue of militancy

By Saleem Shahid

QUETTA: While admitting existence of terrorist camps in Balochistan, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Monday said that government forces were carrying out targeted operations to root out terrorism from the province.

Talking to journalists after the provincial assembly session, he criticised the political parties that are opposing operations and asked them to suggest alternative solutions other than military action to deal with the menace of terrorism.

“They should come with their suggestions and recommendations for the elimination of terrorism, and the government will implement it,” CM Bugti said, adding that terrorists were roaming freely on the streets, kidnapping children and killing civilians and security forces personnel.

When his attention was drawn to rumours about the possibility of changing the chief minister, he said, “I have no knowledge about any such discussions.”

He pointed out that lawmakers from PPP and PML-N as well as other members of the Balochistan Assembly had given him the vote of confidence. He said that no one has submitted a no-trust motion against him as yet, terming it an honour.

Mr Bugti reiterated that he would continue to serve the province as long as the opportunity was available.

HBC delegation

During a meeting with a delegation of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) headed by its chairman, Dr Mukhtar Ahmed, the chief minister underlined the need for preventing anti-state indoctrination of students. He noted that organised groups in many universities across Balochistan and the country were involved in fomenting such sentiments.

Provincial Minister for Education Rahkula Hameed Khan Durran, cabinet members Sadiq Umarani and Rukh Muhammad Kakar, MPA Angbar Taroon, and high officials also attended the meeting.

CM Bugti said his government would raise awareness about this issue by organising a national conference to address it.

TENDER NOTICE

Bids are invited for the following:

Tender No.	Description	Closing Date/Time
POC/EN/PT/09/199/24	Supply, Installation, and Commissioning of Blade Center Isolation at Heat Office	12 Dec. 2024 1500 hrs.
POC/EN/PT/09/202/24	Fence Lighting Works, Electrical Works, and Dismantling Job-Ads	12 Dec. 2024 1500 hrs.

All bids will be opened 30 minutes after the bids closing date/time.

Extension in Bid Closing & Opening Date

Closing and opening date of the following tender has been extended as follows:

Tender No.	Description	Tender Published On	Revised Closing Date/Time
POC/EN/PT/09/135/24	Storage Expansion in Backup Appliances - Data Duplex 6400	05 Nov. 2024	12 Dec. 2024 1500 hrs.

Bidders who have already submitted their proposals (bids) may take them back and resubmit the same before the revised closing date and time mentioned above.

All bids will be opened 30 minutes after the revised bids closing date/time.

Cancellation of Tender

Following tender has been cancelled:

PPRA's Ref.No.	Tender No.	Description	Tender Published On
TS/SS/1314/E	POC/EN/PT/09/202/24	Supply of backwash filtration package for produced water treatment and injection facility	18 Nov. 2024

Tender notice / detailed instructions are available on PPRA website at www.ppra.org.pk. Tender documents are available online and bids are also required to be submitted online through PPRA's e-procurement portal at <https://e-procurement.ppra.gov.pk> for details see instruction for Bidders Section of the tender documents. PPRA reserves the right to reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of a bid or proposal.

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DAWN

Kurram ceasefire

DESPITE efforts by the KP government to bring about a ceasefire in Kurram tribal district, the bloodletting has continued. An official delegation said on Sunday that a seven-day truce between rival tribes had been brokered. The latest round of violence was sparked by the atrocious attack on a convoy on Thursday in which over 40 people were murdered. In an apparent retaliatory move, over 20 people were killed in armed attacks on Friday. Locals told media that there were few signs of a ceasefire on Monday, while officials said the death toll had risen further. The unfortunate fact is that Kurram has been rocked by tribal-cum-sectarian violence for the past several months, yet the state has preferred a firefighting approach, only stepping in after high loss of life. A land dispute is said to be the trigger for the violence that erupted in July, while deadly clashes also took place last year. In fact, tensions go back to 2007, when lethal clashes and their aftermath reportedly resulted in thousands of deaths.

The continuing violence indicates the complexity of the situation in Kurram. For there to be durable peace, the underlying factors fuelling tension need to be addressed judiciously. For one, terrorist and sectarian groups cannot be given any space to operate. These malignant actors use local tribal and land disputes to stoke the flames. Thorough action is needed to neutralise the militants in Kurram and the surrounding districts, while strict vigilance should be maintained to ensure that terrorists based in Afghanistan cannot cross the border. Moreover, the state must ensure people can safely travel between cities and towns, and that violent groups do not maintain any 'no-go areas' in the region. It is the state's duty to secure thoroughfares, and it must deliver on this obligation. Also, an official land commission has reportedly reached a conclusion regarding the dispute at the heart of the matter, but has not made its findings public due to 'sectarian sensitivities'. These findings should be made public, and all sides must reach an amicable solution to end the dispute.

PPP chief Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has blamed the KP administration for the poor security situation in Kurram. Unfortunately, over the decades, all organs of the state — the federal and provincial governments, as well as the security establishment — have repeatedly failed to maintain order, protect citizens and judiciously resolve disputes in Kurram. This must change if the state wants to prevent further bloodshed in this volatile area. Local tribes had signed an accord in Moroo in 2008, which was revalidated in 2011, to help bring peace to the region. This framework should be pursued to permanently end violence in Kurram.

Hollow victory

THE conclusion of COP29 in Baku has left developing nations — struggling with the mounting costs of climate disasters — feeling letdown. While the adoption of a \$300bn annual climate finance target by 2035 marks a threefold increase from rich nations' previous \$100bn commitment (which was met two years late in 2022), it is a pale shadow of what the world needs to slow down climate change. Climate experts have stressed the need for \$1.3tr in annual climate finance to meet the Paris Agreement's goals. The Global North's insistence on private sector financing and blame-shifting to high-emitting economies like China and oil-rich Gulf states further muddles the discourse. For Pakistan, the stakes are particularly high. With a \$348bn climate finance gap looming by 2030, our efforts at mitigation and adaptation risk being stalled. Despite this, we demonstrated resilience at COP29. From the Recharge Pakistan initiative to the National Climate Finance Strategy, Islamabad's proposals reflect its determination to confront the crisis. The Pakistan Pavilion, a hub of dialogue and advocacy, was a testament to this commitment, even amid severe economic constraints. Yet, without significant global support, such steps remain aspirational at best.

The world cannot afford to delay action. With 2024 poised to be the hottest year on record and global temperatures on track to rise by 3.1°C by century's end, inaction will be catastrophic. Wealthy nations must not only deliver on their \$300bn promise but also ensure equitable access to these funds. Red tape that slows disbursement must be dismantled. At home, Pakistan must accelerate the transition to renewable energy, implement strict environmental protection laws, and establish a robust climate change monitoring system. Our cities need climate-smart urban planning, while rural areas require sustainable farm practices and water management solutions. The government must also enhance coordination between the federation and provinces on climate initiatives. However, real progress will depend on both domestic action and global solidarity. The recent floods, droughts, and other extreme weather events worldwide underscore our shared vulnerability. As we look towards next year's summit in Brazil's Amazon rainforest, Pakistan must continue its advocacy for climate justice while demonstrating tangible progress on its own commitments. The presence of climate-sceptic leadership in major economies adds urgency to securing and implementing robust financing mechanisms now. The time for half-measures is long past.

Infrastructure schemes

THE government's decision to finance priority PSDP schemes on a three-year rolling basis is a significant step towards reforming the public development programme and curbing the throw-forward effect of scarce resources. The reform effort has been a part of MIP programmes since 2021. However, it seems to have been gaining momentum lately due to stringent monitoring by the Fund. Still, it would be premature to expect the shift in PSDP strategy to deliver immediate results.

Public funding through annual development programmes is an important tool governments have to create growth infrastructure. But infrastructure is expensive to build and resources for development are shrinking, with the private sector having little interest in funding these projects. Little wonder that our annual infrastructure spending of 2pc of GDP is one of the lowest in the region and well below the national GDP level requirement of 10pc. So the backlog is piling up and the throw-forward effect is becoming a drag on our shrinking resources due to successive governments' inability to reduce wasteful expenditure and increase tax revenues. Besides, each incoming government — federal and provincial — is adding incomplete projects, compelling many to dub the country a 'graveyard of development projects', with tens of billions of rupees needed to close the growing infrastructure gap and fund incomplete schemes. While reforming these programmes is essential to ensure the efficient utilisation of taxpayers' money and transparency — from the selection of a scheme to its completion — as well as to prevent cost and time overruns, which result from delayed project implementation, and to stop the rapid rise in the backlog of incomplete schemes, it is not enough to fill the funding gap for infrastructure development. It is also time that the authorities become innovative about financing infrastructure through private investment. Only private investment along with a reformed public development spending framework can help plug the growing gap.

OPINION

BY ARIFA NOOR



A capital lockdown

The PTI is comfortable in the knowledge that the government is scoring an own goal.

COVID-19 may be a thing of the past for the rest of the world but in Pakistan, the lockdowns are here to stay. Lockdowns to control the smog and lockdowns to control demonstrations — the state has tried and tested all. One could perhaps argue that the internet is also in lockdown but for the fact that its slow speed and blocked apps are a constant state of affairs, while the notion of a lockdown is temporary, with an end in sight.

The lockdown is here because the PTI is on its way again from KP to Islamabad with a crowd. Its size varies on social media, depending on who is commenting, while mainstream media too is in lockdown. On the latter, while discussions about the protest are aplenty, there is little to no reporting. And there are no visuals. In a way, it's like the smog in Islamabad — everyone knows it's still there but it doesn't need to be addressed because it's less visible.

No one can say whether the protest will end with Ali Amin Gandapur and Arif Ali dancing to the tune of *The Final Countdown*, with parliament in the backdrop. But there is merit to the argument that the lockdown in itself is a defeat for the government as it shows not just nervousness but also puts paid to its claims of a healthy economy with interest from investors abroad.

The PTI understands this even better than it did in October. Its journey to Islamabad is making leisurely progress, and it is comfortable in the knowledge that the government is scoring an own goal by locking up half the country, leading to economic losses as well as running the risk of shortages of necessities in urban centres. At the same time, the slow march is firing out police which was deployed days earlier. In a vlog on Sunday night from D-Chowk, Aamir Taseer reported that Sindh Police recruits were without warm clothes as they patrolled on a cold winter night.

But this is not to say the PTI faces no risks. Those in government in KP and others who are part of one assembly or another also do not want

to upset the applecart too much, despite the pressure from Imran Khan and the workers. This was evident not just in the constant reports of PTI leaders who wanted to delay the protests; in addition, the criticism being directed at Gandapur since his disappearance at the previous protest in Islamabad from the party base also shows the pressures the KP government has to juggle.

At the same time, the crowds accompanying the KP rally shows that the party workers and supporters are not sufficiently disgruntled by the leadership to stay at home.

However, it is still worth asking what the PTI hopes to achieve. Overthrowing the government as an aim is great for rhetoric but it is doubtful if even the party ideologues believe it. Second, in Pakistan, protests usually set the stage for a weakening of a government rather than prove to be the final blow. But in this specific case, the PTI might be more interested in using it as a bargaining chip. There is now a strong perception that the release of Imran Khan's wife was a result of the previous protest. This time around too the reports of the negotiations held before this protest point to this: the PTI asked for the release of Yasmin Rashid and other prisoners in Lahore as a confidence-building measure.

If the demand is (or isn't) conceded, this game of cat and mouse can be played again and again.

Perhaps, though, it is also important to understand why the PTI can play this game repeatedly, considering it has a government in KP and the province's short distance from Islamabad.

It appears there was some understanding at the time of election that depriving the PTI of forming a government in KP would perhaps lead to far too much instability. And this is why the party now has the ability to march in large numbers to Islamabad. While there are constant threats to impose governor's rule in the province, this would be a foolhardy step. The already

volatile situation in KP will simply worsen.

However, even this would not have been enough for the PTI to mount such shows of power were it was not for the fragile economic situation.

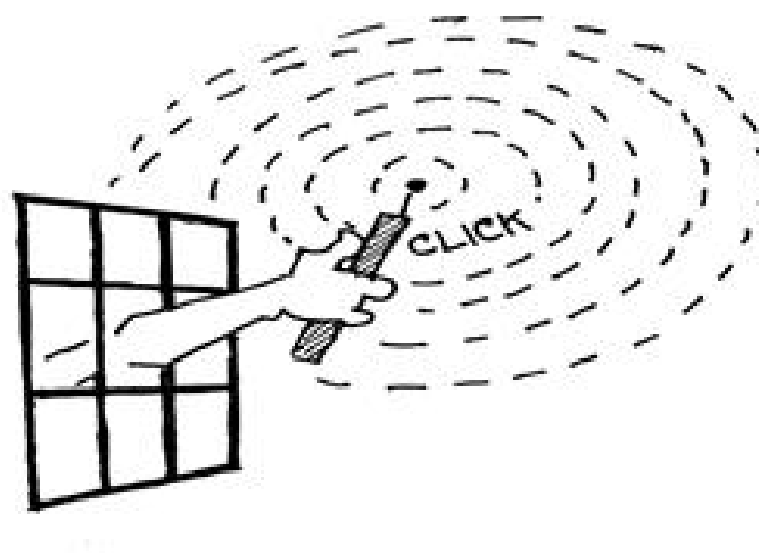
Despite the non-stop repression in Punjab, such such occasion allows young men to play a cat-and-mouse game with the police for hours. It may not show that Pakistan is at the cusp of a revolution but the possibility of violence on the streets cannot be discounted. With Pakistan's demographic numbers and the economy, this is a risk no one can calculate accurately, regardless of the multiple analyses about Punjab's DNA of submergence.

This is what PTI and Khan are counting on. And not a revolution.

Postscript: Perhaps this is a good time to ask what the state plans to do with the PTI prisoners. It has been over a year since these people were detained — in jails as well as military custody — without any kind of trial. We are told via trusted journalists and associates (analysts) that they cannot be freed, cannot be forgiven, for the 'crime' was so great. And that this is also to ensure deterrence.

Indeed, Pakistan society has always been big on deterrence — if we hanged a few thousand in the streets, corruption would stop, or if a rapist was hanged, the crime would stop. But thankfully, for reasons of incompetence, we have rarely managed such events of brutality, though it has allowed the myth to continue. Still, it needs to be pointed out that at times a state needs to calculate if the deterrence it creates at the cost of people's anger and hatred is worth the risk. The prisoners need to be released, all of them, and especially the women. The trials can continue but without this endless incarceration. It is time to send Yasmin Rashid home. ■

The writer is a journalist.



BY JAWED NAQVI

Waiting for Trump, apprehensively

IS Donald Trump the Godot the world is waiting for, with apprehension and hope? But Godot, as Samuel Beckett's 1949 cult play suggests, may not show up at all, ever. In fact, Godot, whoever he is or whatever power he may hold over his characters, could be no more than a figment of a deliberately absurd imagination.

More realistically, Godot perhaps symbolises angst that beset a generation of intellectuals after the gory victory of Churchill over a gruesome Hitler. Many couldn't tell the difference between the colonial racism, just as it is difficult for pacifists to divine Kierkegaard from Boris Johnson, or Trump from Joe Biden. For Estragon and Vladimir the two stoic tramps conversing under a withered tree, their waiting itself was their life. They needed each other, and they were fed up with each other. At one point, they vented their spleen by cursing each other. "Yermin", "C'est", "Moros", the expletives clanging as one alienates the other with the ultimate insult: "Crucif!"

In today's living absurdity, the stakes are truly existential not just in an ideological sense. Biden and Vladimir Putin are posing a mortal threat to the planet, Biden more than Putin, as one is inclined to believe with the support of Douglas Macgregor, Scott Ritter, Theodore Pascal and Ray McGovern among America's leading security analysts.

Yet, much of the world seems to be waiting for Trump one way or another, mostly with apprehension, like passengers in a plane with engine failure, bracing for a crash landing, heads lodged firmly in the knees or thermostats. Others see him as the saviour they were waiting for. There are those who haven't a clue what they are in for with Trump though they would like to see him as an ally as they saw Biden in many ways. This category includes Benjamin Netanyahu and Narendra Modi. Nato members fear Trump would embrace Putin and throw Ukraine under the bus. Putin sees in him an outside chance to win the war allowing him to focus instead with China on building BRICS.

Those who see Trump as a saviour include Israeli critics of the West Bank and potentially

also of Gaza. For the Palestinians, it can't get any worse. For them, the attributes ascribed to Trump as the saviour, have been usurped and co-opted by the supposedly agreeable Biden and his advisers, Amory Blinken and Jake Sullivan, principally.

Many supporters of Palestine, most of them Muslims in Michigan, voted for Trump as the lesser of the evils. It was a desperate gamble against extremely heavy odds. Biden feigned support for human life in Gaza by promising to stop the arms flow if Israel didn't open the border for food and medicines to save the remaining women and children, and possibly the hostages too, from the visitations of arriving winter. In reality, Biden openly described himself as a

Trump the dealmaker could put petrodollars in one scale and Netanyahu's future in the other.

Zionist, and continued to indulge Netanyahu's sadism unleashed on Arab women and children.

Trump promised Netanyahu the world in his previous avatar but is likely to settle for his rejection if it strengthens Israel's hand in striking a deal with Arab states. The dealmaker he far out himself as, saw Trump turning his back when a leading Saudi dissenter was chopped into pieces on the alleged orders of the crown prince of Saudi Arabia. He put two competing interests in the balance and concluded that \$100 billion worth of arms to be sold to Riyadh held greater charm than beating the drums of human rights and personal liberty.

The Saudis are incipiently hostile to an independent Palestinian state fostered by Iran and Arab masses, but are in no position to discuss it publicly. They may be wishing for Trump to deal a crushing blow to Iran but fear the risk to their own survival as greater. Trump the dealmaker

could put petrodollars in one scale and Netanyahu's future in the other and offer a state with municipal rights to the Palestinians.

Trump may not be the Godot Netanyahu sees him as. Because Iran would need to be placated too, possibly with the relaxation of sanctions he imposed on Tehran. Godot, if he exists, has no easy choices. Iran is a handful, and it holds a tricky prospect, given its nuclear threshold and capability with advanced missiles, to disrupt Trump's dream for a great America.

As for Modi, Trump had the words to flatter his ego. "I remember India before... It was very torn. There was a lot of dissension, lot of fighting. And he brought it all together. Like a father would bring it together. Maybe he is the father of India. We would call him the father of India... I think he has done a fantastic job," Trump said before meeting Modi in New York. To India's consternation he also met then Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan, and reportedly offered to mediate on the Kashmir dispute. A few things have happened to worry Modi under Biden's watch. He was invited as a key member to the anti-China Quad, but the group is now considered dead in the water. The Anglo-Saxon AUKUS — involving Australia, the UK and US has supplanted it.

Two other events have threatened to quash Modi's pitch internationally, and both occurred under Biden's watch. His closest political advisers are struggling with a US indictment in an assassination plot targeting an American citizen, a Sikh activist. More worryingly, his closest associate in the business world, Gautam Adani, is wanted in the US in a case of high corruption.

Reports say Modi could bail out of the crisis with a lucrative arms purchase as the Saudis did. However, that could anger his trusted friend, Putin. There are no easy answers for what Trump might do. The best hope probably comes from a theatre critic who described Samuel Beckett's second work as "a play in which nothing happens, twice". ■

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OPINION



BY NIAZ MURTAZA

Future socialisms

"SOCIALISM is dead, Long Live Socialism," wrote fellow Berkeley scholar Roger Burbach in 1997, barely predicting socialism's rise in new forms even as other ones were falling. As capitalism's damaging toll on humans expands hugely, the search for alternatives to the beast we've named capitalism grows. Many think this means ending wage labour, profits and private capital, which they wrongly see as capitalism's core.

But sociologist Karl Polanyi argued that these had existed even before capitalism for long. Capitalism rose only in the 19th century when capital's interests became society's dominant logic to replace other human concerns, with a false promise that it would ensure common welfare.

Capitalism expands its profits by penetrating all human spheres and cooing humans to satisfy all their needs via markets that they are satisfying via family, community, state or nature for free, arguing that market solutions better cater to all human needs. But the ills of this idea, spread cunningly by owners of big capital, are visible now in high inequality, environmental loss, resource wars and irrelevance of millions of workers as AI spreads fast, as capital's dehumanising interests hold sway even over human values that transcend commercial logics. Thus, ending capital's corrupting sway over all other human concerns is imperative.

Socialism is usually seen as a system with state-owned production assets. But Polanyi's insights about capitalism's core inspire a new vision of socialism as a system with common welfare as its dominant logic, aim (rather than an uncertain derived one as in capitalism) that allows all ownership forms that don't risk common welfare. This vision can spawn many forms of socialism, as the plural in the title suggests. The Nordic model is a form built on private capital, with common welfare ensured via provision of public social services, big state investment in education, health, and other human capital services and strong labour-force protection via unions and safety nets.

But poor states lack the globally competitive economies to generate enough taxes to fund a generous welfare state. They need a conjoint twin: a developmental-cum-welfare state where the first twin spawns an inclusive economy that gives income options to all able beings and the welfare twin that gives safety nets to the few labour-deficient beings. But new forms must avoid the ills of failed forms: over-centralised political and economic power that disempowers and disorients masses, kills energies and creativity and causes political autocracy and economic

unproductivity. Oddly, huge oligopolies are producing some such results even in capitalism that aged oligarchs did in former USSR. Donald Trump wants to keep afloat US oligarchies that can't compete with efficient Chinese units, just as Soviet oligarchs tried against efficient US ones 50 years ago.

Politically, new forms must embrace multiparty democracy over a one-party system and disperse power horizontally and vertically. Empowered local bodies must empower community organisations to help gain market power, protection, assets, skills and social services. The economic system must be similarly developed and encourage a wide range of ownership forms, be employee-owned, non-profit, producer cooperatives, dispersed ownership by different state levels and bodies and private companies, with a bias for micro, small and medium units.

The state must revive the cause of poverty among small producers and labourers in rural and urban areas in different regions. Such bottom-up analysis will reveal not only the lack of economic and social investment by the state for such groups as key factors but also their exploitation and marginalisation by markets and local elites. This will give a wide, structural agenda that covers legislation, policies, strategies, projects, services and institutional reform at federal, provincial and local levels.

This major investment in poor regions will drive national progress as reduced poverty ignites twin-win growth that benefits society, the internal market is small, despite our large population, given low incomes. Increasing incomes will expand the national market size and profits for producers. This in turn will expand incomes for the poor and hence national market size and ignite a virtuous progress cycle. Local initiatives will tap local savings digitally to plough them into local investments. Stricter regulation will replace deregulation and broader state units restructuring will replace only privatisation.

Such devolved and empowering socialisms will use the political and economic mobilisation of masses as the key force driving both a state and economy of the people, by the people and for the people. ■

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BY JAWWAD FARID AND RIMMEL MOHYDIN

Banking shortcomings

SYSTEMS in Pakistan often operate below potential. We could be close, but remain mired in red tape, beholden to power structures and burdened by hidden and friction costs. Despite an educated middle class and a growing youth bulge, we barely make a dent in the world. Our banking sector is no exception.

Banks are crucial to capital formation, documentation and digitalisation of the economy. Implementers of monetary policy, banks are the first port of call when it comes to improving national savings rate, interest-based trade or private sector credit. Without healthy banking, standards of living or the GDP will not improve.

So why isn't our banking there yet? One could be forgiven for believing that our banks are creating all the value they can, based on the recent national debate on banking profitability. However, Banking on our Shrobs, a joint analysis by CIBP and Ashberry Technologies, asks if we are looking at the right benchmarks for evaluating banking competitiveness.

If we shift our gaze to banks in similar markets, there is a widening performance gap. Consider India's HDPC bank. Twenty years ago, HDPC and HBL were comparable in size. In 2024, HDPC ranks 15th globally by market capitalisation. The closest Pakistani bank is at number 284. HBL stands at 477. While the volume of reserves, market size and regulatory contexts must be acknowledged, it speaks to the impact of the decisions made by both banks.

Our best banks reveal similar shortcomings in efficiency, profitability, and growth, when measured against their peers in the region who compete by focusing on growing advances with innovative products and technology-driven improvements to credit allocation and disbursement. Pakistani banks focus on invent means and reform on government debt. The outcome of both choices is clear.

When we widen our lens to include context that our banks operate in, conservative estimates, frictional costs in Pakistan's tax collection system cause leaks of Rs2 trillion every year, including the opportunity cost of currency in circulation (Rupee) and non-interest-bearing current accounts (Rupee).

Part of the challenge in our over-regulated banking sector is the emphasis on safety, minimising risk at the cost of innovation. Innovation results from a desire to change but often breaks things. When safety is the prime motivator, breakage becomes a four-letter word.

For decades, the regulator has driven banking innovation — ATMs, national connectivity, faster check clearance, branchless banking and now digital and mobile

banking. Yet many believe this top-down approach with a focus on safety is restricting risk appetite and growth.

Banks are incentivised to lend within well-trodden paths, prioritising uncompetitive sectors like energy, agriculture, and textiles while ignoring high potential industries. A banking-specific mutation of the 'Dutch disease'. Absence of competition discourages new product development and the ability to test on new sectors. Cumbersome approval processes and predictable returns deter innovation with both the regulator and within banking boards.

We need market-driven incentives, regulatory, forward-looking boards and a sandbox approach to experimentation. Otherwise, banks will continue to prioritise comfort lending over bold decisions necessary for economic transformation. Small and medium enterprises are the backbone of economic growth but remain a banking stepchild. Export-focused borrowers pose a different challenge. Their tech focus makes them asset-light and talent-heavy making them unattractive for asset-backed loans. The same is true for the growing low-cost private school market. Partly informed, partly under the radar, it doesn't fit within conventional credit frameworks.

Is it just burdensome compliance and underwriting requirements that deter banks? Or is there more to the equation that prioritises larger exposures? The regulatory 'K' is a scale. We scaled the liability side but left advances behind. But in driven models, market-relevant pricing and customer-driven products are one solution.

Digitalisation, reducing inefficiency and building a new core with a price tag. There are regulatory burdens to overcome, skillful investors to pacify, unprecedented economic challenges to confront. The question is not if these challenges are surmountable — they are, but if we are willing to take them on. The path forward demands courage for regulators to rethink models, for banks to take calculated risks, for policy makers to align incentives with innovation.

But only systems worthy of Pakistan's extraordinary potential can help us reach it. ■

Jawwad Farid is professor of practice at IIM, Karachi. Rimmel Mohyidin is an associate director at CIBP.

FROM THE PAST PAGES OF DAWN

1974 | Fifty years ago

War inquiry report

KARACHI: Mr Justice Hamoodur Rahman, Chief Justice of Pakistan, presented the supplementary report of the War Enquiry Commission to Prime Minister Bhutto this evening [Nov 25] at the Prime Minister's House, according to a Press release. ... After careful study of the report, the special committee constituted for the purpose will take a final decision. ... The supplementary report consists of four volumes: a supplementary report, staff studies, written statements by witnesses and oral evidence recorded by the Commission.

The Commission was constituted in December, 1971 and it commenced its proceedings in Rawalpindi in February, 1972. The Commission presented its first report in July, 1972 in which it said its findings about the causes of the surrender in East Pakistan were tentative and that when the major personalities connected with the surrender, who were then prisoners of war in India, had been repatriated, it would want to meet again to record their evidence. After the repatriation of the POWs the Government, in May, reactivated the Commission. ... It examined 71 witnesses till Sept. 5. ... [including] Lt Gen. A.A.K. Mian, Commander of the Eastern Command. ... — News agencies

1949 | Seventy-five years ago

Serving Islam

KARACHI: "Pakistan has one and only one ambition: to serve Islam and to serve humanity," declared the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr Liaquat Ali Khan, inaugurating the International Islamic Economic Conference in Karachi on Friday [Nov 25] night. The Prime Minister ... assured the delegates that the people of Pakistan have great love ... for the peoples of Muslim countries. Nothing would give the Pakistanis greater joy than to see all the Islamic countries progressing "economically, socially and culturally and becoming strong". Mr Liaquat Ali Khan urged the Muslim countries ... to banish "poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance" ...

He said, it was a pleasure to welcome ... delegates from ... 16 Muslim countries to Karachi and more so because they were meeting not for any "warlike purpose" or to "plan anything against any other country", but for mutual cooperation, for the sake of mutual benefit.

