



## Spat over registration of seminaries escalates

• CII members, ministers term proposed legislation 'flawed'; say seminaries need to remain under education ministry • Fazl asks why president won't sign bill passed by parliament; says plan of action to be announced after meeting Taqi Usmani on 17th • Wafaqul Madaris Al Arabia chief decries politicisation of seminaries, assures Naqvi of support for govt stance

By Kalbe Ali and Fair Muhammad

ISLAMABAD/CHHABRAEDIA: Even as Maulana Fazlur Rehman continued to demand presidential assent for the recently passed bill on seminary registration, the government on Monday — backed by members of the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) — came out in opposition to the very piece of legislation it had passed, saying the draft had many flaws and should not be approved.



COUNCIL of Islamic Ideology member Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ahrabi addresses a conference, on Monday. Federal ministers Chaudhary Saib Hussain, Khadid Magbool Siddiqui and madrasah board members are also present. —Courtesy CII

approved unanimously, demanding that the government of Pakistan maintain the current system of madrasah registration.

The resolution called for consultation with the management of all madrasah boards before any new legislation in this regard. It also called for retaining the Directorate General of Religious Education (DGRE) and keeping seminaries linked with the country's education system.

Under the Societies Act of 1960, religious seminaries were supposed to be registered by the relevant deputy commissioner's office. Traditionally, there were

five seminary boards — four belonging to the respective mainstream sects: Barelvi, Shia, Deobandi, and Ahle Hadith schools of thought, while the fifth board administered the affairs of seminaries under the control of the Jammat-i-Islami.

However, after three years of consultations following the 2014 Army Public School Peshawar attack, these five boards agreed with the government that seminaries should be placed under the administrative control of the Federal Education Department.

Subsequently, the Directorate General of Religious Education (DGRE) was established and the government also decided to make rules allowing the establishment of more madrasah boards. Since 2019, ten new boards have been established, which seemingly pose a challenge to the monopoly enjoyed by the five traditional seminary boards.

In October this year, the government had agreed to introduce

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BANNU: Police officials take part in the last rites of a martyred cop, on Monday. —Dawn

## Security forces kill 6 terrorists

Policeman martyred in Bannu; attack on Levies foiled in Qila Abdullah

Omair Raheem

Services Public Relations (SPR) said.

Security forces effectively snuffed their location and killed two of them, while one was captured with injuries, adding that weapons and ammunition were recovered from them.

According to SPR, the outfits were involved in terrorist activities against security forces, as well as targeted killing of innocent civilians.

A search operation was being conducted to eliminate any other militant found in the area, as security forces were determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country.

Bannu clash

Meanwhile, two militants were killed in a clash

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## SC questions rationale behind handing over May 9 cases to military courts

Justice Hilali asks if corps commanders' residences were declared 'offices' after the date

By Nasir Iqbal

ISLAMABAD: The Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court, hearing intra-court appeals (ICAs) against the Oct 23, 2023 order nullifying the trial of civilians by military courts, raised questions about whether anti-terrorism courts (ATCs) had issued speaking orders explaining their reasons before handing over the accused involved in the May 9 violence to military courts.

"How did the ATC hand over the accused to the military?" asked Justice Nasim Akhtar Akbar, a member of the seven-judge bench headed by Justice Aminuddin Khan.

The bench was hearing on Monday multiple ICAs challenging the trial of civilians in military courts in connection with the May 9, 2023 violence.

On Dec 13, 2023, a regular bench of the Supreme Court, by a majority of five to one,

had suspended the operation of its Oct 23 short order. The earlier order had declared as illegal the trial of 105 civilians identified for their alleged involvement in the May 9 violence.

The Dec 13 decision allowed military courts to commence the trial of the accused but barred them from announcing any final decision, whether convicting or acquitting, until the pendency of the

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## Concern in West as Syria starts transition

• Rebel leader holds talks to form new govt • West calls on HTS to shun violence before diplomacy • Israel launches over 100 airstrikes • Europe stops processing Syrians' asylum pleas

DAMASCUS: The leader of the rebels who ousted Bashar al-Assad to take control of Syria, on Monday, began discussions on transferring power, a day after setting power.

But as world capitals look to engage with the new rulers, many have expressed concern over violence, as well as the security of chemical weapons in the country.

After a day of celebration on Sunday, life seemingly returned

About 100 Pakistani students stranded in Syria will be airlifted from Lebanon, PM — Page 4

Syria's future: Editorial on Page 6

to Damascus on Monday, with traffic returning to streets and

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PEOPLE hold a large Syrian opposition flag at Umayyad Square in Damascus, on Monday. —AFP

## FBR proposes 'one phone per person' limit for travellers

By Mubarak Zub Khan

ISLAMABAD: Passengers arriving at Pakistan's airports should not be allowed to bring more than one mobile phone, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has proposed.

Last week, the revenue body issued SRO 2024/D/2024 of draft amendments to Baggage Rules, 2006 and sought opinions from stakeholders within a two-week period, which ends on Dec 13.

The FBR has proposed amendments to the definition of "commercial quantity" in rule 2 to restrict the number and worth of items including passengers carrying into the country.

Commercial quantity is defined as goods brought "for trading or pecuniary [monetary] purposes and not personal use."

As per the draft amendments, the value of "commercial quantity" would be capped at \$3,200.

If the draft amendments are approved, goods worth more than \$1,200 would be considered "commercial quantity" and confiscated.

Similarly, the draft

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## No immediate outcome from 'N'-PPP huddle

By Syed Irfan Raza

ISLAMABAD: The first meeting between the ruling PML-N and its main ally PPP, held on Monday to address mounting differences between both sides remained inconclusive, with neither party releasing any information or press statement about the outcome of the engagement.

The PPP issued a brief press release detailing the names of the members from both sides who attended the meeting held at the Governor's Annex in Punjab House.

The meeting was held to review the PPP's reservations regarding its representation in the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) and the lack of a

level playing field for the party's political activities in Punjab, which is governed by the PML-N.

According to PPP sources, the party formally expressed its annoyance over the PML-N not taking coalition partners on board while making key policy decisions.

Party leaders expressed particular concern over the practice of "hasty legislation" in parliament and categorically told the PML-N representatives that if they wanted continued cooperation from the party, they must change their attitude of taking coalition partners for granted.

The issue of interest slowdown also came under discussion, with PPP leaders telling the

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## ON OTHER PAGES



## Remittances rise by 34pc in five months

Remittances sent by overseas Pakistanis during the first five months of the current fiscal year jumped 34 per cent, but fell last month compared to the preceding month. The latest data issued by the State Bank of Pakistan on Monday shows that remittances could reach the target of \$20bn set by the government for this fiscal year. The sharp increase is an outcome of the crackdown on illegal currency businesses like Hundi and Hawala. Page 9

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## Timely police action results in arrest of murder suspect

By Our Correspondent

GUJRAT: Timely action of uploading the name of a murder suspect on the Provisional National Identification List (PNIL) by the police led to his arrest from Sialkot airport on Monday, in less than 24 hours of the crime.

Mohsin Iqbal, an expat from Italy, and his accomplices from Tibbi Chand village in Lalamusa opened fire on co-villagers Ali Hassan, Kaleel Azhar and Umar Iqbal following an altercation at a tert pegging competition near Hajj Muhammad village.

The three were attacked by Mohsin, Qamer and their 10 accomplices when they were returning to Tibbi Chand.

All Hassan succumbed to bullet wounds while being shifted to the Lalamusa Trauma Centre whereas Kaleel and Umar were shifted to the Aziz Bhatti Shahid Teaching Hospital with bullet wounds. Police registered a case against 10 nominated and two unidentified suspects under sections 302, 304, 146 and 149 of the Pakistan Penal Code on the report of Zulqarnain, a brother of the deceased.

Lalamusa Sodar Station House Officer Mohr Atique said that on the direction of Deputy DPO Dr Mustawer Alta Bajwa, he got the name of main suspect Mohsin Iqbal uploaded on PNIL within a few hours of the incident due to which the suspect was caught at the Sialkot airport on Monday morning.

He said the immigration authorities had handed over the suspect to the Lalamusa police whereas raids were being conducted to arrest the remaining suspects.



LAHORE: A family selects decorative items at Garpat Road in connection with the upcoming Christmas. —White Star

## PO arrested in KSA, brought back by police

By Our Correspondent

LAHORE: During the ongoing crackdown on dangerous fugitives hiding abroad, Punjab police arrested another proclaimed offender (PO), who had been at large for three years, from Saudi Arabia.

The fugitive, Sansaulah, was wanted by Rajanpur police in a robbery case.

Punjab police got issued a Red Notice by Interpol for the arrest of the fugitive, who was arrested in close coordination with Saudi police and brought back.

Sansaulah was handed over to Rajanpur police.

A police spokesperson said that with the latest arrest, the total number of the POs nabbed abroad this year has reached 97.

Punjab Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr Usman Anwar appreciated the Dera Ghazi Khan regional police officer (RPO), Rajanpur district police officer (DPO), and their team for the successful operation.

## Three kidnapped by Katcha area dacoits

RAJAHM YAR KHAN: Three men were allegedly kidnapped on Sunday night by Katcha area dacoits when they were going to Jamal Din Wali (JDW) Sugar Mills, some 40kms from here, for unloading sugarcane.

As per police and local sources, Akram Machi, Sarwar and Malik Javed Machi, were driving their sugarcane-laden tractor-trolleys from Katcha Chohan to JDW Sugar Mills.

When they stopped at Chaudhry Shoukat Petrol Pump, a gang of dacoits ambushed their truck, the sources said.

The dacoits left the tractor-trolleys at the filling station.

When the relatives of the drivers tried to contact them, they came to know that the three men have been kidnapped.

The incident occurred in Abadpur police station limits. —Correspondent

## CCPO suspends 12 wardens over traffic chaos around Adda Plot

Action taken after LHC judges, CCPO get stuck in traffic jam; wardens shift blame to lawyers' vehicles blocking road

By Asif Chaudhry

LAHORE: Lahore Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Bilal Siddique Kamran suspended 12 traffic wardens, including two inspectors, on Monday following severe traffic congestion near Rainbow's Adda Plot. The suspension comes in the wake of growing criticism of traffic mismanagement in Lahore.

The decision, termed unprecedented,

was taken after the CCPO himself, along with several senior judges of the Lahore High Court, was stuck in a massive traffic jam while attending a wedding ceremony. This marks the first instance of such direct intervention by the Lahore police chief, who issued suspension orders for multiple officers at once.

An official said the CCPO acted promptly upon witnessing the chaos, which caused significant inconvenience to senior judges and other motorists. The suspended wardens, however, shifted the blame onto lawyers attending the wedding in large numbers. They alleged that many lawyers parked their vehicles haphazardly, blocking the road, and used abusive language when asked to move their cars to the designated parking lot.

Earlier to this, senior politician of the PML-N Senator Pervez Rashid had also

faced an awkward position when his vehicle got stuck in the hours-long traffic blockade in Lahore a couple of months back. He brought the matter to the notice of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, raising questions over the inability of the traffic police to manage the heavy traffic congestion on the leading factors.

According to officials, traffic mismanagement has become a persistent problem in Lahore. The problem stems from a focus on revenue generation as wardens are given task under various campaigns. Many key intersections and roundabouts remain frequently congested, contributing to mental stress among commuters.

The chief minister has repeatedly expressed dissatisfaction over the worsening traffic situation, calling for

improvements, but the situation has continued to deteriorate.

The Rawalpindi traffic chaos further highlighted the city's smogging traffic issues. Reports revealed that several wardens were allegedly absent from duty and instead at a nearby hotel, leaving motorists stranded. This discovery embarrassed the department, especially as senior judges were among those affected.