Explaining "What has brought us together?" he said that besides being good neighbours interested in each other's welfare there were stronger ties which bound them together. "We all belong to the great brotherhood of Islam." — Staff correspondent

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@dawn.com

Letters may be edited for purposes of clarity and space. All letters should carry the writer's address, CNIC and phone numbers.

Human trafficking needs govt action



HUMAN trafficking in the country is on the rise again, which is reflected in the fact that in the month of October alone, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) arrested 109 human traffickers in the Gilgit-Baltistan region. As many as 206 cases of human trafficking were reported lodged, and challans of 119 cases were presented to various courts during this period.

According to the '2024 Trafficking in Persons Report' by the American State Department, the Pakistani government failed to meet minimum standards in several key areas. Unfortunately, these shortcomings included the inability to effectively investigate, prosecute and convict human traffickers, as well as inadequate enforcement of existing laws. The 2018 Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act, despite amendments, continues to allow the imposition of fines in lieu of imprisonment, further weakening its deterrent effect.

In 2023, a total of 1,588 trafficking cases had been reported, out of which 1,432 were prosecuted. However, only 351 subsequently resulted in convictions. Among these prosecutions, 231 involved sex trafficking, yet only four convictions were secured. Moreover, 108 cases pertained to other forms of trafficking, with only 10 convictions. The remaining 1,090 cases involved forced labour trafficking, resulting in 337 convictions. This is a minuscule number, given the scale of the problem.

Corruption as well as official complicity remain significant obstacles to combating the menace of human trafficking. The State Department document also noted that the government did not report any investigation, prosecution or conviction of government employees complicit in human trafficking crimes.

As such, many traffickers continue their operations by bribing officials or exploiting loopholes in the legal system to avoid punishment. The culpability actively

uses social media platforms, as can be seen in the accompanying image, to promote their illegal activities and maximise profits. Human trafficking networks across the country are complex as well as deeply entrenched, often with ties to international crime syndicates. These networks smuggle individuals across international borders, particularly to the Gulf states and Europe, where victims are forced into labour or prostitution.

In recent years, several horrifying cases have emerged where groups of migrants were abandoned or subjected to brutal treatment by traffickers in foreign countries, many of whom faced life-threatening situations.

To tackle human trafficking timely and effectively, the government must take a more proactive and result-oriented approach. Besides, strengthening the legal framework, and ensuring full-scale implementation of the laws are critical. This includes providing specialised training to law-enforcement personnel to identify, disrupt, and dismantle trafficking networks. Additionally, the government needs to establish a robust system for the protection and rehabilitation of trafficking victims. This will also be an important step.

Muhammad Ahmad Siddiquei
Islamabad

Criminal negligence

THE recent spate of accidents, involving a particular bus company, has left the people of Gilgit-Baltistan stunned and outraged. Just weeks ago another bus of the said fleet lost its track on the Karakoram Highway and resulted in three deaths and several injuries. With a staggering 53 lives lost and more than 75 injured in just a few years, it is imperative to scrutinise the company's operations and demand accountability.

The frequency and severity of these accidents expose a disturbing pattern of negligence and disregard for human life. The 2019 Baltistan Pass accident, which claimed 26 lives, was a wake-up call that went unheeded. Subsequent accidents in 2022 and others have only reinforced the notion that the company concerned prioritises profits over safety.

In the 2017 Skardu accident, a bus from the company collided with a truck, resulting in five deaths and 10 injuries. In the 2015 Naruan accident, a bus fell into a ravine near Naruan, resulting in 12 deaths and 25 injuries. In 2013, a bus collided with a car near Gilgit, resulting in three deaths and five injuries. A bus crashed into a truck near Mansehra, resulting in four deaths and 10 injuries in 2022.

Investigations have consistently revealed glaring lapses in safety protocols. Drivers have been found guilty of oversteering, reckless overtaking, and ignoring safety guidelines. Faulty brakes, worn-out tyres,

and inadequate safety features have contributed to the accidents. Buses have been consistently overloaded, adding to the risk factor. Drivers lack proper training, leading to inadequate response time and decision-making. The bus company's management has demonstrated a staggering lack of concern for passenger safety.

Additionally, the company has failed to provide adequate information on safety measures and accident investigations. Its management has shifted blame onto drivers, passengers and external factors instead of acknowledging its own systemic failures.

Enough is enough, one must say. The government and its various regulatory bodies must take immediate action, such as suspension of the company's operating licence until safety standards are met. There should be independent investigations into all the accidents narrated above, apart from regular inspections of vehicles and drivers to ensure safety compliance.

The lives lost as well as those injured are not mere statistics; they represent families torn apart, futures cut short, and a nation's trust shattered. Will the authorities finally take action, or will the carnage continue?

Muhammad Iqbal Bhatti
Skardu



Cremation incinerators

THE matter related to the environmental impact of traditional cremation practices among Hindus deserves the urgent attention of all concerned. The process relies on wood for fuel. The source of wood is trees, and to fulfil this requirement, many trees are cut, leading to deforestation, habitat loss, and air pollution.

Thus, it overall has a negative impact on the environment, contributing to global warming, which requires immediate action.

The traditional cremation practices place immense pressure on our already depleting forest resources. Moreover, the smoke from burning wood not only affects air quality, but also contributes to respiratory issues among those residing in the vicinity. An incinerator, designed specifically for cremation, requires minimal fuel, drastically reduces emissions, and serves countless trees that would otherwise be cut down for firewood.

Implementing such an environmentally-conscious solution aligns with the need to protect our region from the hazards of climate change, and serves our natural resources while respecting cultural practices. Cremation incinerators are already being used by the Hindu community in India, the United Kingdom, the United States and many other countries.

The authorities in Pakistan, including Hindu parliamentarians, should consider the installation of eco-friendly incinerators for cremation purposes. This would surely be a more sustainable alternative to current practices.

Kamran Durrani
Karachi

Surgical site infection

FOR patients to recover safely from breast cancer surgery, surgical site infections (SSIs) must be minimised. Preoperative measures are the first step in any effective strategy. Infection risks are greatly decreased by educating patients about good hygiene practices and managing comorbid conditions, like diabetes, to the best of their ability.

It is also advised against to implement decontamination regimens for patients who have staphylococcus aureus colonisation. In order to reduce skin flora, patients can be advised to take chlorhexidine gluconate baths and should get prophylactic antibiotic within an hour of operation.

Strict adherence to aseptic protocols and minimal handling of the tissues are crucial in the operating room. To create a sterile field, surgical draping is required. Sufficient hanging not only shields the surgical site from outside pollutants, but also aids in keeping any possible infection contained inside the draped region.

Teaching patients how to take care of their wounds and to spot infection symptoms is essential after surgery. Surgeons should aim for efficient workflow to minimise the duration of the procedure because longer surgeries have been associated with higher SSI rates.

Healthcare professionals can reduce the incidence of SSIs during all breast cancer procedures by scrupulously adhering to these practices, which will ultimately improve patient outcomes and hasten their recovery time.

Muhammad K. Aam & Kamran Ashraf
Lahore

► **THE DAMAGED ESCALATOR:** The escalator at the University of Peshawar Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station has been out of order for several weeks, causing significant inconvenience to the commuters, particularly the elderly and those with disabilities. The lack of this essential facility makes it difficult for such individuals to navigate the stairs, adding to their hardship. Despite several complaints, the BRT management has paid no heed to the issue. The authorities should take immediate action, and have the damaged escalator repaired in the larger interest of the public.
Yousaf Nadeem
Peshawar

► **TARGETED AREAS:** This is with reference to the report 'KMC' is authorised to take action against illegal construction mayor' (Nov 2), according to which the mayor of Karachi has decided to take action against illegal constructions in Basant, Mohani Colony, Mohammadabad Sada and Ghumna Colony. Unfortunately, the discriminatory attitude towards these three residential areas is rather disappointing. Is there a specific reason to target these areas when there are other areas right under the mayor's nose where five-storey buildings have been constructed, with the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) machinery doing nothing, absolutely nothing. It is high time the mayor and the KMC administration under his back official action without having any fear or favour.
Ammar ul-Haq
Karachi

► **POLLUTION IN LAHORE:** I posted on the social media about the rising level of pollution in Lahore back in 2016. It is disappointing that eight years later, Lahore's air quality index is reaching unprecedented levels. What have subsequent governments been doing in this regard all these years? Where are the international health bodies? No politician, judge or armyman has taken notice of this deadly condition, affecting millions. People are unable to breathe freely. If there is no one left to live a healthy life, nothing else will matter.
Munir Khan
Lahore

External Ombudsman
Veteran journalist Muhammad Ali Siddiqi is Dawn's External Ombudsman (DEO). His duty is to attend to our readers' complaints, and to respond to them professionally. DEO is the investigating authority to whom all complaints can be referred, and it is DEO who takes notice of any alleged violations of Dawn's code of ethics, and informs the Editor for appropriate action.
Email: dmurteebdawn@gmail.com

Six cops, passerby injured in Tank police post attack

By Our Correspondent

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Six policemen and a passerby were injured when terrorists attacked a police post in the Gal Imam area of Tank district on Monday. According to a statement issued by the police, the attackers used both small and big firearms during the assault on the police post. Rescue 1122 teams swiftly transported the injured policemen to the District Headquarters Hospital in Tank for initial medical care. Later, they were shifted to the DHQ Hospital in Dera Ismail Khan. Hospital sources confirmed that all the injured policemen and the passerby were in stable condition. Law enforcement agencies responded promptly to the incident. A joint team of police and security forces was dispatched to the site to initiate an investigation. The authorities cordoned off the area and launched a search operation to track down the culprits. Tank district police officer Aslam Nawaz Khan visited the Gal Imam police post and appreciated the personnel for their swift response in repelling the assault. He issued directives to enhance security protocols, emphasising the mandatory use of bulletproof jackets and helmets. He also urged officers to remain vigilant, avoid distractions such as use of mobile phones while on duty, and actively monitor for suspicious activities.

One killed, three injured in Bajaur cylinder blasts

By Our Correspondent

BAJAUR: One person was killed and three others were injured in separate gas cylinder explosions in Khar tribal area on Monday. Residents and Rescue 1122 officials said the first incident occurred near the Khar Civil Colony in the wee hours of Monday when a gas cylinder exploded in a house, causing it to collapse, leaving the owner, Fazal Karim, dead on the spot. Residents of adjacent houses said that the 62-year-old was a retired government employee. They said he was leaving water for morning prayer in his room when the gas cylinder exploded with a bang, destroying most parts of the house. The residents said that the explosion also damaged home appliances. Soon after the incident, residents of the nearby homes and rescue workers reached the area and recovered the body from the debris. According to Rescue 1122, the second cylinder blast occurred at a shop in the main vegetable market of Khar. They said that three people, identified as Sulaiman Khan, Davatim Khan and Abdullah, were injured in the incident. Conditions of all the injured, who were immediately shifted to the District Headquarters Hospital, Khar, was said to be out of danger.



VILLAGERS enjoy horse dance at a wedding ceremony in Khawari area of Mardan on Monday. The centuries-old tradition, which once used to be the highlight of such festivities, has been diminishing in rural parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. —Photo by Nisar Ahmad Khan

ANP sees ‘well-planned intrigue’ behind growing terrorism in KP

Observes black day against Parachinar violence

Dawn Report

PESHAWAR: The Awami National Party (ANP) observed a black day across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday against the recent Parachinar conveyer bloodbath and other terrorist attacks in the province.

Addressing a rally in front of the Peshawar Press Club here, ANP provincial president Mian Iftikhar Hussain said a “well-planned conspiracy” was behind a surge in terrorism in the province, with international powers and their facilitators involved in it.

He criticised the government over failure to protect public life, especially in the Kurram tribal district where a conveyer of passenger vehicles was attacked leading to the killing of dozens of people.

Mr Hussain condemned the Parachinar violence and demanded action against culprits. He expressed solidarity with the affected families and said his party was committed to standing by them.

The ANP leader criticised the provincial and federal governments over “inaction and silence” on the issue.

He complained that the governments were busy with street protests instead of addressing

people’s issues.

The party also announced plans to hold a peace march across the province to condemn terrorism. It also formed a peace jirga, led by Raza Mohammad Khan, to visit Parachinar and negotiate with stakeholders to find a peaceful solution to the issue.

Meanwhile, the ANP activists staged a protest against terrorism in front of the Swan Press Club, drawing district cabinet members and workers in large numbers.

They voiced concern about the poor law and order situation in the province and complained that the escalating violence had rendered the people vulnerable.

The speakers said the recent carnage in Kurram Agency proved the growing unrest in the province.

They urged authorities to identify and prosecute those responsible for these heinous acts.

The ANP leaders warned the government that if effective measures weren’t immediately taken to restore peace in the province, their party would “take action to ensure stability.”

In Swabi district, the ANP activists gathered on the Swabi-Jalawar Road and blocked the road to traffic, complaining about the failure of the government to protect public life and property.

They demanded restoration of peace in Kurram.

Former forest minister Arsal Sheer Khan said a lot of blood had already been shed on



ANP provincial president Mian Iftikhar Hussain addresses a protest rally outside Peshawar Press Club on Monday. —White Star

Pakistan land, as more blood shed was intolerable.

He said the government should act for peace and provide security to the people.

In the Lower Dir district as well, the ANP staged a rally against the rising violence on the veil of its provincial president, Mian Iftikhar Hussain.

Dozens of party workers, led by the district leadership, attended the demonstration, shouting slogans against the government over the recent Parachinar carnage.

The speakers, including ANP district president and former MPA Haji Bahadar Khan, senior vice president Malik Sajad Yousafzai and leaders Malik Aftab and Mian Hayat Hussain, criticised the federal and provincial governments over fail-

ure to protect public life in parts of the province.

They said Pakhtuns were being targeted under a “planned conspiracy” meant to turn the region into a war zone.

The ANP also observed a black day in Lakki Marwat and Bannu district.

Holding banners and placards, party workers and student activists gathered outside the press club building on the Old Kot Ghori Road in Lakki city.

In Bannu, the ANP activists showed up outside the press club building to condemn the growing terrorist attacks in the province, especially the recent conveyer bloodbath in Kurram tribal district.

ANP district president Nasir Khan Wazir, PSP district president Faizan and leaders

Shah Qayyum Bacha, Malik Sohrab Khan Wazir, Malik Tabir Khan and Ihtsam Pakhtoon said sectarian tensions were being fanned by vested interest in the region.

In Shangha district, the ANP demonstrated outside the Aghori Press Club against the growing incidents of terrorism in the province.

Carrying placards and shouting slogans against terrorism and sectarian incidents, the protesters marched through the Aghori bazaar.

ANP provincial deputy general secretary Mirawakil Khan and other speakers said Pakhtuns could no longer tolerate Pakistan bloodbath.

A demonstration against the Parachinar incident was also reported in Charsadda district.

The speakers, including ANP provincial vice president Qasim Ali Khan Mohammadali and leader Shahzaduddin Taimur Khattak, criticised security agencies over the bad law and order situation in the province.

The ANP also held a demonstration in Bajaur tribal district, with participants demanding early, durable solution to the conflict in the Kurram tribal district.

They expressed sympathies for the families affected by the recent terrorist attacks.

Outside the Khar Press Club, the protesters shouted slogans for peace in the region.

They condemned the recent attacks on passenger vehicles in Kurram district.

Fire destroys hundreds of trees in Sararogha forest

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: A massive fire broke out in Khawakhela hilly area of Sararogha sub-township of Upper South Waziristan district on Monday, burning down hundreds of precious trees.

A Rescue 1122 spokesman said that a rescue team promptly arrived at the scene after receiving information about the fire. The firefighters are currently engaged in efforts to extinguish the blaze.

However, intensity of the fire continues to increase,

fuelled by strong winds, making it challenging for rescuers to contain it,” he added.

The official said the cause of the fire remained to be known.

The incident marks the third such blaze hitting the area in the month of November, resulting in the destruction of thousands of valuable trees, leaving behind early ash.

The frequent occurrences of blazes increases the need for effective measures to prevent

fires in the region, ensuring protection to environment and natural resources.

Officials said that a rescue team was making efforts to contain the blaze. They said that a more proactive approach was needed to prevent such incidents in the future.

The residents said that the authorities must take necessary measures to ensure the safety of the region’s biodiversity and natural assets. —Correspondent

Vintage car show on 30th

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority (KPCTA) has decided to organise the 15th annual vintage and classic car show for car enthusiasts and the people of Peshawar on November 30.

A statement said that more than 50 automobiles, including models from 1935 to 1980, as well as other historic cars, would be on display at the Peshawar Services Club.

Being organised by the KPCTA in collaboration with classic Land Rover, car enthusiasts from Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, and other cities would display their antique and classic

vehicles at the show.

The event would also feature a car rally starting from Peshawar, travelling through Faisalabad, Rahimyar Khan, Multan, and the Thar Desert, before reaching Karachi. The rally would pass through the historic Balahisar Fort in Peshawar and later head to Haveli, Swabi, where a hot jeep race would be held.

Among the classic cars to be displayed are Mercedes, Jaguar, Ford, Chevrolet, Mini, VW, Land Rover, and Jeeps, motorcycles, and other vintage vehicles. Car enthusiasts from across the country would bring their prized classic cars to be a part of this event. —Bureau Report

28 recently repaired schools handed over to education dept in Khyber

Officials say repair of 43 others damaged schools nearing completion

By Our Correspondent

KHAYBER: Scaled Rural Support Programme (SRSP) handed over 28 government schools that were recently repaired to education department in Khyber tribal district while 43 others were nearing completion, officials said.

Addressing a ceremony in Bannu on Monday, SRSP education campaigners Wakil Khan and Syam Khan said that some of militancy-affected and some old school buildings were repaired with the financial assistance of Project for Commonwealth Development Office (PCDO).

They said that education department had identified at

least 24 schools for boys and girls for repair and rehabilitation in Khyber tribal district under the project.

They said that those 24 schools were fully repaired in the first phase of the project and were handed over to education department.

The speakers said that SRSP now started similar activity in its second phase with a target of repairing 95 partially damaged schools. They said that repair of 43 of the total 95 schools was nearing completion while work on the remaining 52 schools was also under way.

“The main objective of this project is not only to rehabilitate school buildings but also to create conducive atmosphere, which could attract a maximum number of out of school children to these schools,” said Wakil Khan.

He said that SRSP would also provide free bags to those students, who would secure good positions in examinations.

Former province of Sindh



A VIEW of a newly-constructed primary school building in Sipah area of Bannu. —Dawn

Khidmat-i-Khaliq Committee Haji Sheikh Gul, village chairman Javed Afridi, social workers Turab Ali and Haji Ghilaf Khan thanked SRSP for reconstruction and rehabilitation of the damaged schools.

Officials of education department said that the reconstructed and rehabilitated schools were identified on the basis of their existing conditions as some of these institutions were constructed in 1970s and 1980s but no repair was conducted since then.

They hoped that with the completion of the second phase, students’ enrolment in Khyber would increase as the reconstructed schools were also provided with solar systems and bathroom facilities.

Earlier, China Aid project had also announced reconstruction of more than 50 fully damaged government schools in Bannu.

Officials said that 51 of these militancy-affected schools were reconstructed and would be handed over to education department in December.

They said that only two schools were still awaiting reconstruction as work was delayed due to land issue as the owners of the previous school building failed to provide the required land for its reconstruction.

Officials said that the Chinese government also pledged to provide furniture worth Rs2 million to primary schools, Rs1 million to middle schools, Rs6 million to high schools and Rs9 million to higher secondary schools in Bannu.



GWADAR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
GOVERNMENT OF BALUCHISTAN
Tel: (92-85) 928 1919-11, Fax: (92-85) 928 1920
Website: www.gda.gov.pk Email: info@gda.gov.pk

TENDER NOTICE
TSE-242511595613

NOTE: In All Procurements of GDA whether through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, it is Mandatory for All Bidders to Get Registered at Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOR.

The Gwadar Development Authority invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following Works for the Year 2024 based on Composite Schedule Rates 2023 on Percentage Rates

Sr.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Tender Fee	Bid Security
1.	Repair / Maintenance & Rehabilitation of Flood Damages of Road along Storm Water Drain at Faqeer Colony, Gwadar	19,781,830	Rs. 2,000	2%

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Presence in Active Tax Payer List
- The Bidding Firm must NOT be Blacklisted by any Procuring Agency of Pakistan
- Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is Required
- Bidder must have completed 2 Assignments of Similar Nature of Work
- Turnover of at least 3,154,420 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent Previous Years showing Financial Capacity of the Firm

PROCEDURE OF PROCUREMENT: Single Stage One Envelope Bidding Procedure

BID SECURITY: The Bids MUST accompany Bid Security in the form of Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 2 % specified above in the name of the undersigned from a Scheduled Bank.

TENDER DOCUMENTS: will be available on Gwadar Development Authority, BPPRA Website and also from undersigned Office. (Rs 2,000/- as Applicable Tender Fee / Bidding Documents Charges) to be deposited in the Head of GDA Accumulated Collection or Fund Account 3802-0081-0083-6601 through Bank Al-Habib Ltd. Gwadar Branch

ISSUANCE OF TENDER DOCUMENTS: From the Date of Publication of NIT to 12 DECEMBER, 2024 during Office Hours on Working Days.

LAST DATE OF BID SUBMISSION: The Tenders MUST be submitted latest by 12 DECEMBER, 2024 till 11:00 am.

TENDER OPENING: The Tenders will be opened on Same Day in the Office of the Undersigned at 12:00 Noon.

ADDRESS: Office of Executive Engineer (Roads-I) Gwadar Development Authority, Gwadar

Phone No: 8649201010

Email: info@gda.gov.pk

Executive Engineer (Roads-I)
GWADAR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

BUSINESS

Dryout fears mount as lockdown disrupts fuel transportation

POL suppliers seek immediate measures to avoid shortages

By Khaleeq Kiani

ISLAMABAD: The tight lockdown of major cities, motorways and national highways imposed by the government to thwart PTI's march on the federal capital has started breaking down the supply chain of petroleum products, particularly in Punjab and Islamabad. Senior government officials said the POL-carrying tankers and lorries movement had been severely affected in major cities because of official barricades. On top of that, most private companies were taking addi-

tional precautions in rolling out their fleet. Tankers already on the roads were instructed to offload their stocks at the nearest available pump for safety reasons to avoid any mishap, as such vehicles were considered moving bombs in any law and order eventuality. As a result, the retail pumps were drying out in critical economic centres like Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Islamabad, as these cities became hotspots for agitation and countermeasures by the government. The officials said the pressure had shifted to the state-run Pakistan State Oil (PSO) to keep the cities not with fuel supplies, and private oil marketing companies (OMCs) were also being pulled out to meet their responsibility. The national fuel supplier first reported the crisis-like situation to the government at the federal and provincial levels and then to the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) for immediate measures. Early in the morning, PSO also approached the Punjab chief secretary and inspectors general police (IGPs) of Punjab and Lahore as well as district administrations to look into the matter and extend special assistance in facilitating fuel transportation with particular attention to replenishing stocks in Lahore Division.

PSO sought immediate attention from the federal and provincial governments and OGRA "the critical disruption in fuel supply across Punjab, particularly in the Lahore Division, due to the closure of key highways and arterial routes. This situation has arisen due to the current law and order challenges". PSO reported that "the closure of highways has significantly delayed fuel transportation, resulting in an acute risk of stock depletion at fuel stations" and added that the Lahore Division, a significant economic and commercial activity hub, was especially vulnerable. "The inability to replenish fuel supplies promptly is adversely impacting essential services, daily operations, and the livelihoods of millions residing in this division and nearby areas", the PSO said. It requested the provincial government and the police chief to help address these challenges and make "urgent intervention to prioritise the Lahore Division and allow the un-

restricted passage of fuel tankers from depots to petrol stations". PSO explained that ensuring an uninterrupted supply of fuel in the Lahore region will not only stabilise the local situation but also mitigate the risk of a broader crisis, and smooth transportation of fuel tankers will help ensure the continuous supply of fuel to the population, particularly in the Lahore Division and address the prevailing shortages effectively. This was followed by a similar SOS from the Oil Companies Advisory Council (OCAC) — an association of around three dozen OMCs and refineries — seeking help from the administration in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) and Punjab to facilitate the transportation of petroleum products to avert a potential oil crisis.

90pc bankers see cybercrimes as biggest threat

Criminals quickly adopting new techniques: PwC-PuK

By Shahid Iqbal

KARACHI: About 90 per cent of bankers believe that cybercrime is the biggest challenge confronting banking in the country, according to a survey conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers-PwC Pakistan. Seventy per cent list fraud as their major concern and 60 per cent believe terrorism financing is the biggest threat, the survey showed. "Bankers in Pakistan operate within an evolving financial crime compliance ecosystem," said the survey report. With criminals quickly adopting new techniques and means to exploit vulnerabilities in banking technologies and processes, there is an even greater need for institutions to remain vigilant and up-to-date in their fight against financial crimes, it added. To analyse the banking industry's current state of preparedness, PwC Pakistan conducted a financial crime survey this year, primarily targeting Chief Compliance Officers (CCOs) and heads of business functions, with participation by over 75 respondents. The results indicate that CCOs perceived risk of major types of financial crime typologies including cybercrime, fraud, Terrorism Financing (TF), Money Laundering (ML), tax evasion and sanctions, has increased significantly. This may be due to increasing digital adoption, economic vulnerability, resultant higher inflation levels and rise in terrorism risk in the country, said the report. The percentage of CCOs who consider risk to be "very high" are cybercrime 90 per cent; fraud 70pc; terrorism financing 60pc; tax evasion 50pc; money laundering 55 per cent and sanctions 50pc.

Adoption of digital technology

An increasing adoption of digital technology in Pakistan necessitates the need to have robust financial crime risk assessments, the report suggested. More than 50pc of the CCOs and heads of business and enabling functions, view technology, data, HR and cost constraints as top challenges in financial crime compliance. To address these challenges and mitigate elevated levels of financial crime risks, CCOs believe following areas may require investments in the next 12 months. About 90pc investments required for data governance, management and clustering; 70pc for Technology optimisation; 70pc for specialised training programmes and 60pc for implementation of emerging technologies. Findings from PwC Pakistan's Financial Crime Survey 2024 indicates that banks are still facing challenges in reaching steady and high performing stages with respect to their financial crime technologies. As the industry faces a new era of transformation marked by digital innovation, technology optimisation, regulations, and shifting customer expectations, the role of culture and talent in driving results is more critical than ever before, the survey added. Banks in Pakistan have abundant data that can enable institutions to identify niche segments, assess their behaviours to understand preferences, use these insights to design data-driven strategies and create attractive propositions to attract, engage, reward and retain customers.

EU steps up Spanish olives spat with US

GENEVA: The European Union on Monday requested authorisation at the World Trade Organisation to impose counter-measures to compensate for US customs duties on Spanish olive imports. The request was filed at a meeting of the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) after Washington challenged "the amount of retaliation proposed by the EU (50.5 million annually)", a Geneva-based trade official said. The EU request for DSB authorisation to impose counter-measures on imports from the United States is intended "to compensate for the US's failure to comply with an earlier panel ruling finding US anti-dumping and countervailing duties on ripe olives from Spain", the source said.—AFP

US DOLLAR BUYING \$1276.97 SELLING \$1278.77	EURO BUYING \$1284.88 SELLING \$1291.61
GBP BUYING \$1246.40 SELLING \$1250.68	YEN DOLLAR BUYING \$175.36 SELLING \$176.07
ISA RYIAL BUYING \$173.52 SELLING \$174.15	GOLD SOLA \$1275.400 10 GMS \$1235.693



ISLAMABAD: Ministers Jam Kamal Khan and Alexey Koshnarenko witness signing of eight agreements at the Business Forum on Monday.—PHD

Eight MoUs signed with Belarus to boost trade

By Mubarak Zeb Khan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Belarus on Monday signed eight memorandums of understanding (MoUs) and agreements in various sectors to realise the true potential of bilateral trade. The MoUs and agreements were signed during the Pakistan-Belarus Business Forum, co-chaired by Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan and Belarus' Minister of Energy Aleksei Koshnarenko. The MoUs were signed before Belarus' president's arrival in Islamabad. Both ministers witnessed the signing of these documents, which are expected to pave the way for deeper economic ties. The MoUs will involve a five-year collaboration arrangement between JSC Belakt and Nuraford & Pharmaceutials and a product supply agreement between JSC Minsk Motor Plant and Shaheed Trade Links in 2025. JSC Belakt and Shaheed Trade Links agreed to sell tyres in the Pakistani market, as did JSC BelVitonapharm and Mustafa Brothers. Logistics collaboration will be established between RUE Belamash service and the National Logistic Corporation. RUE Belmedpreparaty and Bio-Medical System signed a memorandum of understanding for pharmacy registration and supply and a mutual supply deal between JSC Belvitamin and Ross International Trading in 2025. JSC Tractor Works and Green Corporate Initiative will cooperate in agricultural machinery.

Pakistan's exports to Belarus fell 10.23pc to \$1.798 million in FY24 compared to \$2.005m the preceding year. However, imports from Belarus surged 39.9pc to \$17.637m in FY24, up from \$5.461m the previous year. Speaking at the business forum, Mr Kamal said there is a need for trade diversification, emphasising the untapped potential in sectors such as food, pharma, textiles, logistics, and energy. He highlighted that the bilateral trade volume needs to reflect the economic capabilities of the two countries. He stressed the need to diversify trade, capitalising on the potential of respective strong sectors. Mr Kamal said all economic sectors are open to foreign investment and priority areas include energy, infrastructure, telecommunications, manufacturing, minerals, ICT, agriculture, and many more. The minister said that eight RB MoUs/contracts reflect the complementarity of bilateral trade and will pave the way for more to happen. Speaking at the forum, Aleksei Koshnarenko said events of this format were an effective platform for direct dialogue between the business circles of Belarus and Pakistan. He said that Belarusian agricultural machinery, industrial, petrochemical, and dairy products are in demand in the Pakistani market, and light industrial goods and food products supplied from Pakistan are in demand in Belarus.

Oil falls \$2 on possible peace deal in Mideast

HOUSTON: Oil prices fell more \$2 on Monday after multiple reports that Israel and Lebanon had agreed to the terms of a deal to end the Israel-Hamas conflict, citing increased senior US officials. Brent crude futures were down \$2.02, or 2.69 per cent, at \$74.15 a barrel by 9:57 a.m. CST (15:57 GMT), while US West Texas Intermediate crude futures were down \$2.08, or 2.92pc, at \$69.16 a barrel. Israel said on Monday that it is moving toward a ceasefire in the war with Hezbollah but there are still issues to address, while Lebanese officials voiced guarded optimism but said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was not to be trusted. "It seems the news of a ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon is behind the price drop, though no supply has been disrupted due to the conflict between the two countries and the risk premium in oil has been low already before the latest price decline," said Giovanni Stuenkel of UBS.

Oil markets are being pushed up and pulled down on rising or falling supply disruption fears, Phil Flynn, senior analyst at Price Futures Group, said in a Monday note. "A report that Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu approves Lebanon ceasefire deal in principle could be a bullish catalyst, yet we must see more details as they become available. Last week the world was worried as Russia launched a surprise missile attack on Ukraine. Then came the report that Israel and Lebanon had agreed to a ceasefire. The market's bullish momentum. Key contributors to the index's rise included Bank Al-Habab, United Bank, Meezan Bank, Systems Ltd, and MCB Bank, which collectively added 555 points. However, the overall trading volume plunged 48.74pc to 640.25 million shares. The traded value also contracted 41.65pc to Rs25.62bn on a day-on-day basis. Stocks contributing significantly to the traded vol-

Debt inflows plunge 55pc in July-October

Pakistan realises just \$2.7bn so far against an annual target of \$19.4bn

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's foreign assistance inflows fell by more than 55 per cent to about \$2.7 billion in the first four months (July-October) of the current fiscal year, apparently because of delays in securing a bailout from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and subsequent \$2bn disbursements. Last year, inflows had amounted to \$6.05bn in these four months. In its monthly report on Foreign Economic Assistance (FEA) released on Monday, the Economic Affairs Division (EAD) said against its annual target of \$19.4bn, total FEA in July-October amounted to \$2.72bn when compared to \$3.85bn of the same period last year with the annual target of \$17.6bn. This total doesn't include about \$1bn disbursed by the IMF on the last day of September, which is accounted for separately by the State Bank of Pakistan, thus putting the total inflows at \$3.72bn. Last fiscal year, the IMF had approved the nine-month \$1bn Standby Arrangement and had released about \$1.2bn in the first fortnight of July, helping Pakistan to put together a healthy tally of \$2.5bn in the month. In comparison, inflows in July this year struggled at just \$450 million. In October, the EAD reported monthly inflows at \$415m compared to \$318m in the corresponding period last year. The EAD said that out of \$1.72bn inflows in the first four months, about \$997m was received for budgetary support or programme loans and the remaining \$825 for project financing. During the same period last year, EAD had secured about \$992m as project aid and more than \$2.5bn as programme loans. Of the total, inflows from multilateral stood at \$721m in these months of this year compared to \$597m last year, while bilateral disbursements stood at \$208m against \$436m last year. The EAD reported receiving about \$208m in foreign commercial loans in IMF FY25, showing a minor recovery from commercial banks that had stayed away from financing Pakistan last year. It may be noted that the government has budgeted \$3.8bn in financing from foreign commercial banks for the current year, showing a poor start, again due to the delayed IMF umbrella. The government has also targeted \$1bn in international bonds for the current year. Another major projection worth \$50m inflows from bilateral partners — China and Saudi Arabia — targeted for the current fiscal year has also not materialised yet. Still, these are mostly realised in the second half of the fiscal year. These projections include a \$10m time deposit from Saudi Arabia and \$40m China's SAFE deposit. These projections are critical for Pakistan to meet its external financing gap as part of the IMF programme. In addition, Pakistan also received \$548m inflows from overseas Pakistanis through Naya Pakistan Certificates compared to \$305m in the same period last year. The World Bank led the multilateral with \$346m disbursement in IMF FY25, slightly lower than its \$370m released last year, followed by the Islamic Development Bank with \$170m and Asian Development Bank with \$173m. Among the bilateral lenders, China stood out with \$97m disbursements, followed by \$90m from France and \$18m from the United States.

Ecneec clears 10 projects worth Rs172.7bn

ISLAMABAD: The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecneec) on Monday approved 10 out of 11 proposed development projects costing Rs 172.7 billion. A project presented by the Ministry of Health was deferred, requiring further clarification before approval. The meeting was chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar. Six of the approved projects belonged to the province of Balochistan, while the approved projects pertained to the infrastructure sector for improving connectivity in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, according to a press release issued by the Deputy Prime Minister Office. Ecneec also approved a World Bank-funded project for developing solid waste infrastructure for Karachi costing Rs25.2bn.—AFP

Stocks sustain gains above 98,000 for first time

By Muhammad Kashif

KARACHI: Despite a bearish opening on Monday, the equity market managed to extend its rebounding streak in disregard to mounting political tensions amid an ongoing protest march by the opposition towards the capital. In a choppy session, the benchmark KSE 100 index settled above 98,000 for the first time. In initial trading, the index plunged 660.50 points, hitting the day's low of 97,137.64. However, it bounced back to an intraday high of 98,117.48 with a gain of 1,519.24 points. Finally, it closed at 98,079.78 after adding 281.55 or 0.29pc points day-on-day. Topline Securities Ltd said the market maintained a bullish trend as investor confidence was buoyed by unconfirmed speculation that the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) may offer relaxation to banks regarding minimum deposit rates for savings.

PAKISTAN STOCK EXCHANGE

THE TOP FIVE			
GAINERS		LOSERS	
Unilever Foods	117.14	PIA Holding Ltd	95.96
Pakistan Services	48.11	Raffah Maize	59.95
Siemens Pakistan	36.52	Household Pakistan	47.63
Master International	21.47	Lucky Cement	28.11
Service Industries	17.65	Abbott Lab	24.62

INDICATORS			
	Month	Year	Change
KSE 100 SHARE INDEX (Points)	98,079.78	97,784.23	A 295.55
KSE 30 SHARE INDEX (Points)	20,888.73	20,480.71	A 408.02
MARKET CAPITAL (Rs billion)	12,523,044	12,518,526	A 4,518
TRADING VALUE (Rs billion)	65.830	48.476	F 17.354

Alien Mubani of Arif Habib Corporation said stocks closed higher on the strong earnings outlook and the Islamabad High Court ban on protests in the capital easing political tensions. However, medium-term pressure remained on

PSN's future contracts rollover, and there was uncertainty over the outcome of PTI protests and geopolitical tensions. He noted that upbeat economic indicators, reserve stability, and the rising SBP reserves supported the

market's bullish momentum. Key contributors to the index's rise included Bank Al-Habab, United Bank, Meezan Bank, Systems Ltd, and MCB Bank, which collectively added 555 points.

However, the overall trading volume plunged 48.74pc to 640.25 million shares. The traded value also contracted 41.65pc to Rs25.62bn on a day-on-day basis. Stocks contributing significantly to the traded vol-

ACTIVITY	
Total Deal	532
Active	460
Gainers	229
Losers	185
PARTICIPANTS	
Foreign	F \$4.20m
Companies	A \$1.40m
Banks	F \$1.31m
Mutual Funds	F \$3.04m
Individuals	A \$4.30m

ume included Haseel Petrolchem (\$4.82m shares), Chengrico PK (\$48.06m shares), Faqir Foods (\$40.91m shares), WorldCall Telecom (\$3.54m shares) and K-Electric (\$2.09m shares). The shares registering the most significant increases in their share prices in absolute terms were Unilever Foods (Rs117.14), Pakistan Services (Rs48.11), Siemens Pakistan (Rs36.52), Master International Ltd (Rs21.47) and Service Industries (Rs17.65). The companies registering significant decreases in their share prices in absolute terms were PIA Holding Ltd (Rs95.96), Raffah Maize (Rs59.95), Household Pakistan (Rs47.63), Lucky Cement (Rs28.11) and Abbott Lab (Rs24.62). Foreign investors remained net sellers, offloading shares worth \$5.2m. Mutual funds also resorted to profit-taking and disposed of shares worth \$3.04m.

Eight migrants drown off Greek island

ATHENS: Greece's coastguard has found the bodies of eight migrants — six men and two women — who drowned off the island of Samos, authorities said on Monday, in the second migrant shipwreck in the Aegean Sea this month.

Greek police found a further 36 people alive in the northern part of Samos, while three people, trapped in a rocky area of the island, were rescued by coast guard officers, the coast guard said. Aircraft and vessels assisted a search and rescue operation, it added.

According to a coastguard official, authorities were alerted to the incident by a non-governmental organisation and estimate that about 50 people had been on board the vessel that brought them off Samos.

Greece, in the southeast corner of the European Union, has long been a favoured gateway to Europe for migrants and refugees from the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

More than one million crossed from Turkey to Greece's outlying eastern islands in 2015-2016. Many have drowned while attempting the perilous journey on flimsy boats.

The number of arrivals later dropped before surging again last year. Greek Shipping Minister Christos Stylianides said Greece's priority was to put an end to human trafficking networks which were profiting from above the lives of innocent people.

"I want to express my deep sorrow for the loss of eight people, among them six young children," he said in a statement. "We will tackle the great problem of illegal immigration which has exceeded the limits of endurance of the European Union." Four migrants died on Nov 6 after a boat sank off the island of Rhodes.

So far this year, about 54,000 migrants have reached Greece, the second largest number in southern Europe behind Italy. The vast majority of them arrived by sea, according to data from the United Nations refugee agency UNHCR.—Reuters

Japan to bring home WWII dead from Bangladesh

DHAKA: Japanese officials in Bangladesh are preparing the bodies of 23 soldiers who died during World War II to return them home after more than 80 years, enthusiasm tears said on Monday.

The bodies were exhumed from Bangladesh's Mayamari war cemetery, near Comilla, where more than 750 people from multiple nations killed during the war were buried.

"Japanese soldiers were cremated at the Mayamari field hospital, before being moved to their injuries," said Hideo Saito, Bangladesh country man-

ager for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, which runs the cemetery.

The government-backed Japan Association for Recovery and Repatriation of War Casualties is organising the recovery work to return the dead to Tokyo, the Embassy of Japan said in a statement.

The organisation says it seeks to return remains of Japanese war dead, especially from regions that saw heavy fighting during the war — including the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Indonesia and Myanmar.—AFP



(LEFT) Afghanistan's Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Ghani Baradar (centre) looks on during a meeting with Sergei Shoigu (centre right), secretary of Russia's Security Council, at Kabul's Chahar Chinar Palace, on Monday.—AFP

Moscow assures Taliban of removal from negative list

Kabul assured of restoring Afghanistan's observer status in SCO

KABUL: Top Russian security official Sergei Shoigu visited Afghan government officials on Monday, assuring them Moscow will soon remove the Taliban from its list of banned organisations, Kabul said.

The Russian delegation's visit coincides with ongoing diplomatic efforts by China and Iran, Special envoys from those nations are currently in Kabul, marking a rare political gathering of representatives from three US rivals since Donald Trump's recent election victory.

Shoigu, the secretary of Russia's Security Council, met an Afghan cohort in Kabul headed by Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Abdul Ghani Baradar.

He "expressed Russia's interest in increasing the level of bilateral cooperation with Afghanistan," Baradar's office said in a statement released on social media site X. "He also announced that, to expand political and economic relations between the two countries, the Islamic Emirate's name would soon be removed from Russia's blacklist."

The Islamic Emirate is the name the

Taliban government uses to refer to itself.

Analysts say Moscow may be trying cooperation with Kabul to counter the threat from Islamic State Khorasan (ISK) — the Afghan-based branch of the militant group.

In March, more than 140 people were killed when ISK gunmen staged a Moscow concert hall. Taliban authorities have repeatedly said security is their top domestic priority and have pledged militants staging foreign attacks will be ousted from Afghanistan.

"The Taliban certainly are our allies in the fight against terrorism," Russia's ambassador to Afghanistan, Dmitry Zhirinov, said in July. "They are working to eradicate terrorism cells."

Areas of interest

The visit highlighted potential areas of collaboration, including trade, transit, and investment, according to statements from the Taliban.

The discussions covered a range of topics, including political relations, economic partnerships, and Russian investment in sectors such as mining, transportation, and agriculture. Shoigu also emphasised Russia's support for the Afghan Transit project, which seeks to boost Afghanistan's role in regional connectivity.

Baradar, for his part, highlighted the Taliban's commitment to banning narcotics cultivation and eliminating money threats in Afghanistan and the region. "We are working to create opportunities for Afghanistan to export to the region and beyond," Baradar said, emphasising Afghanistan's desire to play a key role in strengthening the North-South economic corridor.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

In a separate meeting with Abdul Kabir, the Taliban's Political Deputy Chief Minister, Shoigu voiced Russia's intention to restore Afghanistan's observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) under Taliban leadership. Russian officials, including Special Envoy for Afghanistan Zaimir Khabizov, also participated in these talks alongside Taliban intelligence director Abdul Haq Waziri.

China's Special Envoy Yao Xueqiang met with Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi earlier this week to express China's interest in economic cooperation. Russia and China have yet to disclose full details of their meetings, but analysts suggest these engagements reflect a coordinated effort by the three nations to address shared concerns over Afghanistan's stability and limit US influence in the region.—Agencies

One killed as DHL plane crashes near Lithuanian capital

VILNIUS: A DHL cargo plane crashed on Monday near the Lithuanian capital's airport, killing one crew member, but authorities stopped short of linking the tragedy to a recent series of sabotage cases.

Lithuanian officials have in past weeks probed alleged acts of incendiary devices being planted on cargo planes.

The plane, which had arrived from the German city of Leipzig, crashed about one kilometre (0.6 miles) from Vilnius airport, leaving its several buildings as it skidded several hundreds metres, according to the police and the DHL company. Images from the crash site showed debris from the plane and packages on fire scattered across a residential area cordoned off by the emergency services.

"So far, there are no signs or evidence suggesting this was sabotage or a terrorist act," Defence Minister Laurynas Kasčiūnas told reporters, adding the probe to establish the cause could take "about a week".

"We cannot rule out the case of terrorism. We have warned that such things are possible, we see an increasingly aggressive Russia... but we cannot make any attributions or point fingers yet," State Security Department chief Darius Juškevičius said.—AFP

Philippine VP labelled 'mastermind' of assassination plot

MANILA: The Philippine justice department on Monday labelled Vice President Sara Duterte the "mastermind" of a plot to assassinate the country's president, giving her five days to respond to a subpoena.

Duterte is being asked to explain herself in the wake of a blistering weekend press conference where she said she had instructed that President Ferdinand

Marcos be killed should an alleged plot to kill her succeed.

"The government is taking action to protect our duly elected president," Justice Undersecretary Jesse Andres said at a Monday press briefing.

"The premeditated plot to assassinate the president as declared by the self-confessed mastermind will now face legal consequences." Speaking to reporters on

hour later, Duterte said she planned to respond to the subpoena. "I will gladly answer the questions they want to ask, but they must answer my questions as well," she said.

"We'll just talk there when I get the subpoena." In his first public comments on the matter, Marcos earlier in the day vowed to "fight back" in the face of a threat he called "disturbing".

The Marcos-Duterte alliance that swept to power in 2022 has collapsed spectacularly in the lead-up to next year's mid-term elections, with both sides trading allegations of drug addiction.

Duterte, who is facing potential impeachment hearings, told reporters that she herself was the subject of an assassination plot and had instructed that Marcos be killed should it succeed.—AFP

Bestselling *Woman of Substance* author Barbara Taylor dies at 91

LONDON: Bestselling British-American writer Barbara Taylor Bradford, whose debut novel *A Woman of Substance* turned her into an overnight success and sold over 30 million copies, has died aged 91, a spokeswoman said on Monday.

Taylor Bradford, who wrote 40 novels and netted up 91 million book sales worldwide during her career, died peacefully at her home on Sunday following a short illness.

She "was surrounded by loved ones to the very

end", the spokeswoman said, adding that a private funeral would be held in New York.

A Woman of Substance tells the story of servant Emma Harris who overcomes a hostile start in Yorkshire in northern England to head a business empire, navigating numerous personal tragedies along the way.

Many of her subsequent novels are also set in Yorkshire and follow a similar rags-to-riches theme, chronicling her own story of success against

the odds, powered by grit and hard work.

"What I really wanted to do was to write about a very strong woman, because I'm strong," she told an interviewer in 1983.

"That doesn't mean I'm tough or hard but I have the strength to meet adversity, not to give in," she said, adding that she wrote 12 hours a day, seven days a week. Her most recent novel, *The Winner of It All*, was published last year.

Born in Leeds in northern England in May 1933,



BARBARA Taylor

Taylor Bradford began her working life aged 15 as a typist for her local newspaper *The Yorkshire*

Evening Post before becoming a reporter.

She moved to London aged 20 where she continued working as a journalist while slipping her toe into the world of fiction.

She started and abandoned several novels before striking gold with *A Woman of Substance*, which was an instant success when it was published in 1979.

"Powerhouse"

The novel spent 45 weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list. It was turned into a double

Emmy-nominated miniseries in 1985 and starred Liam Neeson with British actor Jenny Agutter in the role of Emma Harris.

Seagrams paid tribute to a "sharp friend" and "powerhouse of glamour and warmth".

"Success never dimmed her warmth and humour or her ability to relate to everyone she met, whether a client or a prisoner. She never, ever forgot that she was just a girl from Yorkshire that worked hard and made good," she said.

Charlie Redmayne, chief executive of publisher HarperCollins, described Taylor Bradford as a "truly exceptional writer". *A Woman of Substance* changed the lives of so many who read it — and still does to this day," he said.

"She was a natural storyteller, deeply proud of her Yorkshire roots. For 45 years, she was a huge part of our company and a great, great friend — we will miss her so much," he added.

Taylor Bradford was honoured in 2007 by the

late Queen Elizabeth II who made her an OBE, Officer of the Order of the British Empire, for services to literature. She had lived in the United States since 1984 following her marriage the previous year to American film producer Robert Bradford. The couple were married for 55 years until his death in 2019.

Taylor Bradford's spokeswoman said she would be buried alongside her late husband at Westchester Hills Cemetery, north of New York City.—AFP

NEWSMAKERS

Romania braces for parliament vote after far right's poll upset

BUCHAREST: A far-right, pro-Russia candidate took a surprise lead on Monday in Romania's presidential election, bolstering his party's hopes for a parliamentary vote this week that could usher in a strategic shift for the east European NATO member.

Clauș Ionescu was in pole position with 23pc after the first round of voting on Sunday, a political earthquake in the country of 19 million people that has so far resisted nationalist appeals that have gained traction in neighbouring countries.

His victory and the second-place showing by Elena Lasconi, a centre-right mayor, ended the hopes of Prime Minister Marcel Ciolacu to compete for the presidency in the second-round run-off on Dec 8.

Lasconi scored 19.15pc, ahead of the 19.15 won by Ciolacu, who told reporters that his Social Democratic Party (PSD) "won't challenge" the narrow result, and announced his resignation as party leader.

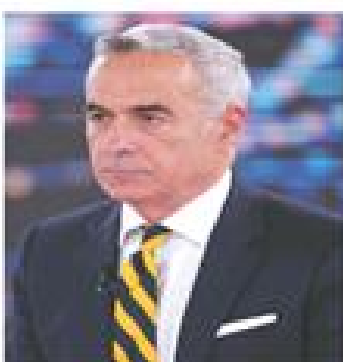
Experts say the far right's surprise success could profoundly affect the parliamentary election later this week, by making it difficult to form a viable coalition government.

Extremist forces and Lasconi's centre-right party now have "wind in their sails", sociologist Gheo Dumitrescu said, though "it remains to be seen if they know how to capitalise" on it.

Georgescu's standing surged ahead of the vote with a viral TikTok campaign calling for an end to aid for Ukraine, which shares a 650-kilometre (400-mile) border with Romania.

He has also sounded a sceptical note on Romania's NATO membership, a key issue as the defence alliance arms Kyiv in its fight against Russia's invasion launched in 2022.

"Tonight, the Romanian people cried



A NOV 19 file picture shows presidential candidate Clauș Ionescu at a television station in Bucharest.—AFP

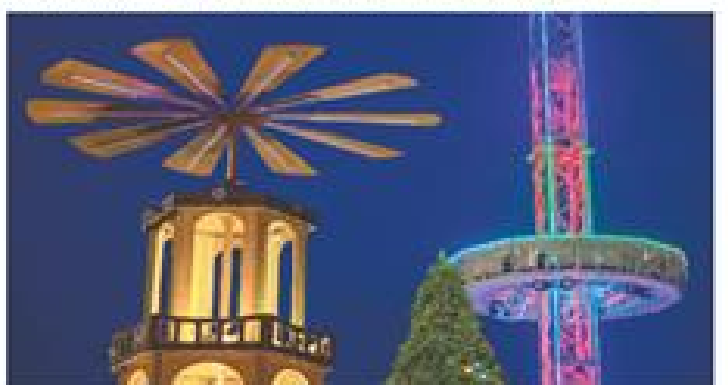
out for peace. And they shouted very loudly, extremely loudly," Georgescu said.

"The far right is by far the big winner of this election," political scientist Cristian Pirvulescu told AFP of the result that sent shock waves across the country. Maria Chis, 70, said she was surprised by Georgescu's lead in the first round but had been impressed after watching his TikTok videos.

"He seems a man of integrity, serious and patriotic. He inspires seriousness. I think only someone like him can bring change," said the pensioner, who denounced the ballot but said she was planning to vote for Georgescu in the second round. Alex Tudose, the owner of a construction company, was gloomy.—AFP



NORTHAMPTON (UK): A drone view shows static caravans surrounded by floodwater after the River Nene burst its banks near an aquadrome, on Monday.—Reuters



METZ: The Christmas market and the City Skyliner (right), in this city in north-eastern France. The City Skyliner, one of the tallest mobile observation towers in the world, has a height of 81 metres and can accommodate 60 people.—AFP



NEW DELHI: An anti-smog gun sprays water to settle dust particles as traffic moves along a road, with the sky enveloped in smog due to air pollution.—Reuters



MOSCOW: A participant wearing a costume attends a cosplay festival, on Monday. Cosplay (a blend of the words 'costume' and 'play') means the practice of dressing up as a character from anime, cartoons, comic books, manga, television series, rock music performances, video games and in some cases, original characters. Cosplay is growing in popularity with Russian youth who see it as a legitimate form of self-expression.—AFP

Three Uzbeks held in UAE over Israeli rabbi's murder

JERUSALEM: Emirati authorities said on Monday three suspects from Uzbekistan were in custody over the murder of a rabbi, a rare violent incident involving an Israeli citizen in the UAE, as his body was flown to Israel for burial.

The United Arab Emirates signed a peace agreement with Israel in 2020 under the US-brokered Abraham Accords.

Yossi Kogan's death was a blow to the tiny Jewish and Israeli communities in the UAE, which has kept a lower profile since the outbreak of the conflict in Gaza in October 2023.

The 28-year-old UAE-based rabbi was found dead by security services last week. The three suspects were arrested on Sunday, and after "preliminary investigations" the interior ministry identified them in a statement.

"The authorities revealed the identities of the three perpetrators, all of whom are Uzbek nationals," said the statement published by the official WAM news agency. It named them as Olimboy Tukhlovich, 28, Makhsomjon Abdurakhim, 28, and Asirbek Karimovich, 33.

The ministry said authorities were talking "the necessary actions to uncover the details, circumstances and motives of the crime".

Kogan was in the UAE as a representative of the Chabad Hasidic movement, which is known for its outreach efforts worldwide.

A spokeswoman for Israel's airport authority confirmed that his body had been flown home. Kogan's funeral will take place on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem next Jerusalem, the Chabad-Lubavitch movement said.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu condemned "the murder of an Israeli citizen and a Chabad emissary", calling it "an abhorrent anti-Semitic terrorist attack".

In Washington, the White House urged accountability for the "heinous crime".

Neither Emirati nor Israeli officials provided any details about the circumstances of Kogan's murder.

In 2020, the year Israel normalised relations with the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco, Kogan joined his older brother, Reuven, and a team of rabbis in the UAE, according to the Chabad-Lubavitch movement. Chabad said on its website Kogan had managed a kosher supermarket in Dubai, which a photographer said was closed on Monday with its windows blinds down.

There is no figure for the number of Jews in the UAE, but an Israeli official said there were about 2,000 Israelis in the Gulf country, with the Jewish community estimated to be up to twice that figure.

UAE presidential adviser Amour Gangash insisted Sunday the country remained "a society of tolerance and coexistence", in a post on social media platform X that made no direct reference to Kogan.—AFP

Prosecutors ask judge to dismiss subversion case against Trump

WASHINGTON: US prosecutors on Monday asked a US judge to drop the criminal case accusing president-elect Donald Trump of seeking to overturn his 2020 election defeat, citing his impending return to the presidency following his successful 2024 campaign.

Prosecutors, working with Special Counsel Jack Smith cited a longstanding US Justice Department policy that sitting presidents should not face criminal prosecution.

The move represents a remarkable shift from the special prosecutor who obtained indictments against Trump in two separate cases accusing him of crimes that threatened US election integrity and national security.

It shows how Trump's election victory over Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris was not just a political triumph, but also a legal one.

Trump pleaded not guilty in August 2023 to four federal crimes, including the Republican of conspiring to obstruct the collection and certification of votes following his 2020 defeat to Democrat Joe Biden.

Trump, who as president will again oversee the Justice Department, was expected to order an end to the federal 2020 election case and an attempt by Smith to revive a second case accusing Trump of illegally retaining classified documents after leaving office in 2021.

The Justice Department policy, dating back to the 1970s, holds that a criminal prosecution of a sitting president would violate the US Constitution by undermining the ability of the country's chief executive to function. US District Judge Tanya Chutkan will still have to approve the request from prosecutors.

Trump's lawyers had previously said they would seek to dismiss the charges based on a US Supreme Court ruling in July that former presidents have broad immunity from prosecution over official actions taken while in the White House.

Smith attempted to salvage the case. Following the high court ruling, dropping some allegations but arguing the rest were not covered by presidential immunity and could proceed to trial.

—Reuters



THIS view captures the moment of an Israeli strike on a building in the Cheyah district of Beirut's southern suburbs, on Monday.—Reuters

Strikes, clashes in Lebanon after ceasefire calls

Netanyahu likely to endorse a US ceasefire proposal

BEIRUT: Israel bombed Hezbollah's Beirut stronghold on Monday and battles raged in Lebanon's south after the group claimed 50 attacks on Israeli targets the day before.