On Monday, the CCPO summoned the SP traffic and the wardens involved to his office for questioning. During the inquiry, the CCPO rejected their justifications as inadequate and admonished them for neglecting their duties. Following the inquiry, he suspended all 12 officers and referred the matter to the Internal Accountability Branch for further departmental action.

## Anti-Corruption Day moot 'NAB distanced itself from controversies in two years'

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: A seminar held to mark International Anti-Corruption Day here on Monday was told that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has "distanced itself from the controversies" over the past two years.

The NAB Lahore hosted the seminar in which its Director General Anwar Mehsud, PMLD president Ahmed Bilal Mehsud and the National School of Public Policy Dean Muhammad Jamil Ahmed Afagi spoke.

"Some 45 percent of Pakistan's registered voters are youth, making their involvement crucial in the fight against corruption. Accountability efforts often face significant challenges, but NAB has distanced itself from controversies over the past two years, earning public confidence," Mr Mehsud said.

He urged the NAB to expand its awareness initiatives to colleges and universities, leveraging social media to reach the youth effectively. Reflecting on the influence of social media, he said that 80pc of the young population

became aware of the youth parliament campaign through digital platforms.

Mehsud asked the NAB to focus on addressing the youth's challenges, noting that corruption was a primary obstacle to resources available for young Pakistanis.

Mr Anwar detailed recent initiatives taken by the bureau's chief, such as monthly open forums, and highlighted NAB's commitment under the 2003 UNCAC convention to share information with member states to combat corruption.

Speaking on the event's theme, "Youth Against Corruption: Building a Brighter Future," he acknowledged the dual challenges of extremism and the lack of democracy impacting the younger generation.

He said the NAB Lahore had established 6,000 character-building societies in schools, colleges, and universities this year.

Mr Anwar stressed that tackling corruption required collective effort, noting that societal acceptance of corruption exacerbates extremism and disillusionment among the youth.

He said that NAB teams had

been organising awareness seminars across educational institutions to address these issues.

Jamil Ahmed Afagi said eradicating corruption entirely might be unrealistic but significant reforms could help control it. He observed that accountability officials in other countries maintained a distinct and independent presence in public life, an approach that could strengthen integrity.

During the ceremony, students who secured first position in various competitions were awarded certificates and cash prizes.

Additionally, the NAB officers who demonstrated exceptional performance throughout 2024 received merit certificates. The recipients of the best officer of the year award included Deputy Director Shehbaz Ahmed from NAB Lahore Headquarters Wing, Deputy Director Qudus Firdous from the Complaint Cell, Assistant Director Raaf Alam from Investigation Wing II, Deputy Director Zaidan Ali from Investigation Wing III, and Deputy Director Rab Nawaz Ranjha from Investigation Wing III.

## Arguments sought on election petitions of Elahi, spouse

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: An election tribunal on Monday sought arguments on the maintainability of election petitions by former chief minister Pervez Elahi and his wife Qasira Elahi challenging the results of Feb-8 polls in their respective constituencies in Gujrat.

The couple filed petitions challenging the results of NA-64 and PP-32 constituencies.

The petitions allege that the election commission altered the results from Form 45 to Form 47, leading to discrepancies.

Ms Elahi claimed she secured 172,000 votes in NA-64 against her nephew Sahib Hussain, who also contested election from PP-32 for the provincial assembly seat.

However, according to the ECP results Mr Hussain of PML-Q bagged 105,205 votes and Ms Elahi obtained 80,946.

Similarly, Mr Elahi obtained 4471 votes in PP-32 against 55,615 of Mr Hussain, who later relinquished the provincial assembly's seat and took oath as member of the national assembly of the Punjab Assembly.

Both petitioners requested the tribunal to set aside the official notification declaring their rivals as winners in both constituencies.

The tribunal comprising retired justice Mehsud Maglood Rajwa directed the lawyers for the petitioners to present arguments on the maintainability of the petitions first.

The tribunal adjourned hearing

til Jan 11.

FIA: A special court (Central-I) on Monday summoned the wife of former federal minister Moazzam Elahi in a money laundering case of the FIA.

Earlier, a lawyer for the family of PFI president Pervez Elahi filed an application, requesting the court to allow permanent exemption to the women suspects from personal appearance in the trial.

He alleged the FIA registered the case on political grounds and the women of Mr Elahi's family were unnecessarily implicated. He also claimed that the FIA's investigation had yet to establish any criminal evidence against the suspects.

Judge Saleem Ghuman observed that the women suspects should appear for one or two initial hearings, after which the request for permanent exemption would be considered. He adjourned hearing till Jan 6 with a direction to Tehseen Elahi, the wife of Moazzam, to appear in person.

The FIA alleged that the sons and the daughter-in-law of former chief minister Elahi committed money laundering through a law cadre employee of the Punjab Assembly. It said the suspects used bank accounts of Qasira Elahi Elahi, a peer of the assembly, to launder money.

The agency said unexplained transactions of millions of rupees had been traced in the accounts of the sons and the children of Elahi. It alleged that the assets of the sons had been found beyond his known sources of income.

## Pace of construction work on Thokar point accelerated

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The pace of construction work on the Thokar Niaz Beg entry/exit point remodeling scheme has been accelerated, paving the way to complete it by the end of this month.

Thokar — Lahore's busiest entry/exit point is being remodelled with widening of the road on both sides. Moreover, the empty places on both sides of the road are being fenced in a bid to avert accidents. Besides this, the signage and monumental related works are also underway.

"The completion of the project will help get rid of the traffic congestion and controlling vehicular carbon emissions," Lahore Development Authority Director General Tahir Farooq said during his visit to the project site on Monday.

"The project must be completed by all means in the ongoing month," he directed the officers present on the occasion.

He was briefed about the ongoing works with completion timelines. The asphalt and widening on both sides of the road has been completed.



According to a document made available to Dawn, the project involves construction of walkways, entry monument, entrance mast, road surfacing, installation of solar lights, fixing fencing with construction of feature walls, provision of proper signage and safety devices. Moreover, the a new police check post is also being constructed after demolishing the old one. Besides these, a stormwater drain is also



being constructed.

The road has also been widened to another 20-feet or so. The bushes grown on the road shoulders and other plants are also being removed and the departments concerned have been engaged to beautify the area with tree plantation.

RECOVERY: Lahore Electric Supply Company (Lescoc) teams recovered Rs1.76 billion from 126,718 dead defaulters in all

the five districts — Lahore, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara during 466 days of its recovery campaign.

Lescoc spokesperson told reporters on Monday that the company has recovered outstanding dues of Rs559 million from 12,308 defaulters in Northern Circle, Rs750 million from 16,028 defaulters in Eastern Circle, Rs660 million from 15,287 defaulters in Central Circle, Rs256 million from

8,520 defaulters in Southern Circle, Rs296 million from 11,787 defaulters in Nankana Sahib Circle, Rs559 million from 15,669 defaulters in Sheikhupura Circle, Rs228 million from 19,533 defaulters in Okara Circle and Rs505 million from 22,580 defaulters in Kasur Circle.

On the other hand, the Lescoc teams, according to the spokesman, have detected another 456 connections from where the customers were pilfering electricity in all its circles of five districts during its anti-power theft campaign in the last 24 hours. The teams also submitted FIR applications against electricity thieves, out of which 150 FIRs have been registered in respective police stations, while 27 accused have been arrested by the respective police.

Large commercial consumers were also found involved in electricity theft. Among the seized connections are 15 commercial, one agricultural, two industrial and 408 domestic. They were also disconnected and charged with detection costs.

All these connections were disconnected and charged with a total of 394,005 units as detection bill amounting to Rs14,035 million.

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## SC suspends order to de-seat MNA over floor-crossing

Lawyer argues Bazai was de-seated by ECP 'without examining the facts'

By Nasir Iqbal

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Monday suspended the Nov 21 order of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to de-seat member of the National Assembly (MNA) Asif Khan Bazai for floor-crossing by abstaining from voting in favour of 26th amendment against the PM's parliamentary party decision.

Only a day ago, the ECP completed the nomination process for the by-election on NA-262 (Quetta-I) seat that had fallen vacant following the 'disqualification' of Mr Bazai due to his 'defection'. He had joined the PM's-N after winning the Feb 8 elections as an independent candidate.

Headed by Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, the SC regular bench that had taken up a set of appeals by Mr Bazai against ECP's decision suspended the ECP order to de-seat him and postponed further proceedings until Dec 12.

The bench also comprised Justice Ayaz A. Malik and Justice Asad Ahmed Abbasi.

The ECP decision came in response to the reference moved by National Assembly speaker in terms of Article 63A on 'defection' from PM's-N parliamentary party and allegedly joining the Shariat-i-Mutahid Council II and thus violating the clear directions of the PM's-N issued on Oct 13, besides abstaining from voting on the 26th amendments bill, and failing to respond to the show-cause notice issued by the ruling party.

In the reference, the NA speaker also attached a declaration from the PM's-N party head under Article 63A (1) of the Constitution that Mr Bazai had joined the PM's-N.

The ECP in its order had held that Mr Bazai had made admission during the hearing before it that he had not given vote during the Finance Bill 2024 (Money Bill) from the PM's-N side, while the record of the commission as well as the NA show his status as still affiliated with PM's-N, it said.

When Mr Bazai's appeals were taken up by the SC bench, petitioner's counsel Faizur Aslam referred to the July 12 decision of the apex court regarding reserved seats in the National Assembly.

At this, Justice Shah wondered whether the counsel really wanted to cite the decision on the reserved seats.

However, Justice Asad Abbasi reminded about the Second Amendment in the Elections Act, 2017.

Justice Shah remarked if the July 12 decision on the specific seats had been implemented, but hastened to add, "Let's move forward anyway."

Justice Malik, however, wondered whether Mr Bazai was among the 81 members who the court had declared as PFI members.

The petitioner's lawyer argued that the ECP de-seated Mr Bazai under Article 63A, 'without examining the facts'.

On the other hand, as many as 23 independent and political party members filed their papers for the NA-262 (Quetta-I) seat, as the ECP had set Jan 16, 2025 as the date of by-election.

According to the ECP schedule, the scrutiny of nomination papers was to be completed on Dec 12, the day when the Justice Shah-led bench would resume proceedings in the case.



PERSONNEL of the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency Vessel bring back the crew members of the Subharullah fishing vessel in the North Arabian Sea, on Monday. The rescue operation was launched after an alert was issued that the fishing vessel, with 19 crew members onboard, had sunk near Karachi.—PTI

## Panel reviews bill to increase Balochistan's seats in Senate

ISLAMABAD: A Senate committee on Monday discussed the bill to increase Senate seats for Balochistan and called the move necessary due to the province's vast size.

The Senate Sub-Committee on Law and Justice, chaired by Senator Zamir Hussain Ghannio, convened at the Parliament House to review the Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2024.

The bill has been introduced by senators Mansoor Ahmed and Darooh Kumar of Balochistan Awami Party to "enhance governance and ensure equitable representation for the province".

The meeting on Monday was attended by senators Hamid Khan, Arshad Rafiqman, Mr Kumar and Ministry of Law and Justice officials.

Senator Kumar highlighted the urgency of more Senate seats from Balochistan, stating that the issue has been under discussion for five years.

He stressed that increasing the province's seats in the upper house of parliament from 65 to 80 would address Balochistan's multifaceted challenges.

Senator Ghannio endorsed the

proposal, emphasising the need for a "more inclusive representational model" for Balochistan.

Senator Khan also supported the bill, noting that the province's vast territory necessitated increased representation, not only in the Senate but also in the National Assembly.