The Israeli military said Hezbollah fired 250 projectiles into Israel on Sunday, part of a wave of attacks the militants said had targeted areas including the Ashdod naval base in southern Israel and military sites near Tel Aviv.

The military said on Monday that it had "conducted intelligence-based strikes on several Hezbollah command centres" in Beirut's southern suburbs, which Israel has repeatedly bombed since it escalated air strikes on Sept 28.

The military later reported having carried out attacks on 25 Hezbollah targets across the country in the span of an hour. "Among the targets struck were the Executive Council's command centre, and intelligence control and collection centres, where Hezbollah commanders and operatives were located," the army said in a statement.

The strikes took place in Nabatieh, Raatbek, the Bekaa Valley, southern Beirut and the city's outskirts, it said. The strikes came after a weekend of heavy air raids in and around the capital's south.

Lebanon's education ministry suspended classes on Monday at schools, technical institutes and private higher education institutions in Beirut and a number of surrounding areas, citing "the current dangerous conditions".

Israeli ground forces have also entered several villages and towns near Lebanon's southern border, including Khiam, where Lebanese official media on Monday reported clashes with Hezbollah fighters.

In the southern district of Tyre, the Lebanese health ministry reported at least 12 people killed in a pair of Israeli attacks, one on a road near the city of the same name, and another in the nearby town of Maassaka.

"Windows of opportunity" The escalation came as the United States, European Union and United Nations pushed for a truce in a war that Lebanon says has killed at least 3,754 people in the country since October 2023, most of them in the last two months.

On Monday a senior UN official urged "the parties to accept a ceasefire" in Lebanon. In Beirut on Sunday, top EU diplomat Josep Borrell called for an immediate ceasefire, after US envoy Amos Hochstein said last week that a deal was "within our grasp".

Jean-Noel Barrot, the foreign minister of France — which along with the United States has spearheaded the efforts towards a truce — called on Israel and Lebanon on Sunday to seize a "window of opportunity" to negotiate an end to the fighting.

The US news site Axios reported that the parties were close to a deal that would involve a 60-day transition period in which the Israeli army would pull back, the Lebanese army would redeploy near the border and Hezbollah would withdraw its heavy weapons north of the Litani River.

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The draft agreement also provides for the establishment of a US-led committee to oversee implementation, as well as US assurances that Israel can take action against imminent threats if the Lebanese military does not, according to Axios.

Israeli media also reported that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was likely to endorse a US ceasefire proposal.

Asked in New York whether Israel had accepted a ceasefire agreement, the country's ambassador to the UN, Danny Danon, said "we are moving forward on this front".

He said he assumed "that the cabinet will meet today or tomorrow to discuss it". The war in Lebanon followed nearly a year of limited exchanges of cross-border fire initiated by Hezbollah in support of its ally Hamas.

"Pessimistic" about a deal

One displaced resident of Shkfa, an Israeli town near the Lebanese border, said she did not want to see a truce that would allow Hezbollah to regroup. "I don't want a ceasefire, because if they do it along the lines that they've announced, we'll be in the same place in five years," said 24-year-old teacher Dorit Slon.

"I am very pessimistic about this agreement... The only thing I want is for my daughter to sleep well at night, without (rocket) alerts, and for her not to be afraid of anything," Israel's foreign, National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir warned reaching a ceasefire deal in Lebanon would be a "historic missed opportunity to eradicate Hezbollah".

"I understand all the constraints and realities, and still it is a grave mistake," he wrote on X.—AFP

G7 ministers discuss ceasefire efforts in Mideast

FRUGGI: Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani said on Monday he was "optimistic" for a cessation of hostilities in Lebanon, as Middle East tensions dominated a G7 meeting near Rome.

The Group of Seven foreign ministers also discussed the International Criminal Court decision. The ICC issued a warrant against Netanyahu and his former defence minister Yoav Gallant as well as Hamas' Mohammed Deif on Thursday.

They have been accused of crimes against humanity and war crimes in Israel's war on Hamas in Gaza, Israel and its allies denounced the decision, but it was welcomed by Turkey and rights groups.

Several countries have said they would comply with ICC warrants and arrest Netanyahu should he enter their territory. Others are still considering their response.

The G7 ministers were "working to find an agreement" on the wording regarding the ICC decision in their final statement, Tajani said.

While "we may not agree with how (Netanyahu's) government" has acted in Gaza, "I believe that we must negotiate with Netanyahu to achieve peace in Lebanon and justice in Palestine", he said. A second session was to include ministers from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, as well as the secretary general of the Arab League. The G7 also came amid political uncertainty following Donald Trump's US election win.—AFP

and arrest Netanyahu should he enter their territory. Others are still considering their response.

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They have been accused of crimes against humanity and war crimes in Israel's war on Hamas in Gaza, Israel and its allies denounced the decision, but it was welcomed by Turkey and rights groups.

Several countries have said they would comply with ICC warrants and arrest Netanyahu should he enter their territory. Others are still considering their response.

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17 missing after tourist boat capsizes in Egypt

CAIRO: Egyptian authorities said 17 people including foreigners were missing after a tourist yacht capsized off the country's Red Sea coast on Monday, with 28 others rescued.

The vessel, which was carrying 31 tourists of various nationalities and a 14-member crew, sent out a distress call at 5:30am (0130 GMT), said a statement from Egypt's Red Sea governorate.

A tally confirmed that tourists involved in the incident include nationals from Britain, China, Finland, Poland and Spain. The "Key Story" embarked on Sunday on a multi-day diving trip from Port Ghadifa near Marsa Alam in the southeast, and had been due to dock on Friday at the town of Hurghada, 200 kilometres (124 miles) north.

Governor Amer Hassab said that some survivors were rescued by an aircraft, while others were transported to safety aboard a warship.

"Intensive search operations are underway in coordination with the navy and the armed forces," Hassab added in a statement. Authorities have not confirmed the nationalities of the tourists.

Beijing's embassy in Egypt said two of its nationals were "in good health" after being "rescued in the cruise ship sinking accident in the Red Sea", Chinese state media reported. The Finnish foreign ministry confirmed that one of its nationals is missing.

Polish foreign ministry spokesman Pawel Wronski said authorities "have information that two of the tourists may have had Polish citizenship".

"That's all we know about them. That's all we can say for now," he told national news agency PAP.

Thrown 'on its side'

According to a manager of a diving resort close to the rescue operation, one surviving crew member said they were "hit by a wave in the middle of the night, throwing the vessel on its side".

Authorities in the Red Sea capital of Hurghada on Sunday shut down marine activities and the city's port due to "bad weather conditions". But winds around Marsa Alam had remained favourable until Sunday night, the diving manager said, before picking up again by morning.

By Monday afternoon, it became increasingly "unlikely that the 17 missing would be rescued after 12 hours in the water," he said, repeating anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

The Marsa Alam area saw at least two similar boat accidents earlier this year but there were no fatalities. The Red Sea coast is a major tourist destination in Egypt, a country of 105 million that is in the grip of a serious economic crisis. Nationally, the tourism sector employs two million people and generates more than 10 percent of GDP.

Reports of dire boats capsizing between coral reefs and islands off Egypt's eastern coast every day, where safety regulations are robust but severely enforced.—AFP

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Belarusian president arrives on three-day visit

Continued from Page 1

for holding meetings with their Pakistani counterparts. Belarusian business representatives participated in a business forum where agreements worth \$47 million were signed, according to Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chairman Mikhail Myasnikov.

Islamabad, which is under a security clampdown because of Pakistan's Tehreek-i-Taliban protest and access to most parts of the city had been blocked with shipping containers, was adorned with welcoming banners and portraits of the leaders of the two countries to mark the occasion.

"During the visit, President Lukashenko and Prime Minister Sharif will hold wide-ranging talks on bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest," the Foreign Office said in a statement.

"Looking forward to our discussions during this important visit," Sharif posted on X, formerly Twitter, after receiving Lukashenko.

Focus on trade and cooperation

The two leaders are set to discuss various areas of collaboration, par-

ticularly trade and investment. According to the Belarusian presidency, the discussions will prioritise practical steps to develop trade and economic ties and explore promising areas of cooperation.

The two sides aim to devise a joint action plan to enhance bilateral engagement. Trade between Pakistan and Belarus totalled approximately \$50 million in 2023, a figure both countries agree is far below the potential.

In addition to bilateral issues, the leaders will exchange views on regional and global security and explore avenues for cooperation at multilateral forums. Multiple agreements and memorandums of understanding are expected to be signed during the visit.

Foreign ministers prepare agenda

Earlier in the day, Foreign Minister Lukashenko met his Pakistani counterpart, Maxim Ryshchenko, to finalise the agenda for Mr Lukashenko's visit.

"The ministers also discussed key regional and global developments, including the situation in the Middle East," the Foreign Office said. "They expressed their support



PRIME Minister Shehbaz Sharif receives Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko upon his arrival at the Nur Khan Air Base.—White Star

for peaceful resolution of conflicts and underlined the need for a coordinated approach to address the

humanitarian situation in Gaza."

Both ministers expressed satisfaction with the momentum of bilateral

exchanges and high-level visits, expressing the hope that Lukashenko's visit would further strengthen ties between the two nations.

Investment partner

Meanwhile, Privatisation, Investment and Communication Minister Abdul Aleem Khan said that Pakistan and Belarus are to enhance government-to-government and business-to-business relations between the two countries.

The minister said this during a meeting with Belarus Transport Minister Alexei Lyakhovitch.

Mr Khan said that work is under way to launch direct flights from Islamabad to Minsk following the start of flight operations for Baku. He said that new cross-border trade is a key to strengthening the country's economy and promoting bilateral relations.

Like Azerbaijan and Turkey, the government also wants to make Belarus an investment partner since Pakistan is rich in natural resources and positive results can be achieved with the skilled workforce, the country has, Mr Khan said.

Belarus Transport Minister Alexei Lyakhovitch, who is accom-

panying President of Belarus, invited the Communications Minister of Pakistan to visit Belarus and said his country wants to increase connectivity with Pakistan through railways and roads.

Mr Khan said that the communication sector is of utmost importance and "we want a trade corridor to Central Asia on the lines of the Karakoram Highway and CPC to promote business activities".

Separately, Belarus Minister for Industries Aliaksandr Vukich held a meeting with Minister for Industries Rana Ishaq Hussain and discussed the potential cooperation between the two countries in industrial and agricultural sectors.

Rana Ishaq said that Pakistan has considerable export potential with Belarus for products like inflatable footballs, articles of bedding and similar stuffed items, sports and outdoor games equipment, footwear, rubber, plastic and metal products.

The two ministers also discussed opportunities to enhance cooperation between the two countries in the small medium enterprises sector.

At the end of the visit, Mr Khan said that the two countries have agreed to

SPORT

Mbappe on target as Real cruise to Leganes win

LEGANES: Kylian Mbappe ended his goal drought with a close-range strike and midfielder Jude Bellingham scored a header as Real Madrid thrashed Leganes 3-0 on Sunday.

With a game in hand, Real are second in the standings on 30 points, four behind Barcelona.

Mbappe latched on to Vinicius Jr's through ball and forced the net after 10 minutes, but his celebration was short-lived as the goal was ruled out for offside.

Mbappe was goalless in his last four games in all competitions, his last goal coming in a win over Celta Vigo last month.

However, the former Paris St Germain striker netted his seventh league goal of the campaign after combining again with Vinicius to give Real the lead two minutes before the break following a Leganes defensive error that Bellingham capitalised on.

"We switched the position of the strikers a bit, with Mbappe on the outside and he did well," said coach Carlo Ancelotti after the match.

Real enjoyed most of the possession in the second half, giving goalkeeper Tihomir Stokich, back in the squad after a muscle injury, little to do.

Uruguayan midfielder Federico Valverde scored the second from a free kick with an unstoppable long-range effort after Bellingham had been fouled in the fifth minute.

The England international put the icing on the cake in the 85th minute when he headed home after the ball bounced off the crossbar.

"We were very comfortable in the first half, playing



LEGANES: Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe shoots to score during the La Liga match against Leganes at the Estadio Municipal de Butarque.—AFP

the game we wanted to, but (to concede) after a mistake... hurts more, it got away from us because of our errors," admitted Leganes defender Sergio Gonzalez. "The team gave everything, and with the smallest opportunities, they punished us."

VINCIUS OUT OF LIVERPOOL CLASH

Real visit Premier League and Champions League leaders Liverpool on Wednesday but will be without Vinicius, who sustained a leg muscle injury in the win at Leganes.

Spanish media reported the Brazilian winger is expected to miss almost a month, which would also keep him out of the Champions League visit to Atlanta on December 10, as well as Wednesday's match at Anfield.

Champions League holders Real have started their European campaign in shaky form, with two defeats in their opening four matches.

They lost 1-0 at Lille and 3-1 at home against AC Milan in their last outing in the competition, leaving them 18th in the expanded group table and could be in trouble with a bad result at Anfield.—Agencies

Sampaoli beaten on Rennes debut

PARIS: Former Argentina boss Jorge Sampaoli began his Stade Rennais tenure with a 1-0 loss at Lille on Sunday, while riot police were deployed to stop an attempted pitch invasion by Nantes fans.

Eduardo Zuscovits struck right before half-time as Lille converted their unbeaten run to eight games to a point behind third-placed Olympique de Marseille.

Rennes seldom threatened as they recorded only one shot on target, and did so in a narrow defeat in 12 minutes.

Sampaoli, a 2015 Copa America winner with Chile, is now tasked to lead Rennes in games against St Etienne, Nantes and Angers before the new year.

Nantes slumped to their fourth consecutive defeat as they lost 2-0 at home to Le Havre in a game interrupted after their fans attempted to invade the pitch.

In stoppage time, disgruntled Nantes fans attempted to storm the pitch, but were stopped by riot police. Over half an hour later and after the fans were cleared from the stands, the final minutes were played.

Josue Canino opened the scoring for Le Havre in the third minute, with Steve Nouri doubling their lead in the 74th to secure all three points.

Winless in nine games, Nantes sit fifth after 12 games, a relegation playoff spot.

Elsewhere, Auxerre snatched a 1-0 win over Angers while Nice came from behind to beat Strasbourg 2-1 in the late kick-off to move up a spot to fifth.—Agencies



ITALY'S Jannik Sinner and team-mates celebrate with the trophy after winning the Davis Cup final against the Netherlands at the Palacio de Deportes Jose Maria Martin Carreras arena.—AFP

Sinner completes year to remember as Italy retain Davis Cup

MILAN: Jannik Sinner completed his seasonal year by leading Italy to a successful defence of the Davis Cup with victory over the Netherlands in the final on Sunday.

The world number one eased into a 7-6 (7-2), 6-2 triumph against Tallon Griekspoor for the winning point after Marco Berrettini had put the defending champions ahead with a convincing 6-4, 6-2 win against Botke van de Zandschulp.

Sinner ends 2024 with titles at the Australian Open, US Open and the ATP Finals.

"The whole team is amazing, we tried to defend our title and we have done it, so we're extremely happy... there's a lot of work behind it," said Sinner as Italy won the Davis Cup for a third time.

Italy became the first team to defend the title since the Czech Republic in 2011, and the fifth nation to win it, along with the Billie Jean King Cup in the same season.

Strong Italian support, along with an orange wall of Dutch fans, made for a fine atmosphere at the Martin Carreras arena, with the Netherlands in the final for the first time in 104 years of trying.

However, defeating Sinner this year has been right on impossible for most players, let alone with the pressure of carrying a nation's hopes on their shoulders.

Griekspoor, ranked 40th, has now lost all six meetings with Sinner but battled remarkably well, forcing

Sinner to save two early break points. Serving brilliantly, Griekspoor twice held to love and hit two aces in the 12th game to force a tie-break.

Sinner scored an early mini-break and another for a 5-2 lead, firing down his 12th ace to take the first set.

The Italian brought up and converted his first break point of the match to take a 2-1 lead in the second set.

Griekspoor produced a backhand winner to drag his way back on serve but could not follow up with a double fault that allowed Sinner to break again for a 3-2 lead.

The game was up for the Dutch and Sinner broke again in the seventh game before sealing his triumph with his fourth match point with a scorching serve Griekspoor could not return.

"I had no other option than playing a high level match — if you want to have a chance against Jannik in this kind of form, this kind of shape, this kind of confidence," said Griekspoor.

"Jannik is very tough to beat, especially with the season he had, he deserves all of it."

Netherlands captain Paul Haarhuis was part of the last Dutch team to reach the semi-finals 21 years ago.

"I don't have a close relationship with second place, I have a hate relationship with second place," said Haarhuis. "Even though I'm unbelievably proud of the guys, for now it feels terrible."

Berrettini edged the first set against Van de Zandschulp but hit his peak in the second and left the Dutchman on

chance, winning in 76 minutes.

The world number 55, who came to support Italy as they ended a 47-year wait for the trophy in 2023 as he missed out with an ankle injury, was crucial in their Davis Cup defence.

The 28-year-old paired up with Sinner to help Italy triumph in a double decider against Argentina in the last night, before winning his semi-final singles rubber against Australia's Thomas Kirkpatrick.

"It feels unbelievable, it feels really great to be on court — if you win it's better, but being able to be healthy, here and enjoying this kind of atmosphere is the most important thing for me, because I missed that," said Berrettini.

"I definitely feel that my level never really left. When you're struggling physically and mentally it's not easy to play your best tennis."

Van de Zandschulp, ranked 80th, became the last player to defeat Rafael Nadal before the Spanish superstar headed into retirement earlier in the week.

However, he was blown away by Berrettini, who moved ahead in the ninth game of the first set. The Italian opened up three break points and took the first to claim a 5-4 lead.

In the second set, Berrettini, who was Wimbledon runner-up in 2021, broke in the third game and again in the seventh. The Italian produced 10 forehand winners and 16 aces on his way to victory, setting up Sinner to finish the tie.—AFP

Lukaku keeps Napoli on top with Roma winner

NAPLES: Romelu Lukaku secured Napoli main-tained their one-point lead at the top of Serie A with the only goal in Sunday's 1-0 win over his old club AS Roma.

It took 54 minutes for Napoli to break the deadlock, with Lukaku sliding in to meet Giovanni Di Lorenzo's low cross from close range and score against the team he played for last season.

Napoli have 29 points after 11 matches, one point ahead of Atalanta, Inter Milan, Fiorentina and Lazio who occupy second to fifth respectively — with Juventus four points off the pace in sixth — in a crowded title race which is yet to offer up a clear favourite for the Scudetto.

It was a disappointing day for Roma manager Claudio Ranieri, who began his third stint in charge at the club, with his side 12th in the table with 13 points.

"When we arrive at the stadium, we can feel the way the fans push us on. We won today and we are happy," Lukaku told Sky Sport Italia. "I just want to do well for the team. We have a problem that we need to go through, we know it would be tough because the other sides were, but we got the result we wanted."

Napoli had an early chance to take the lead, but Khvicha Kvaratskhelia failed to convert, sending a free header wide after being left unmarked at the back post.

Roma goalkeeper Mile Svilar was kept busy, making several crucial saves, including a strong stop from Scott McTominay's angled attempt.

Roma woke up after Lukaku's goal in the second half, with Artem Dovbyk powering a header off the wood-

work from a free kick minutes later, but they couldn't find an equaliser.

Napoli could have added another goal in the final seconds of the match when David Neres sent a scorching shot from the edge of the box just wide.

Ranieri has a job on his hands at Roma, who are four points above the relegation zone.

"We have problems, that's why they called me, and we played against a team fighting to win the title," said Ranieri. "Given all that, I'm happy with the performance. We made mistakes but the desire to get the season on the right track is there."

Roma's struggles will have fans all the more given the hot form of their local rivals Lazio, who beat Bologna Bologna 3-0 to claim their seventh straight win in all competitions.

Namuel Gigot, Mattia Scaccagnini and Flaminio Di Biase all scored in the second half after the visitors' Tommaso Pellgrini was sent off just before the break.

Fiorentina extended their winning streak to seven Serie A matches earlier on Sunday, a feat they hadn't achieved since April 1983, with a 2-0 victory at Como, courtesy of goals from Youssef Adli and Moise Kean.

Keeper David De Gea played a crucial role for Fiorentina, making an incredible triple save to deny the hosts around the hour mark.

Patrick Vieira was denied a winning start as Genoa manager after a late Roberto Piccoli penalty gave fellow Serie A strugglers Cagliari a 2-2 away draw.

Piccoli's spot-kick leaves Genoa in 16th, level with Cagliari and two points above Lecce.—Agencies

Haider slams ton as Shaheens thrash Sri Lanka 'A'

ISLAMABAD: A sparkling century by Haider Ali and an all-round performance by Mushtaq Shaiq powered Pakistan Shaheens to a comfortable 106-run victory over Sri Lanka 'A' in the first 50-over match here at the Islamabad Club on Monday.

Haider scored 108 and Abdul Samad contributed 56, lifting Shaheens to an imposing 106.7 in their allotted 50 overs. Mushtaq then followed up his 48-ball 42 by claiming 3-21, as Sri Lanka 'A' were bowled out for 198 in 35.4 overs.

Barring at number four, Haider faced 94 balls, striking eight fours and six sixes. He reached his half-century off 50 deliveries with two boundaries and three sixes, before accelerating to reach his century off 90 balls with seven fours and six sixes.

Haider added 120 runs from 119 balls for the fourth wicket with Samad, whose 63-ball knock included five fives and a six. Their partnership rescued Shaheens from a shaky position at 94-3 after being put into bat.

The hosts scored 46-1 in the first power play and capitalised on the fourth-wicket stand to accelerate late in the innings. They added 85 runs in the final 10 overs, with Muhammad Haris hitting an unbeaten 36 off 25 balls (four fours and a six) and Muhammad Imran chipping in with a quickfire 15 off 10 balls (two fours).

For Sri Lanka 'A', Eshan Madushanka was the standout bowler with figures of 3-61, while Chaminda Wickramasinghe (2-52) and Dilshan Madushanka (2-42) also chipped in.

In reply, Sri Lanka 'A' struggled to build partnerships, dropping to 61-4 and later to 136-7 before being bowled out. Wickramasinghe top-scored with 47, while Sanath Dissanayake (18) and Nishan Ranasinghe (35) provided some resistance.

Muhammad Imran Junior picked up 2-30. Sirajuddin, Muhammad Imran, Usaid Shah, and Mehran Muneer each claimed one wicket to complete the comprehensive victory.

Report by Staff
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Shaheens beat Sri Lanka 'A' by 106 runs in the first 50-over match at the Islamabad Club on Monday. Haider Ali scored a century (108) and Mushtaq Shaiq took 3-21. Sri Lanka 'A' were bowled out for 198 in 35.4 overs. —Agencies



PAKISTAN Shaheens' Haider Ali plays a defensive stroke during the 50-over match against Sri Lanka 'A' at the Islamabad Club Ground on Monday.—Courtesy PCB

BD end Sri Lanka's winning streak

By Our Sports Reporter

LAHORE: Bangladesh ended Sri Lanka's unbeaten streak in the Birendra Cricket World Cup with a commanding 25-run victory on the third day of the tournament at Bagh-e-Jinnah on Monday.

Barring first, Bangladesh posted a total of 367-4 in 20 overs, with Ahsanullah Rahman top-scoring with 42 runs. Muhammad Salameh contributed 36 runs to the total. In reply, Sri Lanka could only manage 142-7 in their allotted 20 overs. Captain Chaminda Dissanayake led the chase with 56 runs off 44 balls, while Danish Sanderson added 21 runs.

Mehdiul Islam was the match bowler for Bangladesh, taking 3-18 in four overs. Arif Hussain supported with 2-26 in four overs.

In another match at Ghazi Institute Ground, Nepal triumphed over Afghanistan by 108 runs. Nepal posted an imposing total of 228-2, with Pawan Badia remaining unbeaten on 92 and Narush adding 72.

Afghanistan's response was limited to 120-5, with captain Ahsanullah top-scoring with 53. Nimal Mager was the star performer with the ball for Nepal, taking 3-18.

Swimming federation's elections held

By Our Sports Reporter

LAHORE: Retired Major Majid Waseem, Zorab Lashari, and retired Lt Col Ahmed Ali Khan were elected as chairman, president and secretary, respectively, of the Pakistan Swimming Federation (PSF) on Monday.

Sources indicate that the PSF elections were initially scheduled to take place in a few months. However, they were expedited in light of the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) preparing to assume control over the election process for sports federations, with a meeting scheduled for November 28.

Additionally, as the elections for the Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) have been set for December 30, the PSB decided to hold its elections earlier than planned. The newly-elected office-bearers will serve a four-year term, spanning from 2025 to 2028.

China's Ding beats 'nervous' Gukesh in world chess opener

SINGAPORE: Defending champion Ding Liren of China on Monday ended a long run of losses to host teenage challenger Gukesh Dommaraju of India in the opening game of their World Chess Championship match.

Ding, 32, had not won a classical chess match since January and he appeared to be on the defensive early on against his opponent, who played with the white pieces, and took up a great deal of his time allotment to contemplate each move.

But he turned things around with a bold attack by his queen, and put 18-year-old Gukesh on the back foot and also left him facing time pressure.

Ding managed to press home his advantage in masterful fashion and although Gukesh was able to extend the contest, he eventually conceded the game after 42 moves in more than four hours of play.

"For sure I was nervous, it would be sur-



CHINA'S Ding Liren (R) in action during the World Chess Championship first match against Gukesh Dommaraju of India at the Resorts World Sentosa on Monday.—AFP

prising if I said I wasn't nervous, I was surely nervous," Gukesh told reporters after the match.

"But after the game started, I calmed down. I think I was playing some good chess... and then I kind of slipped."

Ding, who took a nine-month break from chess last year due to personal difficulties and depression, said he had ample time to prepare for the match since his last classical game two months ago.

Playing the black pieces, Ding said he thought he was at a disadvantage.

"But then suddenly I found this idea... I'd be able to create counter-attacks on the queen side, and I just moved the piece very quickly," he said at the after-match news conference.

The result ended a run of 28 classical games without a win for Ding, who had been winless since beating Dutchman Max

Wormersdam in January.

Ding and Gukesh will face off for game two at Singapore's Resorts World Sentosa on Tuesday.

At his age, Gukesh is the youngest player in history to challenge for the World Championship and he will hope to surpass Garry Kasparov as the youngest undisputed world chess champion.

There are 14 match days and four rest days scheduled for the world chess crown.

The first player to get 7.5 points will be declared the winner with tiebreaks scheduled if the players are tied on seven points.

The winner between Ding and Gukesh, who qualified by winning the Candidates tournament in April, will take home a prize fund of \$2.5 million/World number one Magnus Carlsen, who had seven world champion sines 2013, relinquished his title in 2022, citing a lack of motivation.—Agencies

KARACHI

Sunset 05:43 pm
Sunrise (Tomorrow) 06:55 am

NEXT 24 HRS

Minimum 21°C
Maximum 30°C
Humidity 61%
Outlook Sunny

METRO South



Bumrah leads India to massive win over Aussies in first Test

Pg.18 SPORT

Two brothers drown as boat capsizes at sea

By Imtiaz Ali

KARACHI: Two young brothers drowned while four others were rescued after their dinghy over-turned upon striking a pole in the sea near Ibrahim Hyderi.

Officials said that the group was on their way to attend an annual fair at Bhindar Island.

Ibrahim Hyderi SHO Faisalabad Hassan told Dawn that six people had gone to attend the annual 'mela' at Bhindar Island on Sunday. However, their boat capsized when it struck a pole and the police received information of the incident at around 6:45pm. He said that four persons were rescued.

The area SHO said they had responded to an emergency call while the incident occurred in the jurisdiction of Kocha police of South Zone.

DSO South Syed Asad Raza told Dawn that body of Mohammed Nabeel was recovered while a search was underway to recover the body of Mohammed Naveed.

He said that Waqar, Muhammad, Pervaiz and Ali Muhammad were rescued.

He said Nabeel was a resident of Block-4 in Clifton whose body was handed over to the Rescue 1122 team at Ibrahim Hyderi.

Syed Baloch, general secretary of the Pakistan Fishermen's Forum, told Dawn that the victims' father, Bilal, owned an ice factory in Ibrahim Hyderi.

Mr Baloch also confirmed that the victims were not fishermen. He said generally, residents of Ibrahim Hyderi and other localities of the metropolis tended to visit the island annually during the annual fair.



RESCUE workers tow the boat that capsized near Ibrahim Hyderi, on Monday. — PPP

Internet disruptions affect routine life, causing misery to Karachiites

Students, office-goers, online business owners and content creators share similar ordeal

By Aleesha Fatimah

KARACHI: Like other parts of the country, internet disruptions have plagued Karachi for the past three days, affecting day-to-day activities of everyone and causing financial loss to those dependent on online services.

Citizens report issues with WiFi and mobile data services as well as social media apps including Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram. They are unable, or facing immense difficulties, to send pictures, voice notes, large files or upload videos.

The outages are linked to the ongoing protests by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supporters heading towards the capital, Islamabad, where barricades and blockages have worsened the situation.

Karachi, despite being a metropolitan city,

still lacks an accessible transportation system, leading a large percentage of citizens to rely on online cab services. This disruption has caused major frustration, particularly among students and professionals who are most affected.

"I commute daily from South Town to LL Chaudhry Road using Bykea. It has been the most comfortable and affordable app for me so far. However, the internet disruptions have made it almost impossible to find a rider in the morning and even in the evening," Aqdas Jaffer, an employee of a private company, told Dawn.

"This has been an absolute mess. What have common citizens done to deserve this? In the midst of political chaos, it is always the common man who suffers," he added.

Neha, a 23-year-old student at Regal Medical University, shares a similar concern.

"I cannot afford to miss my classes, of course, but commuting has become such a headache these days that I can't even get it into words. I used to book a rickshaw at my desired rates every morning through inDrive, but with the current state of the internet, I

now have to pay twice or sometimes even three times more than I used to. I'm afraid things are only going to get worse from here," she said.

The other side of the coin is not much different. Riders face similar challenges, sometimes even worse, due to their heavy reliance on the wages they earn through these apps. "I haven't been able to receive even five rides since yesterday. If I accept a ride, either the map doesn't work or the app crashes. It's so frustrating, and I honestly don't know when this will end," said Khushi Baloch, a Yango driver.

Small business owners, content creators also suffer

The disruptions have been a huge setback for small business owners.

"As a small business owner, almost everything depends on the availability of the internet and social media," Maham Tariq, owner of Mayhem Bakery, shared.

"From clients to vendors to contacting suppliers, the entire chain is disrupted due to these

Continued on Page 14

Murad irked by slow progress of Karimabad underpass project

Expresses displeasure over delay in Korangi causeway, Malir Expressway completion

By Tahir Siddiqui

KARACHI: Expressing grave displeasure and concern over the minimal progress on the Karimabad Underpass project in the past 17 months, Sindh Chief Minister (CM) Syed Murad Ali Shah directed the local government department on Monday to expedite the construction work that caused severe traffic congestion in and around the vicinity.

Initiated in June last year under the Karachi Development Authority (KDA), the project was expected to be completed in two years. But it progressed at a snail's pace and the digging and construction



LABOURERS work at the underpass. — BNP

work piled misery on people due to frequent traffic jams that also slowed down vehicular traffic on the major streets in Central district.

The chief minister, who presided over a meeting to review progress of Karimabad Underpass and two other important projects of the city, was irked to learn that only 100 meters of the 1,080-meter underpass were completed and overall the physical progress of the project was merely 35 per cent. Similarly, the two other projects — Korangi Causeway Bridge and Malir Expressway — also faced inordinate delays.

A press statement issued from the Chief Minister House said that the CM directed the local government department to submit a date-wise plan for the three projects.

"Why is thisordinate delay being faced in completing the projects when

Continued on Page 14

E-taxis to boost employment opportunities for youth: Sharjeel

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Memon has said that the Sindh government is planning to introduce electric taxis in a move to offer employment opportunities to unemployed youth.

Addressing a press conference here on Monday, he also outlined several projects by the PPP government aimed at "providing the best possible facilities to the public" in different areas.

The minister, who holds portfolios of information and transport, also referred to several projects initiated by the Sindh government in flood-hit areas, including providing free electricity to people through solarisation, building houses for 2.1 million families, and offering relief in the agriculture sector.

"The Sindh government was the first to introduce E.V.P (electric vehicle) buses, followed by the launch of the Pink Bus service," he said. "The government also plans to introduce E.V taxis to provide employment opportunities for unemployed youth. All departments of the Sindh government are actively making efforts in their respective areas to serve the people."

Talking about the current political situation, the minister criticised Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for "creating chaos" in the country in the name of protest and claimed that the "final call" by party founder Imran Khan had failed miserably, as the people had rejected the narrative built by the former prime minister.

Man shot dead in Surjani Town

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: A young man, said to be a worker of a mainstream religious party, was shot dead in Surjani Town, police said on Monday.

Area SHO Ghulam Hussain Pirzada said the victim, Mohammed Khalid, 25, was on his way home on a motorcycle. He was passing through a deserted place on a muddy road in Sector-5 when some unidentified assailant(s) opened fire on him. He suffered a bullet wound in the chest and died on the spot.

The body was shifted to the Abbasi Shahzad Hospital for medico-legal formalities.

The officer said the suspect(s) did not take away his cell phone and motorcycle. The incident was being investigated with three angles — a matrimonial issue, robbery bid and targeted attack on religious grounds, he added.

The victim had got married recently. He had studied at a seminary and also taught there for some time before joining a factory. He was affiliated with a mainstream religious party, but was not very active.

The police did not name the religious party.

SSP-West Arib Maher said the exact motive was still not known, adding that police were waiting for the relatives to lodge an FIR and give their opinion to initiate formal proceedings to ascertain possible motive and identity of the killers.

All set to reunite Madhubala with sisters at Safari Park

Four Paws will relocate zoo elephant to the sanctuary today

By Fariza Ilyas

KARACHI: Madhubala's big day has finally come. The barely 17-year-old African elephant is all set to be reunited with her sisters — Malika and Sonia — at Safari Park on Tuesday (today) after 15 years under the supervision of experts of Four Paws (FP) and the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC).

According to officials, the relocation — a unique and sensitive operation taking place for the first time in Pakistan — marks a significant moment as Madhubala will be the second and last elephant in the country getting freedom from zoo's captivity. The first one was Kavana, housed at the Islamabad zoo and later shifted to a sanctuary in Cambodia in 2020.

Living in solitary confinement for more than a year since the tragic death of her long-time partner Noor Jehan, Madhubala received her last lessons on crate training — the extreme of making her step willingly into a large metal transport container that would be loaded on a truck — on Monday. The experts have already declared her fit for the relocation. "We can't wait to finally see them reunited in their new home. Such a big day for Madhubala tomorrow (Tuesday) but I could see in her eyes that she is ready," shared Pia Lindeheimer, who is associated with FP as its field mission coordinator.

"Malika and Sonia don't know yet what a nice surprise awaits them. The sisters will finally be together after 15 years," she added.

Explaining the nature of the relocation process, Dr Amir Khalil, who is heading the FP's team, said they were taking care of all technical details to ensure that the transportation was risk

and stress-free for Madhubala.

"She will receive tranquilliser before the transport to ensure a smooth relocation process. Animals cannot be sedated during transport as this could risk their health and well-being. We have pre-planned some stops to monitor Madhubala's well-being during the transport," he said.

It might be recalled that Madhubala along with her three sisters were separated from their herd and brought to Karachi as calves in 2009. Their plight in captivity forced activists to file a case in the high court in 2020, which led to the intervention of international veterinary experts in their welfare.

While the fight for their well-being continued and the experts called for providing species appropriate environment to the animals, Noor Jehan met a tragic death in 2023, leaving Madhubala alone.

Since then, plans were announced several times for her relocation but none could be materialised. The KMC finally signed an agreement with FP on Madhubala's relocation with her sisters this year in Feb.

"This reunion is a result of collective effort. I am feeling excited yet nervous for the reunion. I pray everything goes well, and Madhubala, Sonia and Malika thrive together for the rest of their lives," said Opeia, Awan, one of the veterinarians in elephant's care and legal consultant of FP.

Mahira Omar, animal rights activist and co-founder of PAWS who fought the legal battle with Mr Awan, called upon the KMC to look into the plight of other zoo animals, especially Rano, the Himalayan brown bear.

"While we are happy to see the reunion and the development of a sanctuary, it's high time that the KMC look into the welfare of other animals at the zoo," she said, adding that Rano didn't belong to the region's harsh weather and should be shifted to the bear sanctuary in Balkassar, Chakwal district in Punjab.



MADHUBALA steps into the metal container that has been especially designed for her relocation. — Courtesy Four Paws

PRAYER	
Fajr	5:37
Zuhar	12:19
Asr	4:06
Maghrib	5:43
Isha	7:09
Praying time in Karachi	

REFLECTIONS

CC RETURNS OF HARD BUT RESPECTABLE LABOUR OF A CHAFTY OR PROFESSION, THROUGH SMALL IN QUANTITY, ARE BETTER THAN THE WEALTH WHICH YOU AMASS THROUGH SIN AND WICKEDNESS. 33

— HAZRAT ALE (A.S.)

73AH427

Cyclists pedal for TCF's educational initiatives

Over 300 participate in annual 'Cycle for Change' event

Dawn Report

KARACHI: More than 300 dedicated cyclists pedalled through the streets of Karachi to support the Citizens Foundation (TCF) in its annual event, 'Cycle for Change'.

This year, a cycling group from Islamabad also participated, said a press release issued after the event.

Cyclists from various parts of Karachi gathered at the TCF School Shriya Sultan Thomas Campus in Qayyumabad to promote the cause of education. The event has been conducted annually since 2021 by the dedicated Supporters of

TCF (STCF).

"The commitment demonstrated by STCF and the leading cycling groups of Karachi in raising awareness and funds for educational initiatives through 'Cycle for Change' is truly commendable. These annual events not only emphasize the importance of education but also unite the community in support of this noble cause," said Muzhar Yaqub, a devoted cyclist from Critical Mass Karachi (CMK).

"Cycle for Change is an outstanding fundraising event for TCF, organized by the STCF. When the pandemic halted everything, we struggled to raise funds for our children. That's when we came up with the idea for Cycle for Change, and to our surprise, it quickly gained tremendous support," shared Nighat Durrani, a member of STCF.



CYCLISTS participate in 'Cycle for Change' event.—Dawn

For nearly three decades, TCF has been steadfast in its mission to educate low-privileged children in Pakistan, bringing them off the streets and into schools. The organization maintains the same fervor, passion, and commitment that fueled its inception with five schools in 1995. Today, TCF boasts an impressive enrollment of 101,000 students studying in 2,033 school units across Pakistan.

The strong participation of cyclists from various backgrounds at TCF's Cycle for Change event reflects a collective dedication to creating a brighter future for the youth of Karachi. In the spirit of ongoing community involvement, TCF is excited to continue celebrating Cycle for Change as an annual tradition that advances its mission, the press release concluded.

E-tagging of 4,000 habitual offenders reviewed

KARACHI: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Ghulam Nabi Memon was informed in a meeting that in the initial phase of implementing the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring Act 2022, 4,000 habitual criminals will be monitored through electronic tagging devices.

The meeting was attended by DGPs of Crime and Investigation Branch, CIA, training, headquarters, IT, and other senior police officials.

During the meeting at the Central Police Office (CPO) in Karachi, the IGP was briefed that the identification and monitoring of habitual offenders will be determined by this court.

Additionally, the advertisement for the procurement of e-tagging devices was released on November 11.

Participants were informed that the monitoring process will initially start at the police station level and later be expanded to divisions, zones, and CPDs.

Addressing the meeting, IGP emphasized that the legal definition of a habitual offender is clear in the Constitution and laws.

He stressed the importance of all SSPs, SPs, Investigations, and relevant investigating officers ensuring that data on habitual criminals is accurately compiled, while closely monitoring those in custody.

He directed that proper identification of habitual offenders should be established, and their records should be systematically maintained.

He also highlighted the need for ensuring the registration of the accused's identity cards and controlling this system. Furthermore, comprehensive efforts must be made to raise awareness and provide training at the grassroots level for the installation, use, and monitoring of the devices.

IG Memon instructed that a training and awareness programme be organized for police officers and officials regarding the use of the monitoring devices.

He expressed optimism that monitoring habitual criminals would help alleviate the pressure on prisons.—APP

Inquiry ordered into reasons for delay in enacting Land Alienation Bill 1947

SHC terms bill an important legislative effort to address economic injustices in pre-partition Sindh

By Ishaq Tahir

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court on Monday directed the provincial authorities to conduct a detailed inquiry to ascertain the reasons as to why the Sindh Land Alienation Bill, 1947, had not become law despite being duly passed by the Sindh Legislative Assembly.

The SHC noted that the bill was an important historical legislative effort aimed at addressing economic injustices prevalent in pre-partition Sindh, particularly the exploitation of the local Muslim population.

A two-judge bench comprising

Justice Salehuddin Panchsara and Justice Arshad Ali Sahito also observed that the bill was modeled after enactment of Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900, a law which restricted transfer of agricultural land from farming communities to non-agricultural classes such as money-lenders.

It also directed the provincial authorities that committees must be constituted at the district level in Sindh to carry out investigation about agricultural land and other properties owned by local Muslims which were either transferred or held under mortgage or redemption agreements with Hindus during the period from 1917 to 1947.

The bench further ordered the secretary law department to place a copy of the Sindh Land Alienation Bill, 1947, along with the debates and deliberations held by the mem-

bers of the Sindh Legislative Assembly within 15 days.

The provincial culture department must undertake efforts to preserve the history surrounding the partition and its associated complexities and such initiative aims to educate the general public on the multifaceted issues arising from the partition and the legislative efforts made during that time, it added.

The bench passed these directives while disposing of a petition in which a petitioner submitted that his ancestors had migrated from India to Pakistan in 1947 and since they were landless in Lahore, they had filed their respective claims after their migration to Pakistan and the same was accepted, however he has continuously been approaching relevant authorities for years to resolve the issue, but to no avail.

The court noted that a pro-

vincial law officer has raised some serious questions regarding the claims made under rehabilitation of displaced persons' laws and argued about the pre-partition status of agricultural and non-agricultural land and maintained that there was a common practice of mortgaging land in lieu of loans by land owners and such lands could not be redeemed for want of payment of huge markups.

The SHC also said that despite being rooted in principles of fairness and justice, the legislative journey of bill ended in disappointment as it failed to receive requisite assent from key authorities, including the Viceroy of India and Governor General of Pakistan.

The bill's underlying objectives remain relevant today, as they reflect a broader vision of empowering marginalized communities and promoting equitable resource distribu-

tion, it added.

The bench further said that the district-level committee, to be headed by the deputy commissioners concerned, were tasked to examine the status of properties under the auspices of the Sindh Land Alienation Bill, 1947, had not been started, it added.

The bench ordered that such committees must submit comprehensive reports within six months and emphasized that the rights of parties who have lawfully acquired title to such properties under existing laws must not be adversely affected in any manner.

Internet disruptions affect routine life, causing misery

Continued from Page 13

these internet outages. This impacts my business, which is highly dependent on the internet," she added.

Syed Talal Mirvi, who runs a brand called Aftabz Apparel, shares a similar issue.

"The business of my business is completely disrupted. I cannot communicate with my customers properly, and my website has suffered significantly due to ads not functioning correctly. We also lost over 100,000 on Meta ads because they didn't yield any results due to the issue," he told Dawn.

Content creation is a niche currently booming

in Pakistan, yet it has been facing serious repercussions due to constant internet disruptions.

Zia Tabarak of Street Food PK complains about not being able to upload content on time, and how it doesn't perform well on social media apps on days like that.

"There is so much uncertainty in the air. My entire work depends on the availability of the internet, and on days like these, it is truly frustrating because it disrupts the entire content calendar. The blogger community also loses brand deals due to such frequent interruptions. This is not okay, and it's also harmful to the economy," Zia shared.

Zaheer Khadry, a veteran journalist, weighs in with his analysis of the entire situation and how it is going to unfold from here.

"I mean, we know this is the 'new normal', but here in the capital, there is nothing resembling this situation," he commented.

"The authorities need to understand that economic control survive uncertainty. The entire business projection is based on constants, while we literally have only variations, and people don't know what is going to happen the next day. This just adds to the sense of rage people have against the authorities," he added.

Murad irked by slow progress of Karimabad underpass project

Continued from Page 13

the local government department.

"I want you to submit a detailed plan with completion dates of all three projects and then I won't tolerate any delay," he said categorically.

The meeting held at the CM House was attended among others by Local Government Minister Saad Usman, Mayor Raza-ul-Masrur, Wajid, Commissioner Syed Hassan Nagvi, Local Government Secretary Khwair Hyder Shah and project directors Niaz Soomro and Zulfiqar Akbar.

During the briefing, the chief minister was told that the Karimabad underpass was a Rs3.8 billion project while the length of the underpass was 1,080 meters of which 300 meters had been completed. It was also informed that out of the 212 present gardens, 151 had been completed and overall the physical progress of the project was 35 per cent.

The CM directed the local govern-

ment department to provide a proper and effective drainage system in the underpass so that rainwater might not accumulate into it.

Answering a question, Mr Shah was told that a roundabout in front of Moons Bazaar and Bazaar-e-Halees was being developed to regulate the traffic movement.

Briefing the CM about the construction of the bridge at Korangi Gateway, it was disclosed that the Rs4.4 billion project was scheduled to be completed on Jan 1, 2025, which might not be met.

The chief minister directed the local government minister to personally monitor the progress of the bridge so that it could be completed on time.

It was informed that the 300 out of 400 piles had been completed and out of the 600 gardens, 504 completed. The overall progress of the project is 30 per cent.

The CM was told that Malli Expressway was a Rs8.85 billion project from Jam Shadi to Kharwa Bridge.

SUMMON
IN THE HIGH COURT OF SINDH AT KARACHI
SANT NO. 1033 OF 2024

Plaintiff: _____
Versus: _____
Defendants: _____

To: _____
The Defendant No. 4

1. WHEREAS the Plaintiff above named has obtained a writ against you to enforce the provisions of the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring Act, 2022, and the provisions of the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring Rules, 2023, and the provisions of the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring Regulations, 2023, and the provisions of the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring Orders, 2023, and the provisions of the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring Circulars, 2023, and the provisions of the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring Letters, 2023, and the provisions of the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring Notices, 2023, and the provisions of the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring Directives, 2023, and the provisions of the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring Instructions, 2023, and the provisions of the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring Guidelines, 2023, and the provisions of the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring Manuals, 2023, and the provisions of the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring 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ISLAMABAD

Sunset 05:03pm
Sunrise (Tomorrow) 06:48am

NEXT 24 HRS

Minimum 09°C
Maximum 23°C
Outlook Sunny

METRO
North

Bumrah leads India to massive win over Aussies in first Test

Pg.18 SPORT



(CLOCKWISE) from top: Police officials deployed on Karnal Sifar Khan Road stop motorcyclists from heading towards Islamabad Expressway; vehicles turn around on the other lane of Islamabad Expressway due to road blockade and a family seen walking on Faisalabad Bridge towards Rawalpindi in absence of public transport on Monday. — Photos by Mohammad Asghar

Imran, Bushra and PTI leaders booked for 'criminal conspiracy, inciting people'

Number of PTI supporters arrested in last four days reaches 170 in Rawalpindi; two police officials beaten up and injured by protesters

By Mohammad Asghar

RAWALPINDI: Police have registered two FIRs against PTI founder Imran Khan, his wife Bushra Bibi, central leadership and over 300 workers of the party on the charges of criminal conspiracy and inciting people to protest.

In the first FIR, registered at the District police station on Sunday, the police accused Imran Khan, his wife, KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, former president Dr Arif Alvi, Dr Arif Khan, Khawar Raza, Atif Raza, Hamid Akhtar, Khurshid Khan and Asad Qadir of refusing to withdraw the call for the November 24 protest.

Police also detained 26 supporters of the PTI, including Amin and Nayyar Abbas of Chakwal. Five of the detainees, who were teenagers, were discharged while the remaining 21 were remanded in police custody for five days.

Likewise, the Sadulpur police arrested 27 PTI supporters who were later remanded in police custody for three days. The number of PTI supporters detained by the police has reached

170 during the last four days.

In Sadulpur, two police officials were injured and beaten up allegedly by PTI supporters who also tore their uniforms, snatched their anti-riot tools, including helmets, jackets and gases containing both and CNICs. A tear gas gun carried by Raza Abbas, head constable, was broken after being snatched by the mob. However, the police narrowly escaped a mob attack.

Islamabad and Rawalpindi had already been put under a lockdown since Sunday with all highways and link roads leading to the federal capital blocked and thousands of police and paramilitary personnel deployed in an attempt to prevent the PTI supporters from marching to Islamabad.

Imran Khan, imprisoned in the Central Jail Adiala, has made a final call to his supporters to descend on Islamabad to demand his release and protest against amendments to the constitution and changes in the judiciary.

Police said Ayesha Khan, sister of Imran Khan, while talking to media outside the Adiala jail on November 22 called upon people to come out for their 'Azadi' on November 24. On November 19, Bushra Bibi issued a video message and delivered Imran Khan's direction to party MNAs to bring 5000 participants each and MPAs 1000 protesters each for the march to Islamabad.

"Despite the Punjab government's imposition of Section 144 on Nov 22, Imran Khan Niaz, founder of PTI and its central leadership, Bushra Bibi, Ali

Amin Gandapur, Dr Arif Alvi, Ayesha Alvi, Umar Arif, Sherry Raza, Atif Raza, Hamid Akhtar, Khurshid Khan and Asad Qadir refused to withdraw the protest call," said the FIR.

It added that on the conspiracy of Agha Sufi Raja, Chaudhry Ameer Aftab, Chaudhry Muhammad Nadeem, Zaid Khaliq Khan and Tariq Aziz Bhatti, who were leading the protesters, Chaudhry Jawaid Kamran, Faridkhan Mahmood Sial, Shahzad Khan, Khawar Muhammad Anam, Raja Sohail Khan, Rashid Mahmood Mirza, Chaudhry Tikka Khan, Raja Arshad, Chaudhry Shahid Hamid, Raja Saghi, Muhammad Taseem, Rafiq Shahid, Arshad Abbas, Mohsin, Arshad Khan, Muhammad Irfan, Tajamal Ijaz, Nayyar Abbas, Ahsan Abbas, Nagesh Hossain, Saleem Mansoor, Mansoor Hassan Bakhsh, Saghi Zia, Taseem Iqbal, Indulhaq, Mahmood Khan, Abdullah Amin and Muhammad Usman along with 500 to 200 unidentified people blocked Dhamial Road by setting old tyres on fire.

Police said a police team was on duty when armed PTI workers started shouting slogans, "Khan Nabeen to Pakistan Nahay" etc. The protesters blocked the road causing problems, disrupting and endangering public life.

The protesters were told that gathering of the public had already been banned as the government had imposed Section 144, but they ignored and instead of dispersing started scuffling with police and opened fire on the police, but

the officials escaped unhurt.

However, a police van was damaged due to firing which also created panic and fear in the area. The protesters dispersed while pelting stones on the police.

The District police registered the FIR on the complaint of Muhammad Asif, 81, under 15 sections of the law, including section 7-AATA, criminal conspiracy, obstructing police from performing duty, blocking road and other relevant sections of the law.

Another FIR was registered with the Sadulpur police on the complaint of Ghulam Murtaza, sub-inspector, against the PTI founder in which the KP chief minister, Bushra Bibi and Ayesha Khan were booked under section 7 of Anti-Terrorism Act.

In the FIR, the police accused the PTI founder of inciting people and having a criminal conspiracy. The police said local PTI leaders Raja Badshah, Sardar Nasir Ali Khan, Zubair Khan, Malik Tahleed, Rehman Kamal Raja, Soomra Tahir, Rashid Hafiz, Zafar Akbar Satti, Zameen, Shabir Raza, Asad Abbas, Malik Taseem Anam Raja, Raja Shahid and others appeared in Dhamial Kala Khan and stormed a chicken market.

A reinforcement of police was called when about 100 PTI supporters led by Soomra Tahir shouting slogans appeared on the road and pelted police with stones injuring two officials.

The police recovered batons, catapults, stones and party flags from those detained.

CIA building declared sub-jail to accommodate arrested PTI protesters

By Munawar Azam

ISLAMABAD: The Crime Intelligence Agency's building in the federal capital has been declared a sub-jail by the Islamabad administration to detain the leaders and workers of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) during the ongoing protests.

Officials of the capital police told Dawn that during the ongoing protests, the capital police have arrested over 500 local leaders and workers.

Due to the engagements in security duties and shortage of space in the lockups

of the police station police, arrested political individuals will neither be transported anywhere else, they said.

"Currently, all the prison vans and other police vehicles are deployed at different locations as per the security plan. Detaining each arrested person in the lockups of the police stations is a risk under the prevailing circumstances," the officers said.

Sources said more police stations will be declared sub-jails if required.

The arrests were made from various areas including Faisalabad, Tarnan, Sanghar, Chungi No 26, Express Chowk, Noon,

Nihore, Shams Colony, and Bahawal.

So far, the capital police have registered seven cases against the leaders and workers of the protesting party for creating unrest and undermining public safety.

The 8th police have booked two nominated and 325 unidentified persons, Shahdud Town 402, Bahawal 302, and the Shams Colony police have booked 450 accused in multiple cases. Similarly, the Nihore and Tarnan police have booked over 350 and over 800 individuals respectively under various charges.

According to the FIRs,

the implicated individuals were armed with weapons, iron rods, batons, stones and sharp metallic pieces.

The police claimed that the accused resorted to aerial firing, pelted vehicles with stones and blocked roads, shouting anti-government slogans and forcefully closing shops.

Moreover, the capital police Monday opened major thoroughfares where shopping containers were placed to block the flow of traffic.

At these blockage points, the barricades were partially removed to make way for a single vehicle to cross

at a time.

The police officers further said that the convoy of the PTI leaders and workers coming from KP comprised over 34,000 persons. Till late in the evening, the protesters had crossed the Hekla interchange.

Meanwhile, the Inspector General of the Islamabad Police (IGP), Syed Ali Nasir Raza, visited D-Chowk and various other areas to inspect anti-riot measures.

He met the officials of Islamabad police and other law enforcement agencies to boost their morale, who according to him were performing duties in order to maintain peace in the federal capital.

On the occasion, IGP

Islamabad instructed the officials to be highly alert to deal with any emerging law and order situation.

"We shall take every possible measure to protect the lives and property of citizens and thwart provocations," he said while addressing the officials.

He further said officials were performing their duties, putting their best efforts to maintain peace in the capital.

All the officers have been directed to stay vigilant in their respective areas and brief the personnel to deal with any untoward situation.

Minister regrets death of policeman in clashes

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi paid tribute to police constable Mubashir who martyred in clashes with PTI protesters at Hekla interchange and expressed his heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the family of the policeman.

"Our deepest sympathies are with the family of the martyred police constable Mubashir and we share the grief of the family," Mr Naqvi said.

Constable Mubashir was injured at Hekla interchange where he was deployed for security duty. He suffered serious head injuries while performing his duty and was shifted to District Headquarters Hospital where he died. The minister expressed his deep sorrow and regret over the martyrdom of Constable Mubashir due to the violence of protesters. "The martyr attained the high status of martyrdom while performing his duty," Mr Naqvi added.

The protesters who resorted to violence and responsible elements will be brought to justice, he added. Mubashir was 46 years old and had three children, including two daughters, and hailed from Muzaffargarh.

Meanwhile, Deputy Inspector General of Police Islamabad Syed Ali Raza visited the hospital to inquire after the injured cops.

DIG Raza visited Pms and met police officers who were injured while performing duties to ensure law and order in Islamabad. He also met with doctors to receive an update on the policeman's health and asked them to provide better treatment and care to the injured officers.

During the visit, Mr Raza emphasised the unwavering dedication of these officers, who, without hesitation, put their lives at risk to protect the lives and property of the citizens.

He praised the efforts of these officers who remained consistently engaged in ensuring the safety and security of Islamabad's residents and maintaining peace and order in the city.

— Staff Reporter

Three dead, five injured in Neelum Valley jeep accident

MUZAFFARABAD: At least three people were killed and five others injured, three critically, when a passenger jeep plunged off a steep road in Neelum Valley on Monday evening, police said.

The jeep, carrying around 30 persons, including the driver, was heading to Sohal village via a steep link road branching from Kundaal Shahi, located some 74 kilometres northwest of here.