Senator Rafiqman acknowledged the importance of the proposal but cautioned against rushing the process.

She emphasised that the constitutional framework is complex, and any adjustments to representation dynamics should be thoroughly examined in consultation with the Election Commission and Balochistan Assembly.

In concluding remarks, Senator Ghannio assured that the proposed increase in Balochistan's representation in Senate would not infringe upon the rights of other provinces.

He also underscored the need to address Balochistan's practical challenges through the increased representation.

The committee decided to forward the bill, along with members' suggestions, to the Standing Committee on Law and Justice for further deliberation.—Malik Asad

## Imran, Bushra testify in £190m Al-Qadir Trust case

Ex-PM denies charges, claims case is 'prime example' of political victimisation

By Malik Asad

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Imran Khan and spouse Bushra Bibi on Monday testified in the £190 million case, which pertains to the Al-Qadir Trust, with the PFI founder describing the corruption charges against him as 'politically motivated' orchestrated by his opponents allegedly with the support of state institutions.

The case centres on the transfer of £190 million from the UK's National Crime Agency (NCA) to Pakistan, in which it is claimed that the PFI founder and his wife illegally benefited through the Al-Qadir Trust. Mr Khan argued that the funds were

transferred as part of an out-of-court settlement between the NCA and Malik Riaz's family, with no involvement or personal gain for him or his family.

The PFI founder accused the ruling coalition and former military establishment of conspiring to remove him from power through a no-confidence motion in April 2022. He alleged that the subsequent corruption charges, including the current case, are part of a broader effort to tarnish his political career and dismantle the PFI.

"After my government was removed through a regime-change operation, a campaign of baseless cases against me and my family began. This case is a prime example of political victimisation," Imran Khan stated during his testimony.

The PFI leader maintained that neither he nor his family benefited from the Al-Qadir Trust, which he emphasised was established to provide quality education to less privileged students. "The Al-Qadir University Trust

is operational, serving the public, and has no connection to any financial irregularities," he said.

The former premier accused the National Accountability Bureau of acting on behalf of his political opponents, alleging that evidence concerning him was deliberately withheld. He also criticised the judicial process, alleging that false convictions were engineered to block his participation in future elections.

He claimed that his party members, supporters, and even family members had been subjected to harassment and wrongful imprisonment in the aftermath of the May 9, 2023, protests. "My political rivals have weaponised institutions to crush dissent and curb democracy," he said.

Mr Khan's spouse Bushra Bibi testified before the accountability court, accused the NAB of acting as a tool of political victimisation, targeting her and her husband after his contest from power. She stated, "I have been implicated in this case solely due to my rela-

tionship with Imran Khan, who has been a victim of political conspiracy since his removal as the prime minister. Despite being innocent, my husband and I have been subjected to repeated malicious prosecutions."

She highlighted that the charges against her in the Toshakhana case as well as other investigations, were baseless and driven by ulterior motives. She also pointed to the suspension of earlier convictions by the Islamabad High Court as evidence of their innocence.

Addressing allegations related to the Al-Qadir University Trust, Bushra Bibi defended its establishment as a philanthropic endeavour. "The university was founded as a noble initiative to serve less privileged communities in remote areas. The evidence clearly shows that no undue advantage or personal gain has been derived by me, my husband, or our family."

Accountability Judge Waqar Javed Raza adjourned further hearing till Dec 12.

## CJP assures district, sessions judges of good environment, safety in Gwadar visit

Down Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Yahya Afridi on Monday visited Gwadar and held a meeting with district and sessions judges of Turbat, Punggor, Washak, Musakhel, Chagat, Harmai, Awaran, Barkhan, Khairat and Zhob.

The CJP's visit to farthest districts of Balochistan, according to an official statement, was part of the policy of the CJP to visit remote districts of south province personally to assess facilities and challenges being faced by judicial officers in dispensing justice in those remote areas and it is part of the CJP's commitment to enhance service delivery and ensure access to justice in far-off areas.

During the meeting with district and sessions judges, the CJP assured judicial officers that he would ensure that they were given good environment, where they could work smoothly and safely.

The CJP further underscored the importance of upholding the dignity of judicial officers, whether presiding over a civil court or a superior court and maintaining the majesty and integrity of the judiciary across the nation.

Acknowledging the unwavering dedication of judicial officers serving in remote and underprivileged areas of the country, the CJP commended their exemplary efforts. He encouraged them to further strengthen their resolve and prioritise adjudication of cases to ensure justice is delivered efficiently and effectively to litigants.

He requested respective high courts to ensure that the best judicial officers were posted to such districts with a minimum term and that these officers are well looked after.

He proposed that foreign training and other opportunities should also be provided to such judicial officers on priority basis by the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan (LJCPC).

The CJP clarified that these measures are not intended to undermine

the support already provided by the provincial government and high courts but rather to supplement it.

The CJP also presided over another meeting to discuss critical issues pertaining to correctional system and approved the formation of a sub-committee for Balochistan.

The meeting was attended by Chief Justice of Balochistan High Court, Hashim Khan Kakar, Justice Abdullah Baloch, retired Justice Nasir Ahmad Lagrove, Syed Shahab Ali Shah, Muzammil Jafri Ansari, Shairi Uskin Kani, Mr Shadab Bibi Baloch, Mr Zarghuna Barooch and Mr Roshane Barooch.

The sub-committee will visit various prisons and submit a comprehensive report suggesting reforms for improving the system.

The sub-committee, led by Justice Abdullah Baloch as convener, includes Justice Nasir Ahmad Lagrove, Mr Roshane Barooch as coordinator, Mr Zarghuna Barooch and Mr Shadab Bibi Baloch as members along with



GWADAR: Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi chairs a meeting on jail reforms, on Monday.—APP

representatives from the Inspector General of Prisons, Balochistan, and the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan (LJCPC).

The sub-committee will develop actionable recommendations addressing the issues of undertrial prisoners, implementation of rehabilitative programmes within prisons — including

vocational training, mental health support, and educational initiatives — and measures to prepare inmates for successful reintegration into society after their release.

Nasir Iqbal in Islamabad, Saleem Shahid in Quetta and Refman Baloch in Gwadar contributed to this report

## Afghan diplomat, FM Dar discuss 'deep-rooted relations'

By Haqir Sajjad Syed

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Afghanistan continued their renewed engagement on Monday, with Afghan Chargé d'Affaires Saad Ahmad Shakoor meeting Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar to discuss bilateral ties.

The Foreign Office (FO) issued a statement on the meeting, noting that the two discussed the "deep-rooted ties" between the nations and agreed on the need to "strengthen mutually beneficial relations".

This marks the second ministerial interaction in recent weeks, following a meeting between Pakistan's Chargé d'Affaires in Kabul, Ghazi Nizamani, and Taliban Defence Minister Mullah Yaqoob.

The two sides look to be trying to mend ties that had been frayed by the use of Afghanistan soil by terrorists to carry out attacks on Pakistan.

FO spokesperson Muntaza Zahra Baloch at a media briefing last week said counterterrorism was the focus of Afghan talks. Reports suggest the Taliban may be relocating TTP fighters from border areas to Ghazni.

Special Representative for Afghanistan Amb Mohammed Saifullah was also present in the meeting, while Saifullah and Shakoor met separately as well.

Later, the Afghan embassy in Pakistan said Shakoor discussed issues pertaining to trade, problems faced by businessmen, regional connectivity, Afghan refugees and students during his meetings with the FO.

## Lawmakers assail railway authorities for 'hiding' graft details

Due to continued lack of transparency, Senate panel refers matter to privilege committee

By Amin Ahmed

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Railways came under sharp criticism at a meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Railways on Monday due to repeated non-compliance with the committee's direction to disclose details of alleged mismanagement and corruption in one of the largest state-owned organisations.

Due to continued lack of transparency, the committee referred the matter to the privilege committee which will now review whether the withholding of information constitutes a breach of parliamentary privilege.

"It seems increasingly clear that the Pakistan Railways is deliberately withholding vital information from

this committee," said the committee's chairman, Senator Saifullah Khan.

There were sharp observations from lawmakers, particularly Senator Shabaz Awan who criticised the railway authorities' repeated failure to provide necessary information about actions taken against corruption, in the FIR's consecutive meeting of the committee.

He said the committee had previously set a deadline for the railway authorities to present details of the action taken against corruption, but the latter failed to comply with the directive.

"Despite several reminders, the railway authorities have not delivered required details, leaving us with no choice but to take this issue to the next stage," Senator Awan said.

While noting that the railway officials had cited a large number of cases pending in courts, NAB and FIA as a reason for the delay, he asserted that there was no excuse for the "lack of transparency".

NAB and FIA representatives present at the meeting informed that all

cases referred by Pakistan Railways for enquiry have already been completed, except a few which have been recently referred by the ministry.

According to Senator Awan, the railways is currently involved in numerous legal disputes, with cases pending before both civil and sessions judges, some of which have been indefinitely postponed.

"The land dispute is another serious issue," he said, revealing that 13,615 acres of railways land had been occupied, of which only 1,170 acres were retrieved. He said that the railways failed to take decisive action despite the land being worth millions of rupees.

Senator Awan criticised both past and present governments for their lack of sincerity in addressing the challenges facing the national rail service. "None of the previous or current administrations has shown any commitment to reforming Pakistan Railways," he lamented.

The committee members also expressed concern about discrepancies in the information provided by the

Pakistan Railways' top officials.

Senator Awan said should the railways continue to withhold information, he would take the matter into his own hands by making the information public. "If they do not provide necessary information today, I will ensure that the details I have are made public," he warned.

Senator Awan also condemned the railways' response to the Quetta Railway Station blast, noting that not a single senior official visited the site of the incident.

Ghazki accident probe

Senator Saifullah Sarwar Khan Nyazee pointed out that name of a BS-19 officer, Tariq Latif, who was the divisional superintendent of Pakistan Railways in Sukkur at the time of the deadly train accident at Ghazki in June 2021 and was included in the inquiry case of the incident, was sent on deputation to the National Highway Authority as a member of the inspection team in BS-20.

However, secretary of the Ministry of Railways said that after the inci-

dent the officer was issued a show cause and an inquiry against him is pending. The committee chairman expressed surprise how come the officer was sent on deputation to another ministry while the inquiry was still pending. He regretted that even after three years, the enquiry had not completed yet. He directed representation of Tariq Latif and also decided to write a letter to the secretary of establishment for the same.

It was also recommended to the ministry of railways to expedite the inquiry of the Ghazki train accident case.

The committee was told that the Pakistan Railways CEO who was appointed during the caretaker government was still working in the same capacity. The committee lamented that the CEO's appointment had been made on a temporary basis.

The committee lamented that even after the directions of the committee to make Ghazki station a stop for Truggan Express and Refman Bibi trains, the order has not been complied with.



STUDENTS hang on a Suzuki Van on a road in Islamabad oblivious to the fact that it may prove fatal — Online

# About 300 Pakistani students stranded in Syria will be airlifted from Lebanon: PM

By Jamal Shahid

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Monday that Pakistani students stranded in Syria would cross over into Lebanon by land and then back to Pakistan after an arrangement was reached.

Speaking at a reception hosted by the embassy of Qatar celebrating the National Day with a message of progress and friendship, the prime minister said that about 300

Pakistani students needed to be evacuated and brought home and the prime minister of Lebanon had promised complete support on the matter.

Ambassador of Qatar Ali Bin Mubarak Al-Khater welcomed dignitaries, including Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, friends of the embassy, and members of the diplomatic community to the grand celebration marking the founding of the State of Qatar by Sheikh Jassem bin Mohammed bin Thani.