While negotiating a sharp bend in the second cut, the vehicle rolled backward out of the driver's control and plunged onto a lower section of the same road around 5:30 pm, said SP Neelum Khawaja Siddiqui. He said that according to an initial report, three people identified as Gohar Ali, 22, son of Karamat Shah (driver), Ameer Bilal, 50, wife of Abdul Hameed, and Mujahid Shah, 33, son of Imdad Shah, had died on the spot.

Five injured passengers were identified as Syed Rafique Shah, 25, Chaudhry Muhammad Asrar, 47, Chaudhry Abdul Hameed, 45, Faza Kamal, 11, and Ishaq Ismail. Of them, Mr Ismail was allowed to go home due to minor injuries, and the rest were hospitalized, the SP said. — Staff Correspondent

Educational institutions to remain closed today as well

ISLAMABAD: All educational institutions in Islamabad will remain closed on Tuesday as well.

Due to the prevailing law and order situation and protest of PTI, the district government on Monday decided to keep all public and private educational institutions closed on Tuesday.

Owing to the protest, both public and private educational institutions remained closed on Monday as well.

Majority of Islamabad's roads are closed as the government wanted to stop advances of the PTI marchers into Islamabad.

In Rawalpindi, all public and private educational institutions in city and cantonment areas will also remain closed on Tuesday (today).

Deputy Commissioner Dr Hassan Waqar Cheema confirmed that the educational institutions will remain closed in the wake of the security situation.

According to Rawalpindi Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education

spokesman Anjan Cheema, practical examinations of the intermediate second annual examination scheduled for Monday and Tuesday had been postponed.

He said the new dates of the postponed practicals will be announced later and the candidates will be informed. — Staff Reporter

PRAYER

Fajr	05:24
Zuhar	11:59
Asr	03:26
Maghrib	05:03
Isha	06:31

Starting time is Islamabad

REFLECTIONS

C C RETURNS OF HARD BUT RESPECTABLE LABOUR OF A CRAFT OR PROFESSION, THOUGH SMALL IN QUANTITY, ARE BETTER THAN THE WEALTH WHICH YOU AMASS THROUGH SIN AND WICKEDNESS. 33

— HAZRAT AIL (A.S.)

FBAH207

Iesco notifies power shutdown programme

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (Iesco) on Monday issued power suspension programme for Wednesday (Nov 27) for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work.

According to Iesco spokesperson, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 9am to 2 pm, Islamabad, Circle, Taramara, Chitra Chowk, Karim, Amir Chowk, G-6/3, Shalimar Town, P-10, G-10/3, P-8/3, P-10/2, G-11/2, P-11 Mike, NDI, AQ Khan, Company Bagh, Beirut, Kothi Sayyan, Shahdara Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Nara Road, Atharabad, Zircon Heights, 4th Road, B Block, Khairpur Colony, KRL, Feroze Aam, Airport, Tamsamabad, Airport Bagh, Gulshanabad, Sarafa Bazar, Jinnah Road, Ali Market, Abu Bakar, Power Colony, Askari XI, Officer Colony, Saham, Mohangpora Feeders, Rawalpindi Canton Circle, Scheme III, Sir Syed Road, Zarafai & I, Zafai I, ISI, Dook Aven, Mohra Nagari, Mail Road, Sir Syed Road, Rahmatnagar, D-1 Town, Hamak, Scheme III, Park View, RII Road, Doki, Noon, Kohala, Quaid-e-Azam Colony, RA Bazar, Padial, Band Shalimar, Khawaja, Nara Market, Industrial, Bengali, Syed Karim, Gagan, Marhah Feeders, Arco Circle, Parnal, Sangani, Farshapur, Sir Shah Nuri, SIMC Road, Tanila, Dhirk, Khairabad, Lalazar, Industrial, Sangani, Pindapur, Darya Sherif, Gondal, Nar Topa, People Colony, Dilarabad, Rahmatnagar, Michael, Bahar, Port, Bhag, Kamrui, Ahmednagar, Khanda, Gul Mohammat, Dhirk Feeders, Jhelum Circle, Ajmal Shalimar, P-7 Kachary, Samadiah Shalimar, New Court Jhelum, CMH Jhelum, Kachari, Kohala, P-4 Machine Mohalla, Boris, P-2 Chughtawal, Industrial, P-10 Kala Bani, Mangla Court, Cagani, Nisar Shalimar, Hameed, Sanghar, Colonal, Muhammad Akram, Karoly, Hayat Sar Road, Main Bazar and surrounding areas. — AFP



THE Sasta bazaar outside Allama Iqbal Park near Sharnabad in Rawalpindi remains open despite the uncertain situation in the city. — White Star

Mushaal slams world community's silence towards abuses of Kashmiri women

By Ihtisham A. Khan

ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussain Mullick, wife of incarcerated Kashmiri leader Yasin Malik, has expressed her utter dismay and frustration over the "dead and dumb approach" adopted by the international community and women's rights organisations towards the horrific use of sexual violence as a weapon of war to quell the Kashmiri freedom movement.

Mushaal, Chairperson of the Peace and Culture Organisation in a message to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, regretted the lack of action to stop the epidemic of violence against women and girls in the occupied valley. She said that the occupation forces crossed limits of barbarism and inhuman acts to silence the dissenting

voices, as the human rights and women rights organisations watch the situation like silent onlookers.

Mushaal applauded UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for his call to observe the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. She urged him to raise awareness about the violence and humiliation faced by women in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and to take concrete steps to put an end to these inhuman acts.

She emphasised that the violence against women in Kashmir is a stark example of how rape is being used as a weapon of war to crush the will of the Kashmiri people and deny them their fundamental right to self-determination.

She stressed that it is essential to acknowledge the severity of this issue and work

towards creating a safer and more just environment for the women of Kashmir.

Mushaal highlighted the devastating impact of the Indian forces' brutal actions in Kashmir, which have left over 30,000 women widowed and more than 90,000 children orphaned.

Furthermore, she added, several thousand Kashmiri girls and women have been victims of sexual violence.

The Chairperson recalled that the Indian army's atrocities have severely impacted the lives of over 50,000 women in Kashmir since 1989.

Mushaal pointed out that as documented by Amnesty International and other human rights organisations, these atrocities include gang rapes of young girls and elderly women, abductions by military and paramilitary forces, and sexual abuse, sometimes in the presence of

male family members, adding that these heinous acts are used as a weapon of war, perpetuating a cycle of violence and trauma.

Furthermore, the presence of over 900,000 Indian military and paramilitary forces in the Kashmir Valley has significantly heightened the sense of insecurity among women and children.

The Chairperson expressed her deep disappointment that the situation in the occupied valley has drastically deteriorated, primarily due to the international community's inadequate and unconvincing response to the plight of the Kashmiri people, particularly women.

Mushaal pointed out that the armed forces in Kashmir have been granted impunity to exploit women's rights and freedoms, often through sexual violence.

She cited a report by the

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, highlighting the Karan-Podhara mass rape as a significant example of the state's failure to investigate and prosecute allegations of sexual violence.

This incident occurred 27 years ago, on February 23, 1991, soldiers from the Indian Army's 4 Rajputana Rifles regiment gang-raped around 23 women from Karan and Podhara villages in Kupwara district and despite attempts to seek justice, the authorities have consistently denied and blocked them.

Mushaal called upon the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch to press the Indian government to stop the worst ongoing women's rights violations and hold accountable the perpetrators of these heinous crimes.

Rwanda, Pakistan have huge trade potential: envoy

ISLAMABAD: Rwandan ambassador Paton Harerimana on Monday highlighted the potential of bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and Rwanda, stressing the need for increased collaboration.

There is a need to expand bilateral economic and trade relations between the two countries, for which the role of the private sector is very important, the envoy said, adding that the two nations enjoy friendly relations supported by mutual respect, growing economic ties and cooperation in various sectors.

"Rwanda and Pakistan, with a longstanding relationship spanning sixty-two years, actively collaborate in various fields, including trade, health, and investment," she said.

Ms Paton said Rwanda's GDP grew by 5.7 per cent in the first quarter of 2024, exceeding the previous year's growth rate of 5.2 per cent.

The country has shown remarkable resilience, driven by strong consumer spending in key sectors such as services and industry, she added.

The ambassador said despite ongoing challenges, the African nation's labour market experienced a strong recovery, with over half a million new jobs created in the fourth quarter of 2023, marking the most significant reduction in unemployment since the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The labour market expansion in Rwanda was broad-based, with women benefiting slightly more than men. To leverage its youth demographic, Rwanda needs to expand labour force participation, as only 2.8 million out of 8.1 million working-age individuals are employed."

She said that Rwanda aspires to become a Middle Income Country by 2035 and a High Income Country by 2050. It plans to achieve this through the implementation of the second National Strategic for Transformation (NST-2), a five-year development agenda supported by sectoral strategies focused on meeting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). — AFP

Suspects remanded in police custody after woman's suicide

By Tariq Nadeem

MUZAFFARABAD: A judicial magistrate in Azad Jammu and Kashmir's (AJK) Sudhota district on Monday remanded two suspects into police custody for a week following their arrest on charges of blackmailing and extorting money from a married woman, who ultimately took her own life.

According to an FIR filed at Baluch police station on Saturday, Arshad Mahmood, a resident of Kohala village currently working in Saudi Arabia, reported that he was informed by his brother-in-law on Nov 15 about his wife's sudden hospitalisation due to a critical health issue. Hours later, he received another call from him about her death.

Mahmood returned home the following day for her burial. While investigating the cir-

cumstances surrounding his wife's sudden death, Mahmood said he discovered that two men, identified as Kamran Kilayari and Mubashar Hamood, residents of Topa Kohala and Upper Kohala, respectively, had developed illicit relations with his wife over the past two months.

According to the FIR, the accused recorded compromising footage of the woman during video calls and used it to blackmail her into giving them money and other valuables.

Mahmood alleged that his wife handed over more than Rs3 million to the suspects, including Rs270,000 from the sale of her jewellery.

Despite meeting their repeated demands, she continued to face blackmail and threats, ultimately leading her to consume poison in despair, he said, while urging strict legal action against both suspects and any accomplices.

S H O W a g a r Azeem told

Down that both suspects were apprehended the same night after police used local intelligence and technology to track their whereabouts.

Preliminary investigations revealed that Mubashar, a neighbour of Mahmood, had shared the woman's contact details and other information with Kamran, asking him to trap her for fulfilling fiscal and carnal demands.

Kamran reportedly initiated contact with the victim and recorded compromising video calls, which he later used for extortion and sexual exploitation. On October 19, Kamran impersonated a third blackmailer, using an unknown SIM card and a local dialect to demand Rs 2 million, threatening to leak the footage if his demands were not met.

Previously, he communicated with the woman in Urdu.

Under duress, the woman sold her jewellery and handed over Rs 570,000 to Kamran, who had hidden his face, at Kohala Chowk on October 20. Days later, Kamran, continuing to impersonate

a third party, demanded an additional Rs 1.5 million, which the woman was unable to arrange.

Desperate and unable to fulfil the demands, the woman sought financial help from relatives under the pretext that her husband needed the money in Saudi Arabia. When her efforts failed, she resorted to suicide, according to the FIR. The SDO said they had recovered incriminating evidence, including the compromising material, from the suspects' mobile phones.

Subsequently, the accused were charged under sections 322 (criminal mischief), 324 (criminal breach of trust), 325 (criminal breach of trust), 326 (criminal breach of trust), 327 (criminal breach of trust), 328 (criminal breach of trust), 329 (criminal breach of trust), 330 (criminal breach of trust), 331 (criminal breach of trust), 332 (criminal breach of trust), 333 (criminal breach of trust), 334 (criminal breach of trust), 335 (criminal breach of trust), 336 (criminal breach of trust), 337 (criminal breach of trust), 338 (criminal breach of trust), 339 (criminal breach of trust), 340 (criminal breach of trust), 341 (criminal breach of trust), 342 (criminal breach of trust), 343 (criminal breach of trust), 344 (criminal breach of trust), 345 (criminal breach of trust), 346 (criminal breach of trust), 347 (criminal breach of trust), 348 (criminal breach of trust), 349 (criminal breach of trust), 350 (criminal breach of trust), 351 (criminal breach of trust), 352 (criminal breach of 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Pakistan, Belarus discuss enhancing ties in matters of legal affairs

By Malik Asad

ISLAMABAD: A meeting between Minister for Law and Justice Senator Anwar Nazki Tahir and Belarusian Minister of Justice Konstantin Evgeny took place on Monday, setting the stage for enhanced bilateral relations in the field of justice and legal affairs.

The meeting was conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation, with both leaders expressing a strong commitment to strengthening ties between their nations.

According to the statement issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice, discussions covered an array of critical issues, including the digitalisation of the

legal system, capacity building for legal professionals, legislative drafting and fostering international cooperation.

Minister Konstantin Evgeny outlined the scope and responsibilities of Belarus' Ministry of Justice, identifying opportunities for collaboration.

The dialogue centred on several shared interests including development of International Mediation and Arbitration Centres (IMAC), implementation of Case Assignment and Management Systems (CAMS), exchange programmes for law councils and legal professionals, enhancing legal education and awareness.

Both sides acknowledged the importance of these initiatives to mod-

ernising their respective legal systems and facilitating a more robust framework for international cooperation.

The meeting culminated in several noteworthy developments. An invitation extended by the Belarusian minister for a delegation from Pakistan to visit Belarus was warmly welcomed by Tahir.

A comprehensive review of previous treaties and agreements was presented, laying the groundwork for future partnerships.

Both ministers expressed eagerness to collaborate on capacity building and legal education initiatives, envisioning an active exchange of expertise and resources.

Daily wage earners – the silent victims of every political turmoil

For labourers like Mohammad, a single lost day of work can mean going hungry

By Aamir Yasin

RAWALPINDI With commercial and social life coming to a standstill in the gateway city in the wake of the ongoing political unrest, Mohammad Nawaz, a daily wage labourer, prepares to return home empty-handed for the second consecutive day.

He had arrived at Raja Bazaar with his tools of subsistence to find work for the day, only to see potential employers vanish.

For a daily wage earner like Mohammad, a single lost day of work can mean going hungry.

The 32-year-old labourer says he works as a construction worker and usually arrives at Raja Bazaar early in the morning in hopes of being hired for the day but for the last two days, he could not find any work due to the political turmoil that has engulfed the twin cities in the wake of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) protest.

"I borrowed money from a relative to get the meal on the table for my five-member family this other day, hoping that tomorrow, the situation would improve."

But road closures have poured cold waters on his hopes, and those of thousands of others like him.

Another labourer, Mohammad Kamran, said that he earned Rs2,000 to Rs2,500 daily but the current situation has dampened his chances today.

"Despite the placement of freight shipping containers on Murre Road, I came in search of work, only to return empty-handed."

For these living hand-to-mouth, situations like these become more than inconveniences.

The toll of the lock-down is not limited to daily wage earners only, as vendors, especially small ones find it hard to survive amid low customer footfall.

"In the last two days, not a single customer has turned up here," said Mohammad Ashraf, a shopkeeper.

Zafar Ahmed, an owner of a clothing shop in Saddar, expressed similar concerns, complaining about the slow pace of business activities.

Although Saddar remained open, it too seemed devoid of customers as people continued to avoid travelling.

The Rawalpindi district administration has closed down the Saeed Bridge, Marrie Chowk, Mori, Mohal Cinema, Warris Khan, Garwalnandi, Pirmadhai and other areas.

While trucks are parked on Mall Road in front of PTCL offices, a single lane going towards the Armed Forces Institute of Cardiology remains open to traffic.

Due to the closure of entry and exit points of Rawalpindi city and the Cantonment areas, oil tankers failed to supply fuel to filling stations, sparking fear of fuel shortages from Tuesday (today).

All Pakistan Oil Tankers Association spokesperson Noman Butt said keeping in view the situation in Lahore, Islamabad and Rawalpindi, transport to these cities has been halted.

"This is significantly impacting the transit of tanker lorries carrying PDI, products, which could lead to disruptions in supply," he said.

He said that the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) is actively engaging with the district administration but permission has not been granted to restore the supply of the fuel to filling stations.

He said most of the petrol filling stations have stock for only one or two days.



THE Parliament House has been illuminated on the occasion of Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko's visit to Pakistan on Monday. — Online

15 years on, work on Chirah Dam still hasn't started

Ecnec had approved project in 2009; Under PC-I, work was to be completed in 2013

By Kashif Abbasi

ISLAMABAD Despite the passage of 15 years after approval by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnec), work on Chirah Dam could not be started while the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad are facing a growing shortage of water.

Ecnec had approved the project in 2009 for providing 15 million gallon per day (mgd) water to the residents of Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

According to its PC-I, the project was supposed to be completed in 2013; however, no practical step was taken to construct the dam on Soan River near Chirah village.

The project worth Rs5.3 billion was a joint venture of CDA and Small Dam Organisation (SDO) and the latter was supposed to execute it.

The project was supposed to be ready in 2013, according to its PC-I.

The issue came under discussion recently at a meeting on water issues which was chaired by CDA Chairman Mohammad Ali RazaBura and attended by representatives from SDO and Water and Sanitation Agency (Wasa) Rawalpindi.

The meeting was held that the proposed dam was at estimation stage. Sources said that the CDA chief showed his displeasure over the inordinate delay and directed to remove obstacles for early start of the project.

"We do agree the project is facing an inordinate delay, but there is no delay on our part as SDO is the executing agency," said director media CDA Shahid Khan. He said that many years ago the CDA had paid Rs5.2 million to SDO for the project. "Recently, in a meeting this issue was discussed in detail," he said.

The sources said that during the meeting it was decided that the CDA will hold a meeting with SDO to make a decision.

"In coming days, we will hold a critical meeting in this regard," an official said.

The sources said keeping in view the inflation rate the cost of the project had increased manifold.

It is relevant to note that both

Rawalpindi and Islamabad have been facing shortage of water. Islamabad is a water scarcity-hit city as CDA has been supplying around 65mgd in urban areas while the total need of both urban and rural areas is more than 210mgd.

The people in rural areas are mostly dependent on water boring and other small schemes of the district government.

On the other hand, during the last almost three decades, no new dam has been built to overcome the shortage of water in Islamabad which has only three major sources - Sandy Dam, Khungar Dam and tubewells. However, it also gets around three mgd of water from Rawal Dam, which mainly provides water to residents of Rawalpindi.

Over the years, various proposed projects including a Ghazi Barotha/Tarbella dam designed to provide 100 mgd each to Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Chirah carryover Dam in Islamabad, Shudrana Dam and proposed Dataru Dam remained under discussion in various meetings of the CDA. However, no step was taken to start construction work. These projects are still at the feasibility stages.

Earlier, various departments were dealing with water related issues. However, last month the federal govern-

ment transferred the administrative control of all water-related departments from the Metropolitan Corporation of Islamabad (MCI) to the CDA, as the civic agency was complaining that it was unable to address the shortfall of millions of gallons under the current arrangement. After getting control of the department, the CDA set up a new organisation "Islamabad Water" headed by Director General Sanjar Khan Zimri.

A summary on the basis of the decision made by the federal cabinet had said the Water Management Wing of CDA was unable to meet a shortfall of 40mgd in urban areas and cannot extend its services to the 1.5 million people living in villages around Islamabad.

"The gap in supply and demand for clean water is increasing day by day due to positive change in urban population and climate conditions. There is no integrated planning and management, no water and sewerage infrastructure master plan is available and no water and sewerage business plan has ever been prepared."

After being convinced by CDA's point of view, the cabinet approved the summary but it is yet to be seen how Islamabad Water will perform.



LABOURERS sit idle along 6th Avenue as no customer has turned up in the wake of road blockades in Islamabad on Monday. — Online

Girl child kidnapped by worker recovered from Karachi

By Our Correspondent

TORA TEK SINGH: An eight-year-old daughter of a farm owner who was kidnapped by his servant on Nov 18 was recovered by Chak Jhumra police from Karachi and she was handed over to her father on Monday.

Police spokesperson said Hidayatullah of Rawalpindi was a worker at the farm of Zamkesh's father, Mageswari Ahmad, at Chak 107-JB, Faisalabad, for the last three years. He kidnapped Zamkesh on Nov 18 and disappeared. Police registered a case against him, used technology and successfully traced and arrested him from Karachi. The minor girl was also safely recovered from him.

Police are still probing the suspect about the objective behind the abduction.

RAPE: A man raped a four-year-old boy at Chak 540-JB in Gujra. The child was playing outside

his house when the suspect took him to a sugarcane field on some pretext and raped him there. When the child faints, the suspect fled. The baby had been shifted to the Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Gujra.

Police registered an FIR.

ADJOURNED: Anti-Terrorism Court judge Javed Iqbal Sheikh adjourned until Dec 2 the hearing of the cases against hundreds of PTI activists registered over May 9 incidents.

About 220 leaders and workers had to appear in FIR number 832, 300 and 1,272 before the court. They included Umar Ayub, Shahid Karim, Zafar Gul but none of them was present in the court during the hearing.

Legal team head of PTI advocate Malik Khalid Shafiq told the reporters that he had given an application before the court that all 420 accused who had to come to attend the court could not reach Faisalabad as all roads were blocked.

At this, the court gave a one-

time exemption to all 420 PTI activists from appearance in court and adjourned the hearing of both FIRs for Dec 2.

GCUP: The quality enhancement cell of the Government College University Faisalabad (GCUP) organised a workshop on improving the quality of education and research at the university with the teachers of the Faculty of Life Sciences, Medical Sciences and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

The objective of the workshop was to formulate a plan to achieve annual goals of research and education.

Quality Enhancement Cell Director Prof Dr Asim Mansha said they were working on a priority basis regarding the parameters of the HEC and their implementation in higher educational institutions.

He said this was possible only if teachers were engaged in an intellectual quest, making the teaching process more purposeful and effective.

Security boost needed to safeguard trans-Indus districts

By Tariq Saeed Birmani

DERA GHAZI KHAN: Enhanced security measures are needed to protect trans-Indus districts against a fresh wave of militancy in the country, especially in neighbouring Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces.

Locals say that as security concerns escalate, there is an urgent need to strengthen security measures at the entry points of Dera Ghazi Khan district.

A local resident of Tuman Qaisrani said that their area Tuman Qaisrani shares its boundaries with troubled areas of Balochistan and KP. Key checkpoints such as Bawata, Sakhi Sarwar, Triman, Ghazi Ghat and Shah Wali are strategic locations for the installation of large scanner gates.

These scanners will help thoroughly inspect loaded trucks to curb smuggling activities and detect potential

contraband hidden under legitimate goods. Ensuring comprehensive scanning at these entry points could significantly reduce the risk of illicit activities.

A retired official of the Baloch Levy said that it is prime time to reactivate the Baloch Levy, a specialised paramilitary force traditionally responsible for safeguarding the provincial boundaries of Dera Ghazi Khan and Rajapur. These districts will benefit immensely from the Levy's reactivation.

Their presence can enhance border surveillance and provide critical support to existing security forces.

Another dire need is convening a grand jirga of the 10 tribes inhabiting the Sulaiman Range.

These tribes include Marri, Daridi, Lohar, Gorchani, Laghari, Khosa, Lohar, Soori, Bander, Qaisrani and Khattan.

Local tribal people suggested, during a conversation with Dawn, that a

traditional tribal council could assign responsibilities to tribal leaders for safeguarding the passes of the Sulaiman Range, government infrastructure and their respective Tumans (territories).

The renowned road bridge connecting Pargah with Balochistan, a strategic asset, is one such critical infrastructure that requires heightened protection.

With tribal cooperation alongside security forces, this effort can reinforce the defence of the two districts against external threats.

Commandant of Border Military Police and Baloch Levy Asad Chaudhry, responding to a query regarding holding a jirga of heads of tribes in the Sulaiman Range, said that instead of holding a jirga, they are consulting heads of tribes individually to make them responsible for the safety and security of passes located in their respective Tumans.

On the other hand, a meeting,

chaired by Commissioner Dr Nasir Mahmood, addressed security measures in Dera Ghazi Khan, particularly in the tri-border areas. Decisions were taken regarding the enhancement of security on internal and external routes, including Kachha areas and mountain passes, with strict surveillance at border entry and exit points and inter-provincial check posts.

It was decided to enhance security on key highways like the Sakhi Sarwar-Bawata National Highway, and Sor-Triman and Kashmir Road. Strict protocols for the movement of forces and protecting foreign nationals, especially Chinese citizens, were also discussed.

Regional Police Officer retired Captain Sajjad Hassan Khan emphasised rigorous security in sensitive areas, VVIP protection, and a crackdown on hired vehicles. The meeting reaffirmed the implementation of the National Action Plan to counter threats.

Car lifters 'kill' taxi driver in Hazro

By Our Correspondent

TAXI: A gang of alleged car lifters killed a taxi driver after snatching his vehicle in the jurisdiction of Hazro police station, the police said on Monday.

They said that 60-year-old Nasim Akhtar made a living through a rented Suzuki van. On the day of the incident, he was hired by unidentified vehicle lifters posing as passengers from Havelian for a ride to Peshawar.

On the way to their destination, they killed him, snatched his vehicle and dumped his body in a hilly area near the Hazro village in the limits of the Hazro police station, sources said.

The police shifted the body to a tribal headquarters hospital for medico-legal formalities, registered a case and started further investigation.

Separately, a 25-year-old girl was abducted by unknown suspects from the limits of Taxila police station on Monday, police sources said.

A complainant named Abdul Hamid told the local police that his daughter was abducted by unidentified suspects after leaving for fathering classes.

The Taxila police have registered a case and launched a probe to trace the abducted woman.

LAHORE

Sunset 05:02 pm

Sunrise (Tomorrow) 06:38 am

NEXT 24 HRS

Minimum 12.0°C

Maximum 24.0°C

Outlook Sunny

AQI

Maximum (Yesterday) 270

METRO

Central



Bumrah leads India to massive win over Aussies in first Test

Pg.18 SPORT



WASA employees continue to sprinkle water on city roads in an effort to mitigate the hazardous effects of smog. — White Star

Govt plans to instal 30 air quality monitors across Punjab

Eases curb on heavy vehicles, allows construction activity

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: In an initiative to combat rising air pollution, the Punjab government announced on Monday the installation of 30 advanced air quality monitors across various cities in the province.

The development is coupled with eased smog-related restrictions in key districts, aiming to improve environmental conditions while supporting economic activities.

Senior Minister Maryyus Awanagah revealed that 30 advanced air quality monitors were being installed across various cities in the province, with Lahore's monitoring capacity increasing to eight units.

She said the new monitors in Lahore

are strategically placed at THQ Kahna, Jya Bhagga Police Station, Shabara Teaching Hospital, Punjab University, and Wildlife Park, Raiwind. Other cities benefiting from this initiative include Rawalpindi (three monitors), Faisalabad, Sheikhupura, and Sukhet (one each), as well as Multan, Gujranwala, and Bahawalpur (two each). Sangolli (two monitors) and Dera Ghazi Khan (one monitor) are expected to activate their systems by the end of this month. These devices are linked to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) central control room for real-time monitoring.

The senior minister highlighted that the collected air quality data will be integrated with the global Air Quality Index (AQI) system, providing accurate and reliable information to the public and researchers. This system is designed to facilitate timely actions against pollution and improve environmental conditions.

"This initiative is a revolutionary step to safeguard human lives. It will provide

transparent data to the public and ensure an effective solution to air pollution challenges," said Maryyus Awanagah.

This programme is not only a significant step toward environmental conservation but also an example of utilizing digital technology to enhance governance and improve public service delivery.

Meanwhile, the Punjab government had eased several restrictions imposed to combat smog in four key districts - Lahore, Multan, Faisalabad, and Gujranwala - providing much-needed relief to residents and businesses.

The EPA issued the new directives (available with Dawn), aimed to strike a balance between addressing environmental concerns and maintaining economic stability.

The restriction on the entry of heavy vehicles into these districts has been lifted, allowing smooth transportation and logistics operations. Brick kilns, previously shut down to reduce emissions, are now permitted to operate, though it

is anticipated that compliance with specific environmental standards will be required. Construction activity has also been allowed.

Dining establishments, including restaurants and hotels, can now operate until 10pm, extending their previous closing hours. Markets and shopping centres must continue to close by 8pm, as per government orders, to limit emissions and conserve energy during peak pollution hours.