PM Sharif appreciated

cordial and friendly ties between Pakistan and Qatar. He was optimistic about the \$3 billion investment in diverse sectors, adding the financing would have a significant impact on the national economy.

A delegation from Qatar would soon visit Pakistan to materialize the investment pledge, he said.

The ambassador of Qatar highlighted the significance of the National Day as a reflection of his country's journey from its foundation to becoming a modern, independent state, recognised

globally for its development and commitment to shared prosperity. "Under the wise leadership of His Highness, the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Qatar has made remarkable strides in humanitarian, economic, social, and environmental spheres, establishing itself as a model of sustainable growth," the ambassador said.

He emphasised Qatar's dedication to humanitarian efforts, its role as a mediator in conflict resolution, and its ongoing partnerships with interna-

tional organisations to support communities affected by crises.

The ambassador also shed light on the flourishing relations between Qatar and Pakistan.

"Our ties are rooted in mutual respect and have seen exceptional progress in trade, investment, education, and culture. Qatar is committed to expanding this cooperation for the mutual benefit of both nations," he said.

Highlighting recent initiatives, he mentioned Qatar's support for educa-

tion, disaster relief, and flood rehabilitation projects in Pakistan. "These efforts underscore the deep friendship between our countries," the ambassador noted, adding that high-level talks had reinforced a shared vision of strengthening the strategic partnership between the two nations.

The ambassador reaffirmed Qatar's dedication to fostering closer ties with Pakistan and working collaboratively toward a future of shared progress and prosperity.

# Lahore High Court judge may take charge of IHC after Justice Farooq

Insiders claim three LHC judges are being considered for transfer to IHC

By Malik Asad

ISLAMABAD: An Islamabad High Court (IHC) Justice Ameer Farooq is expected to join the Supreme Court, the judicial bureaucracy is reportedly planning to bring a judge from the Lahore High Court to lead the IHC after the incumbent CJ's elevation.

Traditionally, the senior puisne judge of a high court is appointed as the chief justice, but the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) earlier this year introduced new rules to bypass the seniority criterion in light of the 25th Amendment.

The JCP proposed that the chief justice of a high court could be appointed from among the panel of five senior-most judges.

For instance, Chief Justice of Pakistan Yasir Afridi, who was number three on the seniority list, was appointed as the CJ by the special parliamentary committee, bypassing senior puisne judge Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Munir Akhtar. Likewise, the incumbent Chief Justice of Lahore High Court Justice Ahsan Nadeem was at number three on the seniority list but senior puisne judge Shujaat Ali Khan and Justice Ali Baqir Nojafi were superseded by the JCP.

In the IHC, Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani is the senior puisne judge who was appointed on Dec 23, 2015. Other judges in the seniority order are Justice Mianqul Hassan Anwar, Justice Tariq Mahmood Jahangiri, Justice Babar Sattar, Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan, Justice Arshad Muhammad Tabir, and Justice Suman Rafiq Idrisi.

Sources told Dawn that the names of LHC Justice Sadique Ali Khan, Justice Shehram Sarwar Chaudhry, and Justice Sardar Mohammad Sarfaraz Dogar are being considered for their transfer to the IHC and it is likely that one of them will be made the IHC CJ.

The date of appointment of Justice Khan is May 27, 2012, Justice Chaudhry and Justice Dogar are June 9, 2015. Hence, all these judges are senior to the IHC judges.

Article 200 of the Constitution says: "The President may transfer a judge of a High Court from one High Court to another High Court, but no judge shall be so transferred except with his consent and after consultation by the President with the Chief Justice of Pakistan and the Chief Justice of both the High Courts."

It may be mentioned that earlier LHC Justice Sardar Mohammad Aslam, Justice M Rizal Khan and Justice Iqbal Hameedur Rehman were transferred to the IHC under the said article and were appointed as the chief justice of the Islamabad High Court.

However, President of the Islamabad High Court Bar Association (IHCBA) Riazul Ali Azad said that the bar would not welcome any judge from another high court to take charge of the IHC.

He said that the IHCBA would strongly resist any such move and hold a protest at Constitution Avenue.

He demanded that the IHC CJ and the upcoming appointment of the additional judges would be made from among lawyers practicing in the federal capital.

# NA committee for vehicle fitness certification system in capital

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: A parliamentary committee on Monday called for immediate steps to combat air pollution, including establishing a vehicle fitness certification system in the federal capital.

The National Assembly Standing Committee on Climate Change at a meeting stressed the need for the establishment of a fitness verification system by the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and the chief commissioner's office to regulate emissions from over one million vehicles in Islamabad.

The committee met with acting chairman MNA Shaukat Pervez in the chair to discuss the escalating air pollution and its broader implications for public health and environmental sustainability.

Besides, the committee called for expediting improvements in diesel desulfurisation processes and enforcing higher fuel quality standards.

To address seasonal smog, the committee emphasised the importance of coordination with the motorway police to prevent stubble and waste burning along highways.

The Environment Protection Agency was directed to finalise hospital waste management rules, ensuring proper regulation of waste incineration facilities.

EPA outlined the major contributors to Islamabad's air pollution, including vehicular emissions, construction dust, industrial emissions, and solid waste burning. Trans-boundary pollution from neighbouring provinces, particularly stubble burning in Punjab, was highlighted as a key seasonal factor exacerbat-

ing the smog problem in the capital.

A briefing showed that Islamabad's Air Quality Index (AQI) consistently exceeds safe levels with particulate matter (PM2.5) identified as the primary pollutant.

Discussing the issue of poor air quality in other cities particularly in Lahore, the committee expressed deep concern over the rising health risks associated with the poor air quality, including respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.

It was noted that AQI in Lahore recently crossed 1,000, alarming both national and global stakeholders. The committee emphasised the urgent need for a coordinated, multi-departmental approach to mitigate these issues.

The committee also reviewed steps taken by the Punjab Environment Protection Depart-

ment to mitigate air pollution in the province. It appreciated the department's initiatives, including stricter monitoring of industrial emissions, promoting cleaner brick kiln technologies and regulating vehicular emissions through enforcement measures.

The committee stressed the need for sustained progress and enhanced coordination across regions to address trans-boundary pollution effectively.

Meanwhile, the committee deferred the "Pakistan Environmental Protection Amendment Bill 2024" (introduced by MNA Nadeem Siddiqi) to the next meeting.

Besides of this, the meeting was attended by MNAs Tabira Awan, Aqeel Malik, Mansoor Razaque Malhotra, Dr Shaukat Rabbia Adam Soomro, Syeda Shabira Raza and Awan Haidar Jakhar.

**DOW UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES**  
Baba-e-Urdu Road, Karachi-74200 Pakistan.  
Tel: 9915754-57 Ext: 5014 Website: www.duhs.edu.pk

No. DUHS/W&S/2024/1337 Dated: December 9, 2024

## TENDER NOTICE

Dow University of Health Sciences (DUHS), Karachi is a Public Sector University invites e-bids through e-Pak Acquisition & Disposal System (EPADS) from well-reputed Companies / Folders / Firms having registration with Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), Income Tax Department, Sindh Revenue Service Board & Sales Tax.

S. No.	NAME OF WORK	METHOD OF PROCUREMENT
1	PROCUREMENT OF EVENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR 5TH ALL PAKISTAN DUHS - ONE DAY HEALTH INNOVATION EXHIBITION (REF NO: DUHS/W&S/171)	Single Stage - Two Envelope Procedure as per Rule 40 sub-rule 2 of GPF Rules 2010 (amended upto date)

Security Fee: Rs. 1,000/- (Rupees One Thousand Only Non-Refundable in Stage of Pre-Qualification / Detailed Draft or Tender of Dow University of Health Sciences, Karachi. Bid Security and Performance Security as mentioned in the bidding document.

E-bidding documents as per detailed terms and conditions, specifications and requirements are available for the registered bidders on Sindh Public Procurement Regulatory Authority's EPADS at <https://portal.sindhprocure.gov.pk/W> and University website <https://duhs.edu.pk> on the payment noted above (non-refundable) on any working day except the day of opening of tenders.

The electronic bids must be submitted using EPADS before closing time **31-12-2024** at 10:00 Hrs. Manual bids, shall not be accepted. Electronic bids will be opened on **31-12-2024** at 11:30 Hrs.. The tender fee (non-refundable) and earnest money of total bid (refundable) in the form of a Pay Order or Demand Draft issued by a scheduled bank of Pakistan in favor of Dow University of Health Sciences, Karachi should be submitted at the 5th Floor of Administration Block (DMC Campus) near Civil Hospital before the deadline for submission of Electronic Bids through EPADS.

In case of any unforeseen situation resulting in the closure of the office on the date of opening or if Government declares Holiday the tenders shall be submitted/opened on the next working day at the same time & venue. The Procuring Agency reserves the right to reject any or all bids subject to relevant provisions of SPP Rules, 2010 (Amended upto date) and may cancel the bidding process at any time prior to the acceptance of a bid or proposal under "Rule-25" of said Rules.

For any query for e-bidding, contact the Office of the undersigned (DMC Campus), 5th Floor Administration Block, Baba-e-Urdu Road near Civil Hospital Karachi.

**DIRECTOR**  
Works & Services  
Dow University of Health Sciences, Karachi

## AJK PM urges global action on HR violations in occupied Kashmir

By Tariq Noqash

MUZAFFARABAD: Aam Jinnah and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq on Monday urged the ongoing violations of fundamental human rights in Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir a test case for the world's conscience.

In his message on the eve of International Human Rights Day, he said the protection of human rights was the shared responsibility of nations, and December 10 reminded the world of the principles upon which global peace and human development were established.

"This day should be utilized to raise our voice against the atrocities being committed in occupied Kashmir," he added.

The AJK premier pointed out that the people of occupied Kashmir were not only fighting for their right to self-determination but also for the fundamental human rights guaranteed under the United Nations Charter.

"The Indian state has not only deprived Kashmiris of their birth right but also their fundamental human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Charter, and other international covenants," he said.

He noted that India's illegal actions, including the revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status in August 2019, had intensified human rights violations, describing the move as "a heinous violation of the UN resolutions."

Urging the international community to act decisively, he said: "It is high time for the UN and other influential world governments to focus their attention on resolving this lingering dispute, which has been the root cause of unrest and violence in the region."

The principles of global peace and human development demanded attention to the plight of the oppressed, he added. He reiterated his government's commitment to intensifying efforts on international platforms to expose Indian atrocities and advocate for the basic human and democratic rights of the Kashmiri people.

**INVITATION FOR REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

**Skill Development Program for Global Workforce Readiness and Economic Empowerment**

The Government of Sindh is committed to developing a skilled workforce capable of meeting international market demands through training programs aligned with internationally recognized and regulated certificate / degree frameworks. This initiative aims to equip students with internationally recognized certifications, promote entrepreneurship, and reduce reliance on government employment.

The College, Higher & Technical Education Department with the prior approval of the competent authority invites proposals from professional service providers to design and implement Skill Development Programs that align and is regulated by international standards and address both national and international market needs.

To ensure transparency and compliance, only national and international service providers, including public and private sector universities, that obtain "Allowed to Work" status through the Evaluation Committee will be recognized as legitimate partners. These entities will be authorized to engage with Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVET) institutions and PSUs across Balochistan.

Additionally, the "Allowed to Work" status granted by the Evaluation Committee will supersede all previous certifications and approvals. Any prior authorizations will be deemed canceled and withdrawn, requiring fresh approval through the Evaluation Committee process.

**Objectives of the Program**

- Develop a globally competitive workforce certified through internationally regulated degree frameworks.
- Facilitate job placement in global and regulated markets, ensuring qualifications meeting international requirements.
- Promote entrepreneurship and economic self-reliance by supporting graduates in launching their own ventures.
- Establish a transparent mechanism for recognizing legitimate service providers to maintain the quality and integrity of skill development programs.