The government has underscored the importance of cooperative efforts in mitigating smog-related challenges. Citizens and businesses are encouraged to adopt eco-friendly practices and adhere to the revised guidelines to ensure a sustainable environment.

The decision follows a period of strict enforcement aimed at reducing pollution levels, which impacted daily life and economic activity. These relaxations are seen as a step towards easing the burden on businesses while maintaining vigilance against smog hazards.

Fuel shortage looms large amid PTI agitation

By Khalid Hashmi

LAHORE: Major cities in Punjab have started facing shortage of petroleum products after the depots in Patoki and Sheikhupura stopped supplies due to closure of roads because of the PTI protest.

Stakeholders apprehend that the situation may worsen on Tuesday (today) and onward, if the roads are not opened to allow entry of oil tankers.

"Around 40 per cent of the total 460 petrol pumps in Lahore have either no or meagre quantity of petrol, diesel etc. And if the current situation persists, there would be no petrol in Lahore on Wednesday or Thursday," Pakistan Petroleum Dealers' Association Information Secretary Khwaja Aftab told Dawn on Monday.

"We are really worried about this situation," he says, adding that the government will have to open roads if it wants to keep Lahore and other major cities in Punjab functional.

According to him, as many as 140 petrol pumps in Gujranwala are also witnessing shortage of petrol. Some of them have gone totally dry, he maintains, adding that fuel supplies to Lahore are made both from Patoki and Sheikhupura depots.

Lahore Deputy Commissioner Syed Musa Raza says the administration will ensure petrol supplies to Lahore by all means.

"I have talked to the officers of the Pakistan State Oil (PSO), assuring them of entry of tankers into the city very soon," he says.

"I will also talk to the office-bearers of petroleum dealers' association to solve their problems in this regard," he adds.

Meanwhile, tankers and motorists in various parts of Lahore faced difficulties in getting petrol.

"I finally succeeded in getting petrol at a filling station in Johar Town after being refused by the staff at three other outlets," a motorcyclist told Dawn.

Eight journalists on bail after 'flimsy case'

GUJRAT: Eight journalists of Hafizabad are on interim bail after being booked by Kassoki Police Station on Nov 20.

They were present on the lawn of the house of former MNA Mehdi Hassan Bharti where his daughter MNA Anveeqa Mehdi Bharti was scheduled to address a news conference when Hafizabad police reached there, pushed the media persons out and did not allow them to attend the news conference.

Later on, a case was registered against eight of them, namely Amjad Parvee, Hafiz Aslam Rehman, Shabbaz Gul, Sheikh Javed, Asrar Shah, Javed Asad, Ehsanullah and Shafayat Wattoo, under sections of the PPC on the report of Sub-inspector Mushaq Hussain.

The journalists later obtained bail before arrest from a court until Nov 29.

Journalists associations condemned the registration of a case against the journalists for performing their professional duties.

They have demanded quashing of the case; otherwise, the journalists would stage protest demonstrations.

Police alleged they raided the venue on the information of presence of former MNA Shabbaz Bharti who was a proclaimed offender and some other PCs but the journalists abetted them to escape from the scene and interfered with official work of police.

The journalists denied the allegations and termed the police action unjustified. — Correspondent



LDA Johar Town office illuminated with orange light in connection with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. — Dawn

Deseating Imran from NA-95

Larger bench sought on plea against ECP powers

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Justice Razaul Hasan Syed of the Lahore High Court on Monday proposed formation of a larger bench to decide a petition challenging the legitimacy of section 137(4) of the Election Act 2017 invoked by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to de-seat former prime minister Imran Khan from NA-95, Minarwali, in Toshakhana constituency.

The judge observed that important legal questions had been raised in the petition, which required to be decided by a larger bench.

The judge forwarded the

petition to the chief justice with a request to form a larger bench on the matter.

Muhammad Ahmad, a lawyer, filed the petition through Advocate Asfar Siddique, pleading that former premier Imran Khan had been disqualified under sections 137(4) (power to prosecute for corrupt practice), 167 (corrupt practice) and 173 (making false statements or declarations) of the Act, however, in these sections, there was no mentioning of word "disqualification".

He argued that not sharing details of Toshakhana gifts and proceeds from sale did not lead to disqualification. He said it could occur only when the

prosecution commenced within 120 days of filing of nomination papers.

The petitioner claimed that the prosecution under section 137 of the Act was only possible to be initiated within 120 days of the filing of false asset statements. However, in the Imran Khan case, the last such statement was filed, on Dec 31, 2021.

Therefore, he said, the prosecution could have been initiated by April 30, 2022 but the same could not be commenced within the stipulated period of 120 days.

He contended that the ECP verdict disqualified

Continued on Page 14

Police identify 35 people involved in Nishtar AIDS scandal

PMA comes out in support of 'guilty' medics, condemns govt for action

By Asif Chaudhry

LAHORE: Multan Police identified 35-36 people, including the Nishtar Hospital staff, who were behind the alleged tampering with the record of the kidney patients who tested positive for HIV/AIDS. However, police lack the mandate to investigate the health professionals.

On the other hand, the Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) has come out in the support of the medics, including the Nishtar Medical University (NMU) VC, who were suspended for negligence that resulted in infections of dozens of kidney patients with

HIV in the hospital.

Police completed the probe into the forged test reports of the patients on the directions of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz when the HIV/AIDS scandal in the nephrology unit of the hospital came to the limelight.

An official told Dawn police would submit findings of the investigation to the health department for further action.

"We have no mandate to investigate the healthcare professionals held guilty of the HIV/AIDS outbreak in the Nishtar Hospital," he said, adding that the Multan police probe was limited to the issue of patients' records that were tampered with.

During the investigation, he said, police found that the private labs had tampered with the record of dialysis patients enrolled with the Nishtar Hospital and generated new falsified test reports to mislead the authorities. He revealed that a hospital

employee was running a dialysis centre out of the government health facility and he had used in his private lab the test kits supplied officially to the Nishtar Hospital.

The police officer added that nearly 30-35 persons, including the hospital employees, were found involved in preparing bogus test reports of the dialysis patients who contracted HIV/AIDS due to negligence of the medics.

To a question, he said, the investigation was carried out under the supervision of an SSP.

The PMA condemned the government's action against the NMU VC and other health professionals in the wake of the scandal.

Talking to the media at a press conference held on Monday, the PMA leaders declared the suspensions of the senior medics on the basis of an inquiry conducted by the fact-finding committee illegal, illogical and against the rules.

The reports suggested that the PMA

came to the support of the guilty NMU senior faculty members and other doctors when a senior leader of the association from Multan was also held responsible for allegedly tampering with the record of the patients who carried HIV/AIDS during the dialysis in the hospital.

Talking to the media, PMA Lahore chapter president Prof Ashraf Nizami, Dr Kamran Saeed, Prof Shahid Malik, Dr Ishaq Ahmad Chaudhry, Dr Iram Shahzadi and Dr Waqar suggested to the Punjab governor to reject the resignation submitted by NMU VC Mehboob Khawar.

Prof Nizami declared the action against the NMU VC and other health professionals a continuation of the departmental and police action against the senior doctors of the National Medical College.

"The Punjab government initiated proceedings against the NMU women VC at a time when the world was observing an inter-

national day for the elimination of violence against the women," the PMA leader said and added that the doctors would not tolerate humiliation of the health professionals and announced that a PMA delegation would meet PMU-N supreme Nawaz Sharif to raise the matter.

Prof Nizami also raised questions over the findings of the inquiry committee, saying that it was half-baked, incomplete and full of anomalies. He declared the standard guidelines of the Punjab AIDS Control Programme controversial regarding the time period of performing the AIDS tests of the dialysis patients.

The PMA leaders put the blame on the bureaucracy, including the health secretary, for mishandling the matter, saying that the CM was not properly informed by the inquiry committee and the health authorities about the facts behind the incident.

Three of a family shot dead over old rivalry

By Our Correspondent

NAROWAL: Three members of a family were killed and another injured in a shooting in Koralke Mirana village in Sheikhpura district, over old rivalry on Monday.

According to police, the attackers opened fire on head of the family, Abdul Hamid (40), his son Tariq (40), daughter Ibtisam (28) and Tariq's son Asim Tariq (18). After the firing, the suspects fled the spot brandishing weapons.

As per Rescue 1122 officials, a team of the emergency service immediately reached the spot on being called and found Tariq, Ibtisam and Asim lying dead on the spot.

The victims provided first aid to Abdul Hamid and shifted him to the District Headquarters Hospital, Sheikhpura.

Sheikhpura Sudder police immediately reached the spot on the information of firing and collected evidence.

Rescue 1122 handed over the bodies of the three family members to the police.

Sheikhpura District Police Officer (DPO) Bilal Sheikh, taking notice of the triple murder, ordered blockade of the entrance and exit routes of the district for

the suspects' arrest. The DPO has also formed raiding teams headed by the Investigation wing SP for the immediate arrest of the suspects.

According to police sources, old enmity seemed to be the motive of the triple murder.

INJURED: Seven persons, including five women, were injured when a bike collided with a motorcycle-rickshaw near a private hospital on Morille Road in Sheikhpura.

As per Rescue 1122, a team reached the spot immediately and shifted the injured to hospital. According to hospital sources, the condition of two of the injured persons is critical.

The accident occurred due to speeding.

UNIVERSITY CLOSED: The University of Narowal has been closed until Nov 29 due to unavoidable circumstances.

University spokesperson Dr Faisal Zaid said the online classes had commenced for the 7,000 students enrolled at the university, while administrative and teaching staff would remain present on the campus.

A formal notification of closure, issued by the assistant registrar on the vice-chancellor's instructions, cited unavoidable circumstances as the reason for the decision.

Shops auction postponed over 'rent controversy'

By Our Correspondent

SATIWAL: On the request of local parliamentarians and the business community, Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahsan Khan on Monday managed to get the Nov 26 auction of 1,212 shops owned by the Arifwala Municipal Committee and the Punjab Board of Revenue postponed by two weeks.

The speaker requested the senior member of the Board of Revenue to postpone the rent terms announced by the district revenue department. According to reports, the auction has been delayed to allow for a "reassessment of shop rents," expected to be completed within the next two weeks.

Local traders alleged that the newly-proposed rents by the Punjab Board were excessively high and unaffordable for shopkeepers who had occupied the shops for decades.

The delegation which met with the speaker included MPA Chaudhary Imran Akram, former union minister Amir Hamza, MNA Rana Iqbal Sherif, MPA Dr. Faridkhan Javed, Tahir Iqbal Javed along with office-bearers of the Markazi Anjuman Tajran, Arifwala.

Sources revealed that, under the Provincial

Revenue Board Rules 2019-2021, all shops on state land under the jurisdiction of Punjab Municipal Committees must now be auctioned in collaboration with the BoR.

Fifty per cent of the auction rent will go to the concerned municipal committee, and the remaining 50pc to the account of BoR. The auction, originally scheduled for Nov 26, included 1,212 shops.

Tahir Iqbal told Dawn that rents, previously ranging from Rs2,000 to Rs1,000 per month, were increased drastically to Rs40,000 to Rs50,000 per month. Despite their appeals, the local district and school administration refused to address these concerns.

The speaker assured the delegation that rents would be reassessed, and the auction would take place after a fair reassessment.

Assistant Commissioner (AC) Mir Ruman Khalil confirmed reports circulating on social media about the auction's postponement has stated that no formal written orders had been received by the municipal committee or local officials.

Tahir Iqbal said Pargatyan Deputy Commissioner Sadia Maheer is likely to receive the official orders by Monday night or Tuesday morning.

Two injured in police firing at picket

By Our Correspondent

MUZAFFARGARH: Two persons were injured seriously when police officials opened fire on them at a checkpoint near Karmi Chowk in Lal Dahan police precincts.

Lal Dahan District Police Officer (DPO) Ali Waseem ordered the immediate arrest of the police officials and registration of a case against them under sections 324 and 34 of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

According to a police spokesperson, the checkpoint at Karmi Chowk had been established

because of rising incidents of theft and robbery in the area. ASI Tariq Mansoor and Constable Ghulam Mustafa stopped motorcyclists at the checkpoint on suspicion. However, when the motorcyclists did not stop, the police officials opened fire, resulting in injuries to Farid and Mushtaq.

Both injured were critically wounded and were transferred to Nishtar Hospital, Multan, for treatment.

A case of attempted murder was registered against the police officials and they were arrested in accordance with legal procedures.



NAROWAL: The Municipal Committee has installed a colourful dancing fountain on Jassar Bypass at a cost of Rs3.5 million. — Dawn

Girl child kidnapped by servant recovered from Karachi

By Our Correspondent

TORAT SINGH: An eight-year-old daughter of a farm owner who was kidnapped by his servant on Nov 18 was recovered by Chak Jhesra police from Karachi and she was handed over to her father on Monday.

Police spokesperson said Hidayatullah of Rawalpindi was a worker at the farm of Zamendra's father, Majid Ahmad, at Chak 107 JB, Faisalabad, for the last three years. He kidnapped Zamendra on Nov 18 and disappeared. Police registered a case against him, used technology and successfully traced and arrested him from Karachi. The minor girl was also safely recovered from him.

Police are still probing the suspect about the objective behind the abduction.

RAPED: A man raped a four-year-old boy at Chak 340 JB in Gogera.

The child was playing outside his house when the suspect took

him to a sugarcane field on some pretext and raped him there. When the child informed, the suspect fled. The baby had been shifted to the Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Gogera.

Police registered an FIR.

ABDUCTION: Anti-Terrorism Court judge Javed Iqbal Sheikh adjourned until Dec 2 the hearing of the case against hundreds of PTI activists registered over May 9 incidents.

About 220 leaders and workers had to appear in FIR number 832, 209 and 1,277 before the court. They included Omar Ayub, Shibli Faraz, Zartaj Gul but none of them was present in the court during the hearing.

Legal team head of PTI advocate Malik Khalid Shafiq told the reporters that he had given an application before the court that all 420 accused who had to come to attend the court could not reach Faisalabad as all roads were blocked. At this, the court gave a one-time exemption to all 420 PTI activists from appearance in court and adjourned the hearing of both

FIRs for Dec 2.

KILLED: An accident occurred near Gogera's Chak 354 JB, Sheikhpura, on Samandri Road, where a sugar-cane-laden tractor-trolley overturned, killing the driver.

Nadir Masih, 23, was transporting sugarcane to Kamalia sugar mills when he lost control at a road bump due to the overloaded vehicle. The trolley overturned into a 20-foot-deep roadside pit, trapping him under the sugarcane.

Despite two hours of efforts by Rescue 1122 staff, Nadir Masih was found suffocated to death when finally pulled out.

ACCIDENT: A woman was killed and four members of her family critically injured in a road accident near Chak 465 GB on the Samandri-Faisalabad bypass.

According to Rescue 1122, Sabia Qamar, 35, was riding a motorcycle with her husband Nazamul Haq, 40, and their three children when a car hit them. The impact caused the family to fall onto the road, where an oil tanker ran over

them. Sabia died on the spot, while Nazam, son Najam, 14, and daughters, Mushal, 5, and Ibtisam, 3, were seriously injured and taken to Samandri T100 Hospital for treatment.

CONFERENCE: A conference on 'Functional Materials and Emerging Technologies' organised by the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) Department of Chemistry discussed the need to integrate materials science with community needs and promote environmentally friendly technologies.

UAF Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Muhammad Sarwar Khan said the university is committed to advancing education and research to tackle environmental issues.

Dean of Sciences Dr Ijaz Ahmad Bhutta outlined the department's efforts in areas like radiation and environmental chemistry, contributing significantly to chemical sciences. Speakers also discussed the role of functional materials, their applications, and chal-

lenges, with Dr Bhutta highlighting the influence of Artificial Intelligence in innovation. Dr Habib Aslam Gaba and Dr Asim Jamil praised the university's contribution to science and national development.

GCUE: The quality enhancement cell of the Government College University Faisalabad (GCUE) organised a workshop on improving the quality of education and research at the university with the teachers of the Faculty of Life Sciences, Medical Sciences and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

The objective of the workshop was to formulate a plan to achieve annual goals of research and education.

Quality Enhancement Cell Director Prof Dr Asim Mansha said they were working on a priority basis regarding the parameters of the HEC and their implementation in higher educational institutions. He said this was possible only if teachers were engaged in an intellectual quest, making the teaching process more purposeful and effective.



SARGODHA: A student participates in a long jump competition during Khelta Punjab inter-division athletics tournament at the Sports Stadium. — APP

Security boost needed to safeguard trans-Indus dists

By Tariq Saeed Birmari

DERA GHAZI KHAN: Enhanced security measures are needed to protect trans-Indus districts against a fresh wave of militancy in the country, especially in neighbouring Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces.

Locals say that as security concerns escalate, there is an urgent need to strengthen security measures at the entry points of Dera Ghazi Khan district.

A local resident of Tuman Quaimani said that their area Tuman Quaimani shares its boundaries with troubled areas of Baluchistan and KP. Key checkpoints such as Barwana, Sakhi Sarwar, Triman, Ghazi Ghaz and Shah Wali are strategic locations for the installation of large scanner gates.

These scanners will help thoroughly inspect loaded trucks to curb smuggling

activities and detect potential contraband hidden under legitimate goods. Ensuring comprehensive scanning at these entry points could significantly reduce the risk of illicit activities.

A retired official of the Baloch Levy said that it is prime time to reinvigorate the Baloch Levy, a specialised paramilitary force traditionally responsible for safeguarding the provincial boundaries of Dera Ghazi Khan and Rajapur. These districts will benefit immensely from the Levy's reactivation. Their presence can enhance border surveillance and provide critical support to existing security forces.

Another dire need is convening a grand jirga of the 10 tribes inhabiting the Sulaiman Range. These tribes include Masari, Darishahi, Lound, Gorchani, Leghari, Khona, Lound Soori, Buzdar, Quairani and Khetran. Local tribal people suggested, during a conversation with Dawn, that a traditional

tribal council could assign responsibilities to tribal leaders for safeguarding the passes of the Sulaiman Range, government infrastructure and their respective Tuman territories.

The renewed steel bridge connecting Punjab with Baluchistan, a strategic asset, is one such critical infrastructure that requires heightened protection. With tribal cooperation alongside security forces, this effort can reinforce the defence of the two districts against external threats.

Commandant of Border Military Police and Baloch Levy Asad Chaudhry, responding to a query regarding holding a jirga of heads of tribes in the Sulaiman Range, said that instead of holding a jirga, they are consulting heads of tribes individually to make them responsible for the safety and security of passes located in their respective Tumans.

On the other hand, a meeting, chaired

by Commissioner Dr Nasir Mahmood, addressed security measures in Dera Ghazi Khan, particularly in the tribal border areas. Decisions were taken regarding the enhancement of security on internal and external routes, including Kachha areas and mountain passes, with strict surveillance at border entry and exit points and inter-provincial checkpoints.

It was decided to enhance security on key highways like the Sakhi Sarwar-Baramulla National Highway, and Suk-Triman and Kashmore Road. Strict protocols for the movement of forces and protecting foreign nationals, especially Chinese citizens, were also discussed.

Regional Police Officer retired Captain Sajjad Hassan Khan emphasised rigorous security in sensitive areas, VVIP protection, and a crackdown on hired vehicles. The meeting reaffirmed the implementation of the National Action Plan to counter threats.

Funeral of martyred constable today

By Our Correspondent

MUZAFFARGARH: The funeral of police constable Mubashar Bilal, who was martyred during violence in Rawalpindi on Monday, will be offered at his native Bani Sohrani on Tuesday (today).

Mubashar Bilal (46) is survived by his widow, two daughters and a son. His children are Tayyaba (15), Aris (13) and Mah Noor (11). Bilal was a resident of Musaffargarh and had joined the police force in 2012. He was stationed at Shah Jamal police station but had been deployed to Islamabad, where he was martyred during an attack during the PTI agitation.

According to sources, Bilal was martyred on the spot during the violence caused by militants at the Rawalpindi Interchange. His family confirmed his death and announced that his funeral prayers would be held on Tuesday. Condolences have poured in from politicians and officials for the bereaved family.

District Police Officer (DPO) Syed Hameed Hasher lauded his sacrifice, stating that the police force would never hesitate from fulfilling their duties, even at the cost of their lives. He assured Bilal's family of the police department's full support during their time of grief.

Bilal's mother and wife are both battling cancer, adding to the family's struggles. His untimely death has left his colleagues and community mourning the loss of a dedicated officer who served with honour and courage.

PESHAWAR

Sunset 05:08pm
Sunrise (Tomorrow) 06:54am

NEXT 24 HRS

Minimum 09°C
Maximum 24°C
Outlook Sunny

METRO
North

Bumrah leads India to massive win over Aussies in first Test

Pg.18 SPORT



VILLAGERS enjoy horse dance at a wedding ceremony in Khawari area of Mardan on Monday. The centuries-old tradition, which once used to be the highlight of such activities, has been diminishing in rural parts of Hazara division. — Photo by Nasir Ahmad Khan

ANP sees 'well-planned intrigue' behind growing terrorism in KP

Observes black day against Parachinar violence

Dawn Report

PESHAWAR: The Awami National Party (ANP) observed a "black day" across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday against the recent Parachinar conveyer bloodbath and other terrorist attacks in the province.

Addressing a rally in front of the Peshawar Press Club here, ANP provincial president Mian Iftikhar Hussain said a "well-planned conspiracy" was behind a surge in terrorism in the province, with international powers and their facilitators involved in it.

He criticised the government over failure to protect public life, especially in the Kurram tribal district where a conveyer of passenger vehicles was attacked leading to the killing of dozens of people.

Mr Hussain condemned the Parachinar violence and demanded action against culprits.

He expressed solidarity with the affected families and said his party was committed to standing by them.

The ANP leader criticised the provincial and federal governments over "inaction and silence" on the issue.

He complained that the governments were busy with street

protests instead of addressing people's issues.

The party also announced plans to hold a peace march across the province to condemn terrorism. It also formed a peace jirga, led by Basir Muhammad Khan, to visit Parachinar and negotiate with stakeholders to find a peaceful solution to the issue.

Meanwhile, the ANP activists staged a protest against terrorism in front of the Swat Press Club, drawing district cabinet members and workers in large numbers.

They voiced concerns about the poor law and order situation in the province and complained that the escalating violence had rendered the people vulnerable.

The speakers said the recent carnage in Kurram Agency proved the growing threat in the province.

They urged authorities to identify and prosecute those responsible for these heinous acts.

The ANP leaders warned the government that if effective measures weren't immediately taken to restore peace in the province, their party would "take action to ensure stability."

In Swabi district, the ANP activists gathered in the Swabi Jehangira Road and blocked the road to traffic, complaining about the failure of the government to protect public life and property.

They demanded restoration of peace in Kurram.

Former forest minister Arsal



ANP provincial president Mian Iftikhar Hussain addresses a protest rally outside Peshawar Press Club on Monday. — White Star

Sher Khan said a lot of blood had already been shed on Paktia land, so more blood should not be shed.

He said the government should act for peace and provide security to the people.

In the Lower Dir district as well, the ANP staged a rally against the rising violence on the call of its provincial president, Mian Iftikhar Hussain.

Dozens of party workers, led by the district leadership, attended the demonstration, shouting slogans against the government over the recent Parachinar carnage.

The speakers, including ANP district president and former MPA Iftikhar Khan, senior vice president Malik Sajjad Yousafzai and leaders Malik Aftab and Mian Haris Hussain, criticised the federal and provincial governments over failure to protect public life in parts of the province.

They said Paktia were being targeted under a "planned conspiracy" meant to turn the region into a war zone.

The ANP also observed a

black day in Lakki Marwat and Bannu district.

Holding banners and placards, party workers and student activists gathered outside the press club building on the Old Kotcher Road in Lakki city.

In Bannu, the ANP activists showed up outside the press club building to condemn the growing terrorist attacks in the province, especially the recent conveyer bloodbath in Kurram tribal district.

ANP district president Nasir Khan Wazir, PNP district president Faizan and leaders

Shah Qayyum Bacha, Malik Sahar Khan Wazir, Malik Tahir Khan and Hakeem Paktia were being targeted by vested interest in the region.

In Shargha district, the ANP demonstrated outside the Airport Press Club against the growing incidents of terrorism in the province.

Carrying placards and shouting slogans against terrorism and sectarian incidents, the protesters marched through the Airport bazaar.

ANP provincial deputy general secretary Mawaddat Khan and other speakers said Paktia could no longer tolerate Pakhtun bloodbath.

A demonstration against the Parachinar incident was also staged in Charsadda district.

The speakers, including ANP provincial vice president Qasim Ali Khan Mohammedi and leader Shabbazuddin Tahir Khan, criticised security agencies over the bad law and order situation in the province.

The ANP also held a demonstration in Bajaur tribal district, with participants demanding early, durable solution to the conflict in the Kurram tribal district.

They expressed sympathies for the families affected by the recent terrorist attacks.

Outside the Khar Press Club, the protesters shouted slogans for justice in the region.

They condemned the recent attacks on passenger vehicles in Kurram district.

Six cops, passerby injured in Tank police post attack

By Our Correspondent

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Six policemen and a passerby were injured when terrorists attacked a police post in the Gul Mian area of Tank district on Monday.

According to a statement issued by the police, the attackers used both small and big firearms during the assault on the police post.

Rescue 1122 teams swiftly transported the injured policemen to the District Headquarters Hospital in Tank for initial medical care. Later, they were shifted to the GHQ Hospital in Dera Ismail Khan.

Hospital sources confirmed that all the injured policemen and the passerby were in stable condition.

Law enforcement agencies responded promptly to the incident. A joint team of police and security forces was dispatched to the site to initiate an investigation.

The authorities cordoned off the area and launched a search operation to track down the culprits.

Tank district police officer Aslam Nawaz Khan visited the Gul Mian police post and appreciated the personnel for their swift response in repelling the assault.

He issued directives to enhance security protocols, emphasising the mandatory use of bulletproof jackets and helmets. He also urged officers to remain vigilant, avoid distractions such as use of mobile phones while on duty, and actively monitor for suspicious activities.



One killed, three injured in Bajaur cylinder blasts

By Our Correspondent

BAJAUR: One person was killed and three others were injured in separate gas cylinder explosions in Khar tribal on Monday.

Residents and Rescue 1122 officials said the first incident occurred near the Khar Civil Colony in the wee hours of Monday when a gas cylinder exploded in a house, causing it to collapse, leaving the owner, Fazal Karim, dead on the spot.

Residents of adjacent houses said that the 62-year-old was a retired government employee.

They said he was heating water for morning prayer in his room when the gas cylinder exploded with a bang, destroying most parts of the house.

The residents said that the explosion also damaged home appliances. Soon after the incident, residents of the nearby homes and rescue workers reached the area and recovered the body from the debris.

According to Rescue 1122, the second cylinder blast occurred at a shop in the main vegetable market of Khar. They said that three people, identified as Sulaiman Khan, Ibrahim Khan and Abdullah, were injured in the incident.

Condition of all the injured, who were immediately shifted to the District Headquarters Hospital, Khar, was said to be out of danger.

Fire destroys hundreds of trees in Sararogha forest

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: A massive fire broke out in Khurdhula hilly area of Sararogha tribal of Upper South Waziristan district on Monday, burning down hundreds of precious trees.

A Rescue 1122 spokesman said that a rescue team promptly arrived at the scene after receiving information about the fire. "The firefighters are currently

engaged in efforts to extinguish the blaze.

However, intensity of the fire continues to increase, fuelled by strong winds, making it challenging for rescuers to control it," he added.

The official said the cause of the fire remained to be known.

The incident marks the third such

blaze hitting the area in the month of November, resulting in the destruction of thousands of valuable trees, leaving behind only ashes.

The frequent occurrence of blazes increases the need for effective measures to prevent fires in the region, ensuring protection to environment and natural resources.

Officials said that a rescue team was making efforts to control the blaze. They said that a more proactive approach was needed to prevent such incidents in the future.

The residents said that the authorities must take necessary measures to ensure the safety of the region's biodiversity and natural assets. — Correspondent

Neonatal intensive care unit becomes operational at Swabi hospital

Unicef provided assistance for establishment of 46-bed facility

By Ashfaq Yousafzai

PESHAWAR: The 46-bed neonatal intensive care unit has become operational at the Bacha Khan Medical Complex, Swabi, to provide modern care to newborns.

BKMC director Dr Khalid Masud told Dawn that the unit, established with the Unicef's assistance, was the largest in

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa catering to patients not only from Swabi but from Buner, Shang, Chitral, Dir, Haripur and Attock districts as well.

He said that the medical complex had secured the services of qualified neonatologist and was in the process of getting recognition from the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan to give the way for postgraduate training in neonatology as they were desperately needed in the province.

Dr Khalid said that the BKMC had 450 beds, with 120 and 150 beds in the affiliated Taps and Lahore hospitals, to ensure visitors get the best

possible care and aren't referred to hospitals outside their districts.

"Neonatology is a rare specialty required to treat patients from birth to the next 30 days. We aim to bring down mortality and save infants from avoidable deaths," he said.

The director said that the complex was in the process of finding intensivists (critical care doctors) in the near future.

"This new facility has been established at a cost of Rs28 million," he said, adding that the Unicef has pledged to solarise the hospital to ensure uninterrupted power supply.

"This neonatal care unit is the first of its kind in the province, offering comprehensive, high-quality and essential care to newborns," he said.

Dr Khalid said that the unit would also reduce patient burden on hospitals in Mardan and even in Peshawar where patients were referred to from the entire province.

Assistant professor Dr Inayatullah, who heads the new facility, told Dawn that Unicef head Dr Imranullah Khan played a key role in the establishment of the first NICU, which was equipped with the latest and modern equipment to provide both invasive and non-invasive ven-

tilation backed by a critical monitoring system.

"Keeping in mind the high rate of mortality in newborns, such as prematurity, we have made a four-bed kangaroo mother care unit and seven-bed mother care unit operational to provide care to premature and low birth weight babies," he said.

The neonatologist said the KMC offered an evidence-based intervention, which promoted weight gain, cognitive improvement, and behavioural improvement in premature babies.

"It has 100pc bed occupancy with all facilities for premature babies and their

mothers. We aim to enhance learning and teaching, and recently sent one staff nurse and one doctor for KMC training to the Postgraduate Medical Institute in Peshawar," he said.

Dr Imranullah said health-care providers required modern training on a specialty which didn't have the required trained people.

He said the state-of-the-art facility also included a critical care unit, high dependency unit, and an isolation unit to ensure that neonates receive all services under one roof.

Dr Imranullah of Unicef said his organisation had been working closely with the provincial government to ensure the provision of better health services to children.

He said neonatal mortality was a big public health issue in the country, with around 700 newborns dying daily, mostly from preventable and manageable causes.

"Unfortunately, most of these deaths occur in rural areas. We need to promote home-based newborn care," he said.

The Unicef's representative said the establishment of Level 2 neonatal intensive care units at all district headquarters hospitals was required to cope with the issues facing neonates.

PRAYER	
Fajr	05:29
Zuhar	12:04
Asr	03:31
Maghrib	05:08
Isha	06:36
Starting time in Peshawar	

REFLECTIONS

CC RETURNS OF HARD BUT RESPECTABLE LABOUR OF A CRAFT OR PROFESSION, THOUGH SMALL, IN QUANTITY, ARE BETTER THAN THE WEALTH WHICH YOU AMASS THROUGH SIN AND WICKEDNESS. 33

— HAZRAT ALI (A.S.)
75AP-427

Vintage car show on 30th

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority (KPTCA) has decided to organise the 15th annual vintage and classic car show for car enthusiasts and the people of Peshawar on November 30.

A statement said that more than 50 automobiles, including models from 1915 to 1980, as well as other historic cars, would be on display at the Peshawar Services Club.

Being organised by the KPTCA in collaboration with classic Lared Rover, car enthusiasts from Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, and other cities would display their antique and classic vehicles at the show.

The event would also feature a car rally starting from Peshawar, travelling through Patakhadd, Bahawalpur, Khairpur, and the Thar Desert, before reaching Karachi. The rally would pass through the historic Baluchistan Fort in Peshawar and later head to Haveli, Swabi, where a 4th jump race would be held.

Among the classic cars to be displayed are Mercedes, Jaguar, Ford, Chevrolet, Mini, VW, Land Rover, 4x4 Jeeps, motorcycles, and other vintage vehicles. Car enthusiasts from across the country would bring their prized classic cars to be a part of this event. — Bureau Report



FARMERS pack turnips in plastic bags at a field in Lala Kaley area on the outskirts of Peshawar. — White Star

Consumers complain vegetable prices doubled in Mansehra

Lakki price review body rejects traders' demand to increase rates of food items

Dawn Report

MANSEHRA/LAKKI MARWAT: Consumers complain that vegetable prices have almost doubled in markets of Mansehra as traders openly violate the official price list.

The district price and control committee led by the deputy commissioner sets fruit and vegetable prices daily.

However, vendors and shopkeepers have been receiving nearly double the prices determined by the committee. The committee fixed the price of potatoes at Rs120 per kilogramme, but shopkeepers sold it at Rs180 per kg.

Garlic is being sold at Rs700 per kg instead of Rs250 per kg, okra at Rs200 per kg instead of Rs100 per kg, and prices of other vegetables have also increased by Rs50 to Rs60 per kg.

"None of the shopkeepers or vendors follow the price list. I paid Rs240 per kg for tomatoes while the committee set the price at Rs160 per kg," Ather Shah, a buyer, said. He asked as to who would ensure the gov-

ernment's writ as traders consistently sold fruits and vegetables at prices much higher than those fixed by the district administration.

Understand that vendors blame the disruption of freight transport on the Pakistan as Tehreek-e-Insaf protests in the federal capital, but this has become a routine, and we are constantly burdened by self-created inflation," Mr Shah said.

Buyers urged the district administration to ensure the prices set by the committee were enforced in letter and spirit, and consumers were taken to justice under relevant laws.

"Though vegetable prices have been high for the last couple of weeks, they surged significantly on Monday as trucks and pick-up vehicles carrying tomatoes and other agricultural products could not reach their destinations owing to traffic suspension at main arteries," a local fruit and vegetable vendor claimed.

In Lakki Marwat, the district price review committee has rejected traders' demand to increase rates of pulses, meat, milk and spices, saying that after reduction in prices of oil commodities there is no justification to enhance rates of essential food items.

The committee met at the District Headquarters Complex, Tajarai, on Monday with deputy commissioner Zeeshaan Abdulhaliq in the chair.

Additional deputy commissioner Sikandar Khan, additional assistant commissioners Colar Ali Khan, Aamir Ali Khan and Muhammad Arif, district food controller Khan Zaman, representatives of traders and consumers' bodies and relevant municipal officers were in attendance.

Ignoring the requests of traders' representatives, the committee kept the prices of various items unchanged.

The deputy commissioner took serious notice of reports regarding slaughtering of animals outside the slaughterhouses, and asked the relevant authorities to make such places functional in Lakki city and other towns of the district.

"It must be ensured that animals are slaughtered in the slaughterhouses in the presence of veterinary experts," he maintained.

He asked the price magistrates to carry out joint inspection visits of bazaars and markets with the livestock and food authority experts and keep a check on prices and quality of milk, spices and other food items.

Mr Abdulhaliq also asked traders to improve hygiene at their outlets, keep food items covered and avoid indulging in illegal acts of profiteering and hoarding.

He said his administration would not tolerate artificial price hike and the traders involved in violation of the official price list would face stern action.

Haripur varsity, NAHE unveil faculty development programme

By Our Correspondent

HARIPUR: The University of Haripur's human resource development cell (HRDC), in partnership with the National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE), inaugurated a transformative national outreach programme for faculty development the other day.

The one-month training initiative, running until 16th December, aims to equip faculty members with the skills and expertise needed to become Trainers of Trainers (TOT), enabling them to serve as expert educators and professional trainers across Pakistan.

Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Shafiqur Rahman, in his welcome address, emphasised the significance of such programmes in raising the standards of higher education in the country.

He highlighted the varsity's commitment to innovation and academic development, expressing gratitude to NAHE for selecting the university as a host for such an impactful initiative.

He also praised the collaborative efforts of the

faculty members and leadership in making this programme a reality and stressed the long-term benefits it would have for the academic community.

The guest speakers marked the faculty development initiative as a significant step in empowering educators with the skills and expertise they needed to excel as trainers.

"By enhancing the professional landscape of higher education in Pakistan, it promises to create a ripple effect of knowledge and skill-sharing across institutions, leaving a lasting impact on the academic ecosystem," said one of the speakers.

The opening ceremony was attended by prominent dignitaries including Prof Dr Fida Yousaf Khattak, former vice chancellor and dean, Kohat University of Science & Technology (KUST), Prof Dr Zeeshaan Zeb Khattak from KUST, Chaudhry Murtaza Gorya, Assistant Director, NAHE and others.

The training will be overseen by Prof Dr Amirullah, Director of the human resource development cell.

Students urged to focus on modern education, technology

LOWERDIR: University of Malakand (UoM) Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Rashid Ahmad urged students to focus on modern education and technology rather than certificates and degrees, so they could better serve both the nation and their families.

He was addressing a certificate distribution ceremony at the National Institute of Education in Timergara as chief guest on Monday. A total of 32 students of BS Zoology, Political Science and English Literature were awarded degrees on the occasion.

The function was also addressed by the institute's managing director Prof Abdulhaliq Jan, principal Akhtar Hussain and others.

The UoM vice chancellor stressed that the youth

should realise the current challenges and be prepared to cope with them. He asked them to play an active role in bringing about positive change in society. He appreciated the standard and quality of education imparted to students by the private institutions affiliated with UoM and stated that the university never compromised on the quality of education.

Meanwhile, shields, trophies and cash prizes were also distributed among position holder students of a private high school during a separate function. The school principal Sakar Khan and renowned educationist Faridullah Khan also spoke on the occasion. The speakers appreciated the role of the private sector in promoting quality education. — Correspondent

Second edition of Peshawar women literature festival opens at SBBWU

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Speakers at the launching ceremony of second edition of women literature festival here on Monday called upon literati and rights activists to highlight women issues and challenge the perspective of portrayal of women's role in the society.

They urged stakeholders to play their role in eliminating stereotypes, clichés and so-called oppressive social traditions.

The inaugural ceremony of second edition of the weeklong women literature festival was arranged under the auspices of Dosti Welfare Foundation (DWF) in collaboration with administration of Shah Waliullah Centre for Women University in its main hall. Dignitaries including literati, rights activists and social workers from different fields of life attended the event.

Tributes were paid to successful and eminent women in various fields from education, politics, to art and culture and even modern day high technology.

Speakers lauded literary, social and political contributions of women during the last decades despite restrictions and



A SPEAKER addresses the launching ceremony of the women literature festival in Peshawar on Monday. — Dawn

cultural taboos.

Tasleem Haider, director general of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority (KPTCA), said on the occasion that role of women in shaping the society fabric was irrevocable. She added that KP women had great potential in

them, especially young women were contributing to society in different fields.

Rukhsana Nae, provincial coordinator for protection of women against harassment, stressed the need for raising awareness among womenfolk through literature. She said that written

words could best express problems and issues facing by women.

Dr Hamida Bhatti, chief organiser of the festival, said that the administration of SBBWU was committed to empowerment of women and would always support the cause of raising voice of women for their due rights.

A panel discussion titled "Literature and women" was held in which Faiza Tag, Shahreen Amin, Umera Malikani, Mumtaz Nadi and Dr Bismara spoke on the reflection of women's role and rights in the society. They shed light on various aspects of women life and their status, urging writers to depict true image of women.

It was followed by a book launching ceremony in which an Urdu book by Badsha Faruqi was reviewed critically. Ms Faruqi has played a vital role in promoting cause of women as her contribution has influenced literary trends regarding feminism.

Ahmad Qadir and Muhammad Rafique Khan, the director social welfare, special education and women empowerment, praised the women coming from the merged tribal districts and expressed the hope that such events would help in promoting voices of women in literature.

SCCI seeks talks as political unrest impacts trade activities

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: The business community has expressed grave concern over the prevailing 'shutdown' in economic and trade activities due to the current political unrest and feared that the country's economic situation will worsen in case a viable solution is not sought immediately.

In a statement issued here on Monday, Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Fazal Musqueem Khan, senior vice-president Abdul Jabir Jan and vice-president Shafiqur Khan urged the federal government and other stakeholders to resolve all issues through negotiations to maintain law and order and ensure smooth functioning of the economic activities.

They said that a lockdown-like situation prevailed due to political protest/riots that had halted business and trade activities throughout the country.

On the other hand, they lamented that the online businesses had also badly suffered due to shutdown in internet services.

They said exports had already

declined in the prevailing situation and the protest/riots would further paralyse them, which was not in the best interest of people and the country.

The SCCI office-bearers asserted that the government and relevant stakeholders must sort out solutions to all issues through talks because the country could no longer afford any kind of turbulence.

Fazal Musqueem stressed that a peaceful atmosphere was vital for economic stability and growth as it was crucial for improving business, trade and exports that would lead the nation on the path of sustainable prosperity and progress.

The SCCI chief said suspension of business, trade and economic activities was tantamount to further pushing the economy to a standstill.

Mr Musqueem urged the government and protesters to adopt a path of dialogue in the best interest of the economy and the country and avoid creating anarchy and instability.

He emphasised that all issues needed to be addressed through mutual consensus to preserve the country and economy from further damage.

CORRIGENDUM

Country	Islamic Republic Pakistan
Name of Project	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Integrated Tourism Development Project (KITE).
Contract Title	Installation of different sizes of Guidance and Information Signboards for Tourist Facilitation at Kaghan, Kunar, Kalash, Galyat, Upper Swat, and CEPC route.
Project No.	PI183562.
Credit No.	IDA-64620.
RFB Reference No.	PK-AP DOT-457393-GO-RFB.

This is for public information that the last date for submission of bids for the assignment viz "Installation of different sizes of Guidance and Information Signboards for Tourist Facilitation at Kaghan, Kunar, Kalash, Galyat, Upper Swat, and CEPC route" appeared in the Daily the DAWN & Daily Mashriq on (Date: November 06, 2024, is hereby further extended to December 03, 2024, at other provision of the advertised RFB and subsequent RFB addendum will remain the same. However further information can be obtained through email procurement.kite@gmail.com.

The bids will now be delivered at the address given below, in a sealed envelope, clearly mentioning the title of the assignment on the envelope by or before December 03, 2024, at 1:00 PM and will be opened on the same date at December 03, 2024, at 1:00 PM.

Project Director
 Project Management Unit (PMU)-Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
 Integrated Tourism Project (KITE),
 Department of Tourism (DoT).
 House No. 20, Syed Jamal Uddin Afghani Road University Town Peshawar,
 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. 25000.
pd.kite@pk.com, procurement.kite@gmail.com
 Phone No. +92 91 9216370-72. Website: www.kite.pk

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COURT NOTICE

HARIPUR

In the Court of Muhammad Saqib Jan, 26 Civil Judge, District Haripur, District Haripur, Case Title: Usaid Asghar vs Asghar Ali Din. Date of next Hearing: 06-12-2024. Notice To: Muhammad Asghar Ali Din. Residence of Ghani Tahir, District Haripur, Present address: Out Of Country, England. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendant will not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in the Court at 11 am dated 06-12-2024 the proceeding will be taken ex parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court at 06-12-2024. (20242776325)

ATTOCK

In the Court of Atiqul Zia Chaudhary Civil Judge Family Court Attock, Attock, Case Title: Muhammad Adnan Haseeb vs. Gul Farid Chaudhary of Attock. To: Muhammad Adnan Haseeb son of Gul Farid Haseeb resident of New Colony House No. 3, Plot 04, Kila Khos Rahat Colony, Attock, District Attock, presently residing at United Kingdom, you are shown to attend the Court personally or through counsel or attorney on 02-12-2024 at 11 am to attend ex parte proceedings. (20242776325)

UK

In the Court of Hina Ghaffar, Civil Judge 111/1/2/3, Attock, Case Title: 20/20 Family Run Rahat Adnan vs. Tania Haseeb etc. 1. Tania Haseeb On Muhammad Haseeb 2. Muhammad Adnan Haseeb 3. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 4. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 5. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 6. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 7. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 8. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 9. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 10. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 11. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 12. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 13. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 14. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 15. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 16. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 17. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 18. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 19. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 20. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 21. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 22. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 23. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 24. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 25. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 26. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 27. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 28. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 29. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 30. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 31. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 32. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 33. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 34. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 35. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 36. Dr. Farid Chaudhary 37. 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CIA building declared sub-jail for arrested PTI protesters

By Munawar Anjum

ISLAMABAD: The Crime Intelligence Agency's building in the federal capital has been declared a sub-jail by the Islamabad administration to detain the leaders and workers of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) during the ongoing protests.

Officials of the capital police told Dawn that during the ongoing protests, the capital police have arrested over 500 local leaders and workers.

Due to the engagements in security duties and shortage of space in the lockups of the police stations police, arrested political individuals will neither be interrogated nor transported anywhere else, they said.

"Currently, all the prison vans and other police vehicles are deployed at different locations as per the security plans. Detaining such arrested persons in the lockups of the police stations is a risk under the prevailing circumstances," the officers said.

Sources said more police stations will be declared sub-jails if required.

The arrests were made from various areas including Faisalabad, Tarnoli, Sanghar, Chungi No 26, Express Chowk, Noor, Nilore, Shams Colony, and Barigalla.

So far, the capital police have registered seven cases against the leaders and workers of the protesting party for creating unrest and undermining public safety.

The Shams Colony police have booked two nominated and 325 unidentified persons, Shuhad Town 402, Barigalla 382, and the Shams Colony police have booked 450 accused in multiple cases. Similarly, the Nilore and Tarnoli police have booked over 350 and over 300 individuals respectively under various charges.

According to the FIRs, the implicated individuals were armed with weapons, iron punches, iron rods, batons, stones and sharp marble pieces.

The police claimed that the accused resorted to aerial firing, petrol vehicles with stones and blocked roads, chanting anti-government slogans and forcefully closing shops.

Moreover, the capital police Monday partially opened major thoroughfares where shopping containers were placed to block the flow of traffic.

At those blockage points, the barricades were partially removed to make way for a single vehicle to cross at a time.

The police officers further said that the convey of the PTI leaders and workers coming from KP comprised over 34,000 persons. Till late in the evening, the protesters had crossed the Hukla interchange.

Meanwhile, the Inspector General of the Islamabad Police (IGP), Syed Ali Nasir Raza, visited D-Chowk and various other areas to inspect anterior measures.

He met the officials of Islamabad police and other law enforcement agencies to boost their morale, who according to him were performing duties in order to maintain peace in the federal capital.

On the occasion, IGP Islamabad instructed the officials to be highly alert to deal with any emerging law and order situation.

"We'll take every possible measure to protect the lives and property of citizens and thwart adversities," he said while addressing the officials.

He further said officials were performing their duties, putting their best efforts to maintain peace in the capital.

All the officers have been directed to stay vigilant in their respective areas and be alert the personnel to deal with any untoward situation.



A WORKER dyes the thread used in carpet weaving at his workplace in Sothi Town, Peshawar. — APP

28 recently repaired schools handed over to education dept in Khyber

Officials say repair of 43 others damaged schools nearing completion

By Our Correspondent

KHAYBER: Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP) handed over 28 government schools that were recently repaired to education department in Khyber tribal district while 43 others were nearing completion, officials said.

Addressing a ceremony in Bana on Monday, SRSP education campaigners Wakil Khan and Syam Khan said that some of militancy-affected and some old school buildings were repaired with the financial assistance of Project for Commercial Development Office (PCDO).

They said that education department had identified at least 24 schools for boys and girls for repair and rehabilitation in Khyber tribal district under the project.

They said that those 24 schools were fully repaired in the first phase of the project and were handed over to education department.

The speakers said that SRSP now started similar activity in its second



A VIEW of a newly constructed primary school building in Siph area of Bana. — Dawn

phase with a target of repairing 95 partially damaged schools. They said that repair of 43 of the total 95 schools was nearing completion while work on the remaining 52 schools was underway.

"The main objective of this project is not only to rehabilitate school buildings but also to create conducive atmosphere, which could attract a maximum

number of set of school children to these schools," said Wakil Khan.

He said that SRSP would also provide free bags to those students, who would secure good positions in examinations.

Former president of Sipah Khidmat-i-Khaliq Committee Haji Sheikh Ghal, village chairman Javed Akhbar, social workers Turab Ali and Haji Ghafar Khan thanked SRSP for reconstruction and rehabilitation of the damaged schools.

Officials of education department said that the reconstructed and rehabilitated schools were identified on the basis of their existing conditions as some of these institutions were constructed in 1970s and 1980s but no repair was conducted since then.

They hoped that with the completion of the second phase, students' enrolment in Khyber would increase as the reconstructed schools were also provided with solar systems and bathrooms facilities.

Earlier, China Aid project had also announced reconstruction of more than 50 fully damaged government schools in Bana.

Officials said that 51 of these militancy-affected schools were reconstructed and would be handed over to education department in December.

They said that only two schools were still awaiting reconstruction as work was delayed due to land issue as the owners of the previous school building failed to provide the required land for its reconstruction.

Officials said that the Chinese government also pledged to provide furniture worth Rs2 million to primary schools, Rs4 million to middle schools, Rs6 million to high schools and Rs9 million to higher secondary schools in Bana.

Mohmand residents protest delay in road construction

By Our Correspondent

MOHMAND: Mohmand Political Alliance, an umbrella organisation of civil society and political parties, held a strike in Dikghard area here on Monday against the prolonged delay in the completion of work on the Peshawar-Mohmand highway.

The protesters said that construction work on the road had been started four years ago but it was yet to be completed.

They said that the government collected millions of rupees per month in taxes from mineral deposits of Mohmand district, but the roads in the region were lying in a bad shape.

The protesters alleged that the provincial government spent all funds on rallies and processions against the federal government and ignored development of the province.

The Mohmand Political Alliance includes JUI-F, ANP, Jamiat-ul-Islami, Qasmi Women Party, Haq Da Tehreek, PTM, PPP, Mohmand Welfare Organisation and social activists.

The alliance's president, Jamnath Khan Mohmand, JUI-F district councillor Maslana Arif Haggani, JI councillor Muhammad Saad Khan, ANP president Malik Saifullah, Mohmand Welfare Organisation president Mir Asad Mohmand, PTM leader Razaq Rafi, Ayaz Qari and QWP leader Malik Maslana and others addressed the protesters.

They said that different roads in the region, including Karaga, Sar Lora and the Pak-Afghan trade route of Gomal were lying in a state of disrepair.

The speakers said that after the former Fata's merger with KP, the problems of tribesmen had increased.

15 years on, work on Chirah Dam still hasn't started

By Khalid Adnan

ISLAMABAD: Despite the passage of 15 years after approval by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ENEC), work on Chirah Dam could not be started while the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad are facing a growing shortage of water.

ENEC had approved the project in 2009 for providing 15 million gallon per day (mgd) water to the residents of Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

According to its PC-I, the project was supposed to be completed in 2013; however, no practical step was taken to construct the dam on Soan River near Chirah village.

The project worth Rs5.3 billion was a joint venture of CDA and Small Dam Organisation (SDO) and the latter was supposed to construct it.

The project was supposed to be ready in 2013, according to its PC-I.

The issue came under discussion recently at a meeting on water issues which was chaired by CDA Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa and attended by representatives from SDO and Water

and Sanitation Agency (Wasa) Rawalpindi.

The meeting was held that the proposed dam was at estimation stage. Sources said that the CDA chief showed his displeasure over the inordinate delay and directed to remove obstacles for early start of the project.

"We do agree the project is facing an inordinate delay, but there is no delay on our part as SDO is the executing agency," said director media CDA Shahid Kiani. He said that many years ago the CDA had paid Rs852 million to SDO for the project. "Recently, in a meeting this issue was discussed in detail," he said.

The sources said that during the meeting it was decided that the CDA will hold a meeting with SDO to make a decision.

"In coming days, we will hold a crucial meeting in this regard," an official said.

The sources said keeping in view the inflation rate the cost of the project had increased manifold.

It is relevant to note that both Rawalpindi and Islamabad have been facing shortage of water, Islamabad is a water scarcity-hit city as CDA has been supplying around 65mgd to urban areas while the total need of both urban and rural areas is more than 220mgd.

The people in rural areas are mostly dependent on water boring and other small schemes of the district government.

On the other hand, during the last almost three decades, no new dam has been built to overcome the shortage of water in Islamabad which has only three major sources - Sandy Dam, Kharghar Dam and tobaccoella. However, it also gets around three mgd of water from Rawal Dam, which mainly provides water to residents of Rawalpindi.

Over the years, various proposed projects including a Ghazi Sarotha/Tarbeta dam designed to provide 100 mgd each to Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Chitral carryover Dam in Islamabad, Shuhada Dam and proposed Batura Dam remained under discussion in various meetings of the CDA. However, no step was taken to start construction work. These projects are still at the feasibility stage.

Earlier, various departments were dealing with water related issues. However, last month the federal government transferred the administrative

control of all water-related departments from the Metropolitan Corporation of Islamabad (MCI) to the CDA, as the civic agency was complaining that it was unable to address the shortfall of millions of gallons under the current arrangements.

After getting control of the department, the CDA set up a new organisation "Islamabad Water" headed by Director General Sardar Khan Zimri.

A summary on the basis of the decision made by the federal cabinet had said the Water Management Wing of CDA was unable to meet a shortfall of 40mgd in urban areas and cannot extend its services to the 1.1 million people living in villages around Islamabad.

"The gap in supply and demand for clean water is increasing day by day due to positive change in urban population and climatic conditions. There is no integrated planning and management, no water and sewerage infrastructure master plan is available and no water and sewerage business plan has ever been prepared."

After being convinced by CDA's point of view, the cabinet approved the summary but it is yet to be seen how Islamabad Water will perform.

Daily wage earners – the silent victims of every political turmoil

For labourers like Mohammad, a single lost day of work can mean going hungry

By Aamir Yasin

RAWALPINDI: With commercial and social life coming to a standstill in the garrison city in the wake of the ongoing political unrest, Mohammad Naseem, a daily wage labourer, prepares to return home empty-handed for the second consecutive day.

He had arrived at Raja Bazaar with his tools of subsistence to find work for the day, only to see potential employers vanish.

For a daily wage like Mohammad, a single lost day of work can mean going hungry.

The 32-year-old labourer says he works as a construction worker and usually arrives at Raja Bazaar early in the morning in hopes of being hired for the day but for the last two days, he could not find any work due to the political turmoil that has engulfed the twin cities in the wake of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) protest call.

"I borrowed money from a relative to put the meal on the table for my five-member family the other day, hoping that tomorrow, the situation would improve."

But road closures have poured cold waters on his hopes, and those of thousands of others like him.

Another labourer, Mohammad Kamran, said that he earned Rs1,000 to Rs2,000 daily but the confusable situation has dampened his chances today.

"Despite the placement of freight shipping containers on Maroon Road, I came in



LABOURERS sit along 9th Avenue as no customer has turned up in the wake of road blockades in Islamabad on Monday. — Online

search of work, only to return empty-handed."

For those living hand-to-mouth, situations like these become more than just inconveniences.

The toll of the lockdown is not limited to daily wagers only, as vendors, especially small ones find it hard to survive amid low customer footfall.

"In the last two days, not a single customer has turned up here," said Mohammad Ahsan, a shopkeeper.

Zafar Ahmed, an owner of a clothing shop in Saddar, expressed similar concerns, complaining about the slow pace of business activities.

Although Saddar remained open, it too seemed devoid of customers as people continued to avoid travelling.

The Rawalpindi district administration has closed down the Soan Bridge, Marri Chowk, Mori Mahal Cinema, Waris Khan, Gawalmandi, Pirwaddah and other areas.

While trucks are parked on Mall Road in front of PTCL offices, a single lane going towards the Armed Forces Institute of Cardiology remains open to traffic.

Due to the closure of entry and exit points of Rawalpindi city and the Cantonment areas, oil tankers failed to supply fuel to filling stations, sparking fear of fuel shortages from Tuesday (today).

All Pakistan Oil Tankers Association spokesperson Noman Butt said keeping in view the situation in Lahore, Islamabad and Rawalpindi, transport to these cities has been halted.

"This is significantly impacting the transit of tanker lorries carrying PGL products, which could lead to disruptions in supply," he said.

He said that the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) is actively engaging with the district administration but permission has not been granted to restore the supply of the fuel to filling stations.

He said most of the petrol filling stations have stock for only one or two days.