**Key Requirements for Proposals**

- Evaluation and "Allowed to Work" Status**  
Proposals will be reviewed by an Evaluation Committee to assess their alignment with program objectives, compliance with regulations, and overall feasibility.  
Service providers must secure "Allowed to Work" status through the evaluation process, which will serve as the basis for granting them legitimacy.  
Only service providers with valid "Allowed to Work" status will be issued No Objection Certificates (NOCs) and permissions to engage with TEVET institutions and PSUs.
- Internationally regulated certification and degree programs**  
Certification and degree programs should be delivered in partnership with globally recognized boards, universities, or accreditation bodies.
- Guaranteed Job Placement and Market Alignment**  
Proposals must ensure job placement pathways by directly linking to internationally regulated degree programs, targeting high-demand industries.  
Certifications and degree programs should guarantee employability in both local and international markets, particularly by regulated international certification and degree programs professional.
- Financial Sustainability**  
Proposals must include a comprehensive financial model, highlighting self-financing mechanisms, scholarships, and stipends, provincial/federal funding or international donors' intervention.  
Collaboration with micro-financing institutions to provide post-graduation financial support for skills be mandatory incorporated.
- Outcome-Oriented Approach**  
Proposals should detail measurable outcomes, including employment rates, entrepreneurial success stories, and long-term economic impacts, supported by tangible data.  
Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness must be included.
- Collaboration with Stakeholders**  
Service providers must demonstrate partnerships with internationally recognized certification boards, global organizations, and provincial Government TEVET entities and Public and Private Sector Universities.  
Proposals must be supported by donor agencies; provincial or federal governments must disclose funding sources and feasibility plans.

**Submission Guidelines**

Qualified service providers are invited to submit detailed and comprehensive proposals addressing the following:

- Program design and structure, ensuring alignment with internationally regulated degree frameworks.
- Financial models, funding sources, and sustainability plans.
- Strategies for job placement and entrepreneurship support.
- Partnerships with certification boards, micro-financing institutions, and global stakeholders.

**Deadline for Submission: 27.12.2024**

Proposals will undergo a transparent evaluation by the Evaluation Committee to determine eligibility for "Allowed to Work" status. Only providers with valid "Allowed to Work" status will be issued NOCs and granted formal permissions to engage with TEVET institutions and Public Sector Universities (PSUs) of Sindh.

Contact for Queries and Submission "Room No. 22, First Floor, Block No.2 Civil Secretariat, Zarghoun Road Quetta. Contact No. 991-8203267"

PRO No. 2287/09-12-2024

Bastion Office (Academic)  
College, Higher & Technical Education Department

# Strict security being provided to projects, Unicef assured

By Saleem Shahid

QUETTA: The Balochistan inspector general of police (IGP), Muzammil Jafar Ansari, has said that strict security measures are being taken to ensure safety and security of all development projects initiated by the UN and its affiliated organisations in Balochistan.

The UN's principal security coordinator, Paul Farrell, and his delegation visited the IG office to discuss the safety and security of UN's development projects.

IGP Ansari informed the UN team that Balochistan police were taking robust action in relation to public vaccination efforts.

"In anti-polio vaccination campaigns, police personnel are tasked with safeguarding police workers to ensure maximum children are administered polio drops," he said.

IGP Ansari added that Balochistan police were on the frontline role in securing and protecting police workers across the province during polio vaccination campaigns.

Mr Ansari highlighted the establishment of a modern Women and Juvenile Facilitation Centre in collaboration with United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

This centre provides facilities, particularly to women and children, who may not be able to voice their concerns at police stations. They can file complaints and receive preliminary assistance at this centre, he said.

The IGP also took the UN team on a tour of the museum and library at the IGP office, where they were briefed on historical artifacts displayed in the museum.

The UN team appreciated efforts of Balochistan police for security and welfare of women and children and praised their contribution in this regard.

# Spat over registration of seminaries escalates

Continued from Page 1

The Societies Registration (Amendment) Act, 2024 as it attempted to woo the JUI-F chief for the sake of the 26th Amendment.

This piece of legislation, which would revert control of seminaries from the education department to the DCs, was approved by both houses of parliament. However, it was not signed by President Asif Ali Zardari, who returned the bill to the National Assembly in late October due to "several technical flaws".

When the Mawana learnt of this development, he threatened to launch protests against the government to force it to accept the bill. But as the ruling allies closed ranks, even the opposition PTI refused to join the JUI-F's proposed agitation, with Barrister Gohar Ali Khan saying that the 2019 decision to mainstream madrassahs was made through "national consensus".

When the Mawana learnt of this development, he threatened to launch protests against the government to force it to accept the bill.

At Mawana's event, Education Minister Dr Khalid Maqsood Siddiqui said that the rollback of the JUI-F agreement was not acceptable to his party, nor would it be in the interests of the country.

"Madrassah reforms have been a serious issue in terms of national security as well, and at the same time, the boards of religious seminaries had demanded that madrassahs be placed [under] the federal education department in 2019".

He said that agreement was a need of the hour at the time, to save seminaries from international pressure in the wake of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) regime, and terrorism

related allegations. Allama Jawad Nagvi, who belongs to one of the nine seminaries, stressed that madrassahs needed to stem four stigmas — involvement in politics and agitation, terrorism, sectarianism, and terrorism. His suggestion was endorsed by the gathering.

On the other hand, Information Minister Asim Taseer said there were 'legal complications' in the proposed legislation and extensive consultations were being carried out to reach a solution that would be acceptable to all stakeholders, the Associated Press of Jhalikan quoted him as saying.

The minister said that a few years back, a system was devised after extensive consultations to bring religious seminaries into the mainstream.

"Registration of 18,000 seminaries is the result of the efforts of the DGHE," he said, appreciating its efforts. He said the suggestion given by the scholars had been noted, and a solution would be found after thorough consultations.

However, he refrained from attacking Mawana Fakhir Rehman, saying that the JUI-F chief was "a respectable leader whose suggestions would be given due importance".

Minister for Religious Affairs Chaudhary Nadia Hussain, CI Chairman Dr Raghib Nawazi and others also addressed the conference.

In a related development, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited Jamia Ashrafia in Lahore and met Mawana Fakhir Rehman, the patron-in-chief of Wilayat Madaris Al Arabia, the board of

seminaries belonging to the Deobandi school of thought. According to AFP, Mawana Fakhir Rehman told the minister there should be no politics over seminaries, and expressed a desire to play a positive role on the issue.

seminaries belonging to the Deobandi school of thought.

Speaking to reporters at the residence of JUI-F leader Barrister Arshad Abdullalab in Uthmaniyah on Monday, the JUI-F chief questioned what was keeping President Asif Zardari from signing the semi-act law, when other bills were being signed into law.

He recalled that the idea in 2019 was to introduce a new system, but what eventually emerged was just an 'agreement'.

The government is linking seminaries with an executive order, while we want to bring them within the ambit of the law, he said.

The Mawana also said that he did not want a clash with the state, but accused the government of trying to "divide them".

He recalled that at the time of the passage of the 26th amendment, the president, the prime minister, all parties and institutions had agreed to the draft, which was eventually passed by parliament.

"Now, if the president can sign other constitutional bills, why he cannot sign the registration of religious madrassahs? Madrassahs are free to register with any institution. We will not compromise on the freedom and autonomy of madrassahs," he said.

He said that Multi Tasking Unit had convened a meeting of madrassah boards on Dec 17 and a plan of action would be given there.

# Forces kill 6 terrorists

Continued from Page 1

with the police about an hour after they targeted a cop near Keri Bridge on Hayed road in Hama.

Regional Police Officer Imran Shahid told journalists that two armed militants riding a motorcycle attacked Head Constable Ali Bahadar Khan while he was on his way to the carromment police station for duty.

He said the cop was critically wounded and was immediately shifted to DHQ Hospital, but he could not survive.

Mr Shahid said the incident prompted swift and commander of Quick Response Force (QRF) were sent to the area to chase the attackers and ensure their arrest.

The regional police chief said that police commander came across the militants in the Mayran area, where an exchange of fire forced the attackers to abandon their motorcycle and take shelter inside a house.

He said an additional force, including policemen from nearby police stations and counter-terrorism (CTD) commander led by DPO Ziauddin, was dispatched to the area to assist the QRF personnel.

"The militants opened fire on law enforcers when they tried to lay a siege to the house, injuring a cop identified as Amanullah Khan," he said, adding that the suspects switched weapons from the house terrace and used them against the police.

He said police, backed by an armoured personnel carrier, responded effectively and neutralised both militants, adding that two brass pistols and ammunition were seized from the dead militants, while the wounded cop was shifted to hospital, and later referred to Peshawar for better treatment.

He said one of those killed was identified as Safer alias Hama, adding that he was the cousin of militant commander Ibrahim alias Zarar. He further said that both the

most were trained by the police and CTD for their involvement in over a dozen militancy-related cases.

most were trained by the police and CTD for their involvement in over a dozen militancy-related cases.

Attack on Levies killed In Qila Abdullalab, two suspected attackers, who wanted to target a Levies station in the Masai Adha area, were killed in a bomb explosion.

Levies officials said the blast took place in an orchard behind the Levies police station.

The Levies and personnel of other forces shifted the bodies to the trauma centre in Masai Adha.

Qila Abdullalab Assistant Commissioner Shaukat Baloch said the killed men were apparently carrying the bomb to attack the Levies station on a motorcycle but before reaching their target, the device went off killing them both on the spot.

"They wanted to attack the Levies police station but the bomb exploded in an orchard behind the Levies police station," the officer said, adding that the bodies were blown up and were beyond recognition.

He said a motorcycle was found at the explosion site while pistols were recovered from the deceased's possession.

It was the fourth blast in Qila Abdullalab over the past two weeks.

Levies officials said that bomb disposal squad was called for cordoning the area. Further investigation is in progress.

Security forces praised President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif commended the security forces for carrying out a successful operation against terrorists in the Karachi area.

In separate statements, the president and the prime minister paid tribute to the officers and personnel of the security forces for killing two terrorists and arresting another during the operation.

With input from AFP

# CM Bugti vows to increase local govt funds

QUETTA: The Balochistan government has decided to increase the funds for local government institutions, depending upon their service delivery.

This was announced by Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti during his visit to Keri, where he inaugurated the new office of the municipal committee.

He emphasised the importance of functional local government institutions.

The chief minister said that resolving civic issues at grass roots level would save citizens from the hardship of travel, as most of their grievances could be addressed at local level.

The chief minister also pointed out that if local government institutions play an active role, it would reduce unnecessary pressure on provincial machinery.

Minister Mir Asim Kirri and Chief Secretary Shaukat Qadir Khan also accompanied the chief minister.

Earlier, Sui municipal committee chairman Inayatullah, along with other dignitaries, warmly welcomed CM Bugti upon his arrival at the municipal committee office.

The municipal committee head also presented a certificate to the chief minister.

—Staff Correspondent

# FBR proposes

Continued from Page 1

amendment proposes allowing passengers to bring only one mobile phone, in addition to the one already in their personal use, from abroad. It suggested that any other mobile phones in their baggage be confiscated.

Another amendment proposes changes to the process of handling confiscated items. Earlier, commercial quantity goods seized by authorities were released after the payment of duties or fines.

A document available on FBR's website currently states that commercial quantity goods would be released after the payment of a fine equal to 10 per cent of the value of goods in addition to duties and taxes.

Now, the FBR has suggested an amendment to rule 17, which reads "The goods brought in commercial quantity shall not be released on payment of duty, taxes and redemption fine."

# SC questions rationale behind handing May 9 cases to military courts

Continued from Page 1

government-instigated ICAs.

On April 8 this year, the federal government, through Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Arain, informed the Supreme Court that 20 individuals arrested for their involvement in the May 9 violence had been released after serving their sentences to allow them to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr with their families.

"In their own reasons based order from the ATC courts while handing over cases to the military courts?" Justice Nasim Akhtar Afghan asked, directing senior counsel Khawaja Haris Akhruel, representing the defence ministry, to note down the queries and respond at the end.

During the hearing, Justice Mansoor Hali questioned whether the corps commanders used their residences as offices and whether these premises were officially declared as offices. How true is it that the idea of claiming their houses as their offices emerged only after the May 9 incident, the judge asked.

Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail urged the lawyers representing various

petitioners to assist the court in reaching a definitive conclusion by compiling the case as expeditiously as possible.

During the hearing, Justice Mansoor Hali, addressing TV analyst Hakeemullah Niaz, inquired whether he had met his son Hassan Niaz, who has been in physical custody for several months.

Mr Niaz replied in the affirmative, but explained that due to the court's earlier decision to stay the arraignment of final judgments by the military courts, a hostage-like situation had been created. Let the military courts be allowed to announce their decisions so that their decisions could be challenged before the superior courts, he said.

However, Justice Aminuddin Khan cautioned him against making such statements in court.

Additional Attorney General (AAG) Chaudhry Asim Rehman suggested that since the military trials of the accused had been completed, they should now be allowed to prosecute their verdicts.

However, Justice Hali observed that recent the stay at this stage would imply the court's jurisdiction to try civilians.

During the hearing, Khawaja Haris argued that it was incorrect to suggest civilians cannot be tried in military courts,

stating that the Pakistan Army Act (PAA) also applies to employees of private companies affiliated with the armed forces.

Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, however, observed that there were a specific category of civilians, such as those working in the Ordnance Factory.

Mr Haris maintained that the PAA broadly covers civilians, without distinguishing specific roles.

Justice Syed Hassan Arshad Razi asked about the trials of those involved in the Army Public School attack.

The counsel explained that the trials of individuals responsible for the APS massacre were conducted when special military courts were established under the 21st Amendment.

Justice Mandokhail recalled that the Constitution had been amended at that time specifically to facilitate the trial of civilians by military courts.

The court later adjourned further proceedings until Tuesday.

SCJP's position

Also on Monday, the Constitutional Bench imposed a fine of Rs20,000 on an application moved by former chief justice of Pakistan Jawwad S. Khawaja, seeking to adjourn the case regarding the trial of civilians in military courts until a final decision on the pending challenges to the 26th Amendment.

The application had argued that

resolving the challenges to the 26th Amendment was crucial before proceeding with the ICAs related to military courts. It had contended that the Constitutional Bench was formed by the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP), which itself was established through the 26th Amendment.

If the amendment were declared null and void, the actions of the JCP, including the formation of the current bench, would be "irregular".

Arshad Sharif murder case

Separately, the Constitutional Bench directed the government to submit a detailed report on the tragic killing of journalist Arshad Sharif.

AAG Rehman informed the court that the federal government had prepared a mutual legal assistance (MLA) agreement with the Kenyan government, which is set to be signed on Tuesday. Therefore, the government could not file the report.

The Supreme Court had earlier taken suo motu notice of the journalist's killing. The government previously informed the court that a draft MLA had been finalised to formally seek assistance from Kenyan authorities in gaining access to suspects involved in the case.

On July 8, 2023, the Kenyan High Court in Nairobi declared that the 2023 killing of Arshad Sharif by Kenyan law enforcement personnel was unlawful.

## TENDER NOTICE

Sites are invited for the following:

Tender No.	Description	Closing Date/ Time
PD/GEM/PT/20631/24	Pneumatic-electrical instruments spares (Harness, Level transmitter, Gauges, Modules, Valve solenoid etc.)	30 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20196/24	Pre-qualification of contractors for civil works at Adhi Dhoak Sultan Fields	30 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20209/24	Pre-qualification of contractors for general services at Adhi Dhoak Sultan Fields	30 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20207/24	Pre-qualification of contractors for event management services at Adhi Dhoak Sultan Fields	30 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20206/24	Pre-qualification of contractors for supply of utility water at Adhi Dhoak Sultan Fields	30 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20205/24	Pre-qualification of contractors for control system maintenance works at Adhi Dhoak Sultan Fields	30 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20204/24	Pre-qualification of contractors for crane of transportation services at Adhi Dhoak Sultan Fields	30 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20203/24	Cyber security assessment and gap analysis of IT infrastructure	30 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20202/24	Data backup & recovery software license renewal	30 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20621/24	Spares for gas turbine (lock wire & wire brush) and housing bearing	30 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.

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

### Extension in Bid Closing & Opening Dates

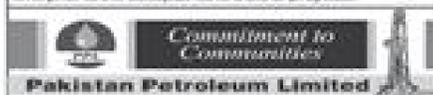
Closing and opening dates of the following tenders have been extended as follows:

Tender No.	Description	Revised Closing Date/ Time
PD/GEM/PT/20602/24	Pre-qualification of contractors for UPS maintenance works at Adhi Dhoak Sultan Fields	26 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20609/24	Pre-qualification of contractors for compressors maintenance at Adhi Dhoak Sultan Fields	26 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20606/24	Pre-qualification of contractors for vibration analysis and machinery diagnostic services at Adhi Dhoak Sultan Fields	26 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20645/24	Pre-qualification of contractors for generator maintenance at Adhi Dhoak Sultan Fields	26 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20620/24	Spares for Brown Lubrite corrosion inhibitor injection packages	26 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20640/24	Pre-qualification of manufacturers or their authorized representative for supply of TEO-chemical	30 Dec, 2024 1500 hrs.
PD/GEM/PT/20602/24	Pre-qualification of manufacturers or their authorized representative for supply of MEA-chemical	07 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 respective revised bids closing date/ time.

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



**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

Subject: Provision of Hotel Guest House Booking, Lodging, Food, and Event Management services

Tender Publication Date: 20 November 2024

Closing Date of the Tender: 10 December 2024 at 14:00 hrs hours

Reference No.: 2024/PAP/OT/PAK/10048

The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) in Pakistan, would like to invite interested vendors to participate in this invitation and submit their Technical and Financial offers, as per the technical specifications.

The registration with UNICM (<https://www.unicm.org/portal/Registration>) is a mandatory requirement in order to participate in this tender. Please visit [www.unicm.org](http://www.unicm.org) for more information on how to register your company in UNICM.

**PARCO PAK-ARAB REFINERY LIMITED**  
A Pakistan-Arab Joint Venture

**Tender Enquiry # 6000004187-24-51**

Bids are invited from the eligible parties for the following:

Scope Description	Est. Amount	Est. Submission / Bid & Tender
Civil Installation services at 8 PARCO Stations and Terminals for IP temporary installation.	PK. 10,000,000	Est. Submission Through SAP ARSA (4.12.2024, 1500 hrs) Bid Opening (4.12.2024, 1500 hrs)

Tender Issuance Date / Tender Date: 07 Nov, 2024

SAP ARSA PORTAL LINK: <https://www.saparsa.com.pk>

Single Stage - Single Envelope Bidding Process shall be adopted for the above mentioned Tender. Detail of bidding procedure is available in the Tender Documents. Interested parties are invited to obtain the Tender Document by submitting the Sealed copy of the duly signed and stamped request on Company's letterhead along with bank copies of valid NTN certificate in SAP ARSA Portal.

The Service Provider should be registered with the federal income tax authority and shall maintain its status as an authorized taxpayer with three tax authorities while rendering services to PARCO.

PARCO reserves the right to accept any or all bids or to cancel the entire bidding process without assigning any reason whatsoever before or after the Bid Opening.

This advertisement is also available on PARCO website: <https://www.parcopk.com/Pak-Arab-Refinery> & SAP ARSA Document.

Manager Materials

**In memory of**

**Roshen Ali Bhimjee**  
11th August, 1917 – 10th December, 1998

**A visionary, a friend and an inspiration**

He has left us a legacy we are proud to follow.  
His memories will always be with us.

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# Syria's future

**A**s Bashar al-Assad boarded a plane for exile in Moscow, the police state his family had ruled for over five decades swiftly crumbled. The Syrian strongman's opponents have pledged to build a 'new' Syria, but it remains to be seen whether the country's new rulers will be able to build an inclusive, democratic state. While Mr Assad was able to hold off the armed opposition since the 2011 civil war erupted, indeed gaining the upper hand with Russian and Iranian help, the willpower with which the Syrian Arab Army collapsed in the face of a rebel assault led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham was stunning. Today, HTS — a 'reformed' radical outfit once associated with Al Qaeda — is in a position to be the leading power broker in Syria, though there are also other claimants to the throne of Damascus.

It was largely Mr Assad's hubris that led to the downfall of his regime. The ex-president failed to learn lessons from the fate of other Arab strongmen — Saddam Hussein, Muammar Qaddafi, Hosni Mubarak — who met untidy deaths. If he had negotiated a peaceful transfer of power with the moderate Syrian opposition, tens of thousands of innocent lives lost in this bloody conflict could have been saved. But external factors were also at play in Bashar al-Assad's ouster. The Americans had long dreamed of regime change in Damascus, and on Sunday morning that dream came true. Israel, moreover, is quite pleased to see the back of Mr Assad, as Benjamin Netanyahu lauded the event as a "historic day". On the other hand, Russia has lost perhaps its closest ally in the Arab world, whereas a central pillar of Iran's 'Axis of Resistance' has fallen.

Looking to the future, after the euphoria subsides, the victors of this conflict will have to build a functioning administration. Large numbers of Syrians within the country and the diaspora are ecstatic, as many of them suffered under Mr Assad's autocratic rule. Yet, unless a viable post-Assad state emerges, such celebrations will be short-lived. The aim should be a democratic state where all of Syria's religions, sects and ethnic groups can live in freedom. But there are real dangers of rival factions fighting over power, and warlords running statelets along the post-Qaddafi Libyan model. A nightmare scenario is also possible, with the more extreme, sectarian factions within the Syrian opposition seizing power, and succeeding where the self-styled Islamic State group failed. This would have a devastating impact on the region and the world. Equally important is the need for external actors to respect Syria's sovereignty. Already, Israel has occupied land in the Golan Heights, while Tel Aviv and the US have been separately bombing targets inside Syria. Such destabilising activities must cease immediately as Syria tries to rebuild.

# Rights in peril

**I**n Pakistan's fraught landscape of human rights infringements, misery hangs in the air. What makes this year's theme for World Human Rights Day, 'our rights, our future, right now', more poignant is the state of justice and equality that is worsening by the day. Amid endless woes — the stifling curbs on free speech, enforced disappearances, the millions of out-of-school children, the climate crisis and its deleterious effects — it is the sheer scale of political vendetta that stands out as reflected in the large numbers of political activists in custody. The ransacking of homes, harassment of families, and arrests of politicians and political workers on allegations of 'terror' and anti-state activities — with scores jailed for extended periods, and without fair trial — violate democratic principles; they are reminders of past dictatorships. Age and health are no consideration as apparent in the case of Dr Yasmin Rashid, a septuagenarian political worker who is a cancer survivor. This political victimisation is an indictment of the ruling regime, which has been ineffectual in upholding the rule of law and the rights and dignity of Pakistani citizens. That these incarcerations are not listed in verified statistics is concerning and is a gauge of a dark time in our political journey.

Another blot that is set to grow darker is the state's digital rights record. As the HRCP correctly points out in a press release to mark Human Rights Day, "Tacit censorship has given way to more direct measures, particularly in the digital sphere, with increasingly stringent regulations and bans on social media platforms. ... The state must prioritise people's right to decent work and understand that beyond fair wages and collective bargaining, this right intersects with the right to connectivity for gig workers..." Indeed, one international study shows that in October, out of 111 countries reviewed, Pakistan was ranked 100 for its slow mobile and broadband internet speed, which severely compromised freedom of expression and the right to work. This picture should not be allowed to obscure the other disturbing realities: the vulnerability of religious minorities as well as sections of the general population, including women and children, who are routinely subjected to physical and emotional abuse. The negligible application of the laws and abysmal conviction rates confirm the need for a rights regime that goes beyond paying lip service to fundamental liberties.

# Learning from AJK

**T**he recent events in Azad Kashmir are a powerful example of how dialogue can play a constructive role in effectively responding to public dissent. Days of peaceful yet resolute protests against the controversial 'Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Ordinance, 2024' compelled the AJK government to engage with the people, listen to their demands, and ultimately repeal the contentious law. Even after the AJK Supreme Court suspended the ordinance, protesters amplified their call for accountability and justice. Remarkably, despite sporadic unrest, the government refrained from heavy-handed crackdowns, allowing citizens to exercise their right to assemble. Protests were recently held in Islamabad, too, by the PTI. But the party's march to the capital was met with an iron-fisted response. The protests were characterised by clashes with law enforcement, charges of excessive force against protesters and a wave of arrests. The tragic deaths of several security personnel and reports of PTI supporters killed highlight the human cost of a confrontational approach. Instead of fostering dialogue, the government — and the PTI — chose force. And the choice was made well before time, with the kind of over-preparedness on the part of the government witnessed in the lead-up to the events.

AJK's approach, while not without flaws, shows us the importance of upholding democratic principles. The government's decision to form a consultative committee, release detained activists, and meet public demands reflects a recognition of the wisdom in civic engagement. By addressing grievances, AJK defused tensions and reaffirmed faith in institutional processes. The political leadership must take a leaf out of AJK's experience. Engaging with dissenting voices, rather than suppressing them, can pave the way for meaningful resolution. Protests are not just acts of defiance — they are opportunities for growth. Heavy-handed responses only stifle this potential and risk alienating an already disillusioned citizenry. The path to a united nation lies in dialogue, tolerance, and respect for the people's voice.

# OPINION

BY ARIFA NOOR



# The more things change...

Do we truly have a reincarnation of Nawabzada Nasrullah amongst us?

**T**HERE is a new alliance man in town. It is Faizal Yasuda, the senator without a party. Owned by no one politically, but taken seriously by everyone, he is a man on a mission. He is on every talk show — on a panel and individually — and heard intently by those sitting opposite him. In the recent past, he has been quite the commentator on all developments political, and also the voice of doom and gloom. But that was just a phase, as was his earlier one as part of the PTI, when he was on the front line, whether it was the scene of a terrorist attack in Karachi or the site of an Indian plane downed by Pakistan.

But while he continues to share information about the doom and gloom, it is now spread more evenly. There are fears for Imran Khan's life as well as dates for the Faizal trial, as well as blunt analyses about the PML-N's expired brand.

But let us think that there is no light at the end of the proverbial Pakistani political tunnel, there is a new message, and a new mission about peace, love and bringing everyone together. It's a future with *Men Sami Sami* for all the parties (though the fate of N remains a little unclear). So much so that the man who once predicted the PTI would be left with no candidates in a general election is now worried about returning the party's mandate to them. It truly is a happy-sappy world.

Do we truly have a reincarnation of Nawabzada Nasrullah amongst us? The absence of the grand old man of politics has been felt acutely in past years, when the parties now in power were struggling to form and sustain an alliance.

This was true when the PTI was in power and in true form, when the PML-N is at the helm. Back during the PTI times, the PDM alliance (before it found love in Piraji) faced many a crisis, to the point where the PPP joined ways (and so did the ANP) with the rest.

The N and JUI-F took umbrage at the PPP's decision to accept BAP votes in the Senate, and the PPP walked out in a huff because the N and JUI-F took umbrage. Even back then, it was said that those leading the alliance just didn't have the patience or wisdom of the Nawabzadas and hence the alliance had fallen apart. But of course no one ever bothered asking who the invisible nawabzada was who later brought all the jilted parties together to oust the PTI.

I digress. Faizal Yasuda has decided Pakistani politics needs an alliance maker and a healing touch.

However, it is more challenging this time around. This is because, unlike earlier times, when all political parties were outside the tent and wanted to change places with those inside, as present either the parties are inside the tent or most can see the welcome mat laid outside the opening to the tent. Indeed, the tent didn't let in politicians to create the Q League, but welcomed those who didn't need to be christened.

This, of course, has left some with no reason to seek an opposition alliance, regardless of what they may say about their willingness to talk to the PTI. On the other hand, the PTI also continues its lone ranger act, averse to talking to the Q League of the present. This leaves behind the religio-political and ultra-nationalist parties, who too are wavering between the allure of power and the wilderness of the opposition, the JUI-F being a case in point. Does it really leave any room for an alliance and an alliance maker, even if he proves as vanilla as Nawabzada sahib?

Perhaps this is why the man in search of peace is not seeking out the parties in opposition, a la the old times (this was evident even from 2018 to 2023, when the PPP claimed to be an opposition party despite its government in Sindh). Instead, it seems he is reaching out to

those already inside the tent — the PPP and the MQM, other than the JUI-F. Times have changed, the parties' positions have changed, but the alliance has to be formed within the same parties that needed to be brought together in the 1990s, give or take an exception.

This may be because these meetings fit in well with the rumours in Islamabad of a new government led by the PPP instead of the PML-N. It is quite like the long-running saga in which plot twists simply meant the same faces dating one another, one after the other.

And while the good senator may argue it is because of the 'expired' PML-N brand, it might just have something to do with the purported reasons the N is in trouble. It's the lack of movement on the economy, where there are more committees and task forces than actual decisions. It is said to be coming some heart burn somewhere, as is the failure of the government to sound as effective as the PTI in winning over hearts and minds.

And, of course, the government's absence before, during and after the PTI protesters were forcibly removed from Islamabad — Mohsin Naqvi managed it all alone, with a guest appearance now and then by the information minister. And the latter's efficacy is far from established.

There is trouble in paradise, despite the pronouncements of the prime minister and the generous sharing of credit. The talk about the PTI and its mandate might just be a distraction — a distraction from the events of past days, which are better not spoken about.

As for the younger, more dynamic PPP leadership replacing the older, apparently tired PML-N faces at the helm, a rose by any other name will smell as sweet, to paraphrase Shakespeare. ■

The writer is a journalist.

## ASSAD FLEES SYRIA



BY JAWED NAQVI

# Straws in the Syrian whirlwind

**T**HE persistence of sectarianism almost always others in intellectual subterfuge in its wake. The lightning, if not spontaneous, takeover of Damascus by medieval militias is being predictably applauded by Western journalists as an overthrow of a 50-year-old family dictatorship. Some reports added 'revolt' to Bashar al-Assad's long and previous rule, a description that was carefully mythballed when it came to the horrific crimes still being committed by Benjamin Netanyahu.

If one is not alert, gleeful Western reports would suggest that bearing Syria, from Morocco on the Atlantic coast to Oman abutting the Arabian Sea, knitting North African regimes with Tel Aviv, Amman, Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, Manama, Doha, Muscat and Sanaa, secular democracy and human rights have been showing their blessings on the region day and night. Since the sunrise is ridiculous, how should we proceed to describe the events unfolding in the Levant, to assess them neither as overly chest-thumping nor as needlessly defeatist?

To answer the question posed by the West on Syria as liberating, not least since one of the (erstwhile) throat-cutting snakes in the rising group told CNN that "social diversity" had become their newly minted virtue, one needs to step back in time to link the brazen hypocrisy with its origins. And we should start not with the 1953 coup against the popularly elected government in Iraq. The UN has since acknowledged toppling the democratic Mossaddegh government, not so MR, the author of the coup.

Iran in 1936 was instructive differently, when Reza Shah issued a decree known as *Kashf-e-hijab*, banning Islamic veils, including hijab and chador. We are told the order was "swiftly and forcefully" implemented. The ban was lifted in 1941, but it had done the damage. The veil would become a symbol of resistance to the Shah even though women were free to dress as they wished until the Iranian Revolution of 1979. (It was interesting to see the CNN woman interviewing the chief of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) taking the precaution of covering her head with a scarf.) Enforcement of hijab has been the stick to beat

the Iranians with even though their democracy, rare in the region, is as good or bad as Assad's insofar as both are theocratic states. For Syria, which had a reasonably cosmopolitan polity under Assad, the absence of democracy was cited as reason for Western hostility. Truth be told, Assad's fall completes the tripling of the list of secular Arab regimes that challenged bigoted Israel and US with Soviet support. Yemen, Libya, Iraq and PLO stand already destroyed.

So, what's afoot in Syria? Three things come to mind. The march on Damascus targets China and Russia, to hobble their ambitions for BRICS. The presence of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the Kazan summit of BRICS in Russia and the offer to induct Ankara

into the club despite its being a Nato member, must have sent shivers down the spines of Western capitals. Erdogan's thinly veiled role in slipping up the storm in Syria, curious though it seems, may not calm nerves in the West. As things stood, Assad's Syria had also applied for BRICS membership and Iran is already there, together with Egypt, Ethiopia and the UAE. Saudi Arabia is expected to formally be on board. Perceptive fear of BRICS is a bipartisan affliction in Washington, and Donald Trump has warned against any move to "de-dollarise" the global economy. By most accounts, there is no BRICS move to challenge the dollar anyway, only a plan to skirt its troublesome impositions on vulnerable countries.

Significantly, although the storm did rock the boat for Iran and Russia, their boats still remain tethered to the Syrian jetty.

Significantly, although the Syrian storm did rock the boat for Iran and Russia, their boats still remain tethered to the Syrian jetty. And that could be a worrying story for the West in

the coming days. Russia has not vacated, nor seems to be planning to move out its military presence from the country, including its crucial naval base at Tartus.

And while the Iranian embassy was ransacked, portraits of slain Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah and the Iranian Quds Force chief Qasem Soleimani vanquished, both being staunch adversaries of the militants now controlling Damascus, Iran too is keeping its embassy running. On Saturday, it said it was moving out diplomatic families, but denied a report by the *New York Times* that it was pulling out military personnel. In fact, Iran's ambassador to Syria Hossein Akbari spoke to state TV to say the embassy was still open with five to six diplomats and was carrying out high-level meetings to follow up with the overall situation. Iran's state TV said HTS had guaranteed there would be no disturbance to the Syeda Zeinab shrine in Damascus. A meeting of the foreign ministers of Turkey, Russia and Iran in Doha on Friday was crucial in this regard.

Though the trio formed the Astana group in 2017 to stabilise Syria, Erdogan's difficult ties with Assad remained legendary. It's worth while, then, to ask why Iran and Russia didn't bail out Assad this time around. Were they surprised by the stealth and speed of the military? Or have the Astana trio sacrificed the unpopular Assad with a purpose?

True, Iran has lost its handy land link to Hezbollah. By most accounts, that option was torpedoed not by Israeli intervention of Hezbollah's supply routes in Syria, but because China and Russia have got bigger fish to fry. And Iran is too precious for both to be allowed into a fruitless military enterprise that wouldn't have stopped the Israeli genocide of Palestinians.

The Palestinians' rehabilitation now looks more double under an agreeable mechanism to be shouldered by Arab states and Turkey. Russia gets back to dictating peace in Ukraine while China steps footing over the flow of Iranian oil. The snakes in Damascus are enjoying good press, meanwhile, as the Afghan mujahideen once did. ■

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# OPINION

BY NIAZ MURTAZA



## Enigmatic Bhuttos

STATES traverse the democratic path in the vehicles of political parties, which are driven by political families in our region. One must review how their actions have shaped our tortuous political journey heavily, starting with the Bhuttos, our oldest, most colorful, federal-level political family.

Seldom politically in all eras since the 1950s, it exhibits an odd, schizophrenic persona that fights for democracy one step but under its next step in power. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was in our first, most successful and pro-US military set-up from day one. He initiated strong China ties but also backed Operation Gibraltar that led to the 1965 war. He then transformed into a hawkish nationalist icon and a socialist democrat to oppose the Yashwantrao Chavan deal, and launched the then western wing's first federal, socialist mass party.

But after toppling his patron autocrat, he allied again with the new one (Yahya) against fellow socialist democrat Mujib, to cause the tragic 1971 atrocities and division. In power, he gave our first rights-based, lasting Constitution, and strong but dependent Gulf ties. He started a nuclear programme for security. But security comes more from being at peace internally and regionally. He fired two opposition provincial set-ups, restarted army action in Balochistan, politicised the bureaucracy, overrode dubious nationalisation and only limited land reforms, declared Ahmadia non-Muslims, and nullified free speech. He rigged the 1977 polls, which led to his fall.

Since then, the Bhuttos have shown such schizophrenic merry games. They opposed Zia and Musharraf and other covert establishment autocrats to suffer the martyr of some family members as well as prolonged incarceration and the wrongful seeking of three PPP regimes. But in power, they upheld democracy through allegedly corrupt and inept set-ups at the centre and in the provinces; the Taliban's creation in the 1990s; bloody battles with the MQM; and dubious PPP deals. Besides, they helped in the establishment's toppling of opposition set-ups and initially refused to reappoint the Musharraf-led judges.

The PPP's few phases included the 18th Amendment, the Benazir Income Support Programme, and the first smooth civilian power transfer between two fairly elected set-ups in 2013, making 2008-2013 their least bad era. But all that was largely undone in the last two and a half years as part of a set-up that has delayed and rigged polls; harassed the opposition, media and civil society; defied the courts,

and, lastly, reversed judicial freedom via the 26th Amendment. Some say that the abbreviation should stand for 'Pride Puppets Party'. Newer generations have not learnt any lessons.

The review reveals some key points. The Bhuttos and the PPP have suffered more in opposition and may have better foreign, legislative and social sector focus than others. But their bigger mistakes mean they have arguably still caused more harm to democracy than any other political force in our history, despite others such as the PML-N, the PTI and the pre-1958 Muslim League having overall had records too — though perhaps more of them than the PPP in inflicting harm on democracy except the establishment. This is partly because more of them have the PPP's long span — for example, the PTI has been around for about 20 years. But even if we just take their first 20 years, their political aim arguably dwarfed others' wrongs.

To develop a better picture, I checked the democratic record of the top South Asian political families. But even among regional political families, liberal or conservative, and with longer spans, according to my analysis, the Bhuttos had the worst ranking.

How could they undermine democracy even more than right-wing, dispensationists, despite overtly displaying good traits like being democratic, socialist, secular, cosmopolitan and literate, with Berkeley-Oxford pedigree? Among the regional political families, only the Bhuttos are in red-inked. Perhaps the strong effect of a retrogressive culture makes even generations of liberal education at the best global schools. The Bhuttos will continue to rule South and may even rule federally, but apparently only with covert help. However, they may not improve their past record much.

Among others, the Muslim League's story under the founding fathers is the second worst, but it may anger state leaders if it is told. The Shuras provide a vivid story to tell, though it is shorter and duller. The Inam Khan/PTI story is short but strong. Like Scheherazade from Arabian Nights, I will tempt you to wait to hear those stories. ■

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BY SAMUEL RIZK

## Human Rights Day

THE year 2024 draws to a close amid profound turbulence: rising poverty, intensifying conflict, and deepening polarisation have tested societies across the globe. For Pakistan, these challenges are not distant or abstract; they manifest in the daily lives of its people, where economic inequality, climate vulnerability, and social exclusion amplify hardship. In this context, the September UN Summit of the Future served as a critical moment to restore faith in multilateralism and address today's most pressing global challenges.

For Pakistan, the summit's call for deeper international cooperation, revitalised governance, and a renewed focus on inclusion offer a timely framework for its development trajectory. On this International Human Rights Day, commemorating the 76th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and within the global 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, we reflect on how these global aspirations can shape Pakistan's local realities. The protection of human rights, especially for women, girls, and marginalised groups, must not just be a priority but the very foundation of sustainable development.

Pakistan's development challenges are pressing. Once classified as a country with medium human development, it now ranks 164th out of 193 countries in the 2023-2024 Human Development Index. Its gender equality gap persists as one of the widest globally, ranking 145th out of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Report 2024, with 28 per cent of women aged 15-49 reporting experiences of physical violence. These indicators reveal entrenched patterns of marginalisation and inequality that threaten not only individual well-being but also social stability and potential growth.

For Pakistan, the lesson of development pioneers like Nobel laureate Amartya Sen or Dr Mahabub ul Haq rings in profoundly relevant. Both emphasised that true progress comes from policies that prioritise people — expanding freedoms, empowering the marginalised, and creating equitable opportunities. As Pakistan grapples with economic and social headwinds, these principles must inform its path forward.

To bridge widening social fissures, Pakistan must pivot towards an inclusive development model that transcends traditional GDP metrics. This requires prioritising the empowerment and well-being of its people, bridging the digital divide to ensure inclusive and equitable access to technology, safeguarding environmental ecosystems, and strengthening governance and institutions.

In this context, Development Advocate Pakistan (DAP), UNDP Pakistan's flagship quarterly publication, dedicates its final

edition of 2024 to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Its principles serve as both a mirror for reflection and a guide for action, with inclusion as its core value driving Pakistan's development narrative.

UNDP is steadfast in its commitment to people-led, collaborative planning as the foundation of transformative change. As we prepare our new global UNDP Strategic Plan 2025-2029, our nationwide consultations have identified key priorities for Pakistan: climate resilience, economic stability, youth development, and digital inclusion. These priorities are critical to the agenda of inclusive development, as reflected in the essays by our DAP authors featured in this issue.

Closing Pakistan's \$148 billion financing gap by 2030 requires bold action and innovative solutions. Economic reforms, investments in renewable energy, healthcare, and innovative financial instruments to mobilise climate and SDG-aligned funding must be prioritised.

Governance reforms are equally vital, increasing threats faced by civil society, marginalised communities, and human rights defenders advocating for change must be confronted head-on. Rebuilding trust, safeguarding freedom of expression, and encouraging civic engagement are fundamental

to improving Pakistan's human security and development.

Pakistan's biggest untapped resource is its people, especially its youth and women. With two million young people entering the workforce every year, and 34pc of them not engaged in education, employment, or training, a dual focus on entrepreneurship and employment is critical to provide decent work for all. Digital inclusion, particularly for women, can be transformative. Our 2024 National Human Development Report: Doing Digital for Development highlights how ensuring every woman to have access to a smartphone could create unprecedented opportunities in financial inclusion, health, and education.

As 2025 approaches, aligning Pakistan's development agenda with the SDGs is imperative. The Decade of Action leaves no room for delay. Together, we can write a development story that is defined by respect to human rights, inclusion and equitable opportunity for all. The time to act is now. ■

The author is a resident representative, UNDP Pakistan.

## FROM THE PAST PAGES OF DAWN

1974 | Fifty years ago

### Malaysian Ruler arrives

**RAWALPINDI:** Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto tonight (Dec 9) described the current visit of the Paramount Ruler of Malaysia, Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah as a "great honour to Pakistan". "Pakistan and Malaysia have old and well-established relations", the Prime Minister said at a banquet he hosted. ... Mr Bhutto spoke briefly before proposing a toast to the health of the Malaysian Ruler and the Queen, and the friendship between the two countries and the "everlasting" prosperity of the Malaysian people. No formal speeches were made. ... The Malaysian Ruler proposed a toast to the health of the President ... and Prime Minister ... and to the "continued well-being and happiness" of the people of Pakistan. — News agencies.

[Meanwhile, as reported by news agencies from Peshawar,] two persons sustained serious injuries in an explosion in the United States Information Centre, situated on the busy Arbab Road in the fashionable Peshawar Saddar area here this evening (Dec 9). Fire also started inside the library hall of the centre after the explosion, filling the ... building with smoke. ... The explosive was reportedly planted ... in the library hall.

1949 | Seventy-five years ago

### New world trade

**LONDON:** A new pattern of world trade affecting 33 nations was announced early today (Dec 10). These nations, with a trade estimated at over 80 per cent of the world's total, shunned the new pattern in four and a half months of tariff-breaking talks at Annecy, south-western France, between April 8 and Aug 2. The results, published simultaneously today in the capitals of all the countries concerned, mean about 5,000 items in new tariff lists. The American concession — vitally important in a dollar-hungry world — include both reductions of some present barriers and guarantees against the raising of others. They involve about 250 million dollars worth of imports. Trade officials in Washington said last night (Sunday) that President Truman and the American State Department were preparing for new world tariff-cutting negotiations next year. They were studying likely commodities on which Britain would seek tariff concessions. The Annecy Conference was held by the 23 countries belonging to the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), who first agreed to extensive tariff concessions two years ago in Geneva. Pakistan is one of them. — News agencies.

# 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.

## World on edge as Trump gets ready

DONALD Trump's resounding victory in the presidential election that was recently held in the United States has frightened the world. In capitals around the world, there is a sense of dread and anxiety, while, in others, the mood is that of exultation. In the US itself, immigrants and naturalised citizens seem worried.



In his previous term, Trump had left deep divisions and inflicted grievous scars on American society. Racism spiked to unprecedented levels. Trump's moralist predisposition as well as his transactional approach and aversion to the liberal world order is viewed by analysts as the most worrisome of his personality traits.

His increase in bathing of constitutional and democratic norms, and superficial knowledge of international security matters, coupled with an authoritarian bent of mind, remind one of the rise of Adolf Hitler in 1933. The two differ only in political creed, 'Labourism' (diving apex) and 'America First', but wield an identical state of mind. One does not need to cite how Hitler's unbridled ambition once changed the course of world history.

Hitler's propaganda man once remarked, "Give me resources and I will make the people believe the devil is God." Would it be far-fetched to surmise that had Hitler not been on the global scene, there would have been no nuclear weapons around? For Trump, climate change is a "big hoax", and that looks ill for the future.

Regardless, the interest, fear and jubilation produced by Trump's second win clearly lead to one simple conclusion: the US is still the most powerful actor within the international system. China, a peer competitor, is in several and critical ways still behind.

Trump will inherit a different world than it was in his previous term. In that era of war, like Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Lebanon, belligerents are showing strategic exhaustion. Vladimir Putin is not likely to be an easy diplomat to uncover by Trump, especially given his recent success on the ground against Ukraine.

Iran, though quite weak economically, has placed its nuclear programme on a fast track. The Houthis are still vibrant, with enough potential to imperil global shipping in the Red Sea. Both Hamas and Hezbollah have been hit hard, but they have not been demolished.

On its part, China stands stronger in the larger western Pacific region, with American power standing rather diluted.

With a toxically hawkish anti-China nominee Marco Rubio as the next secretary of state, one wonders what to make of the US naval chief's recent memorandum asking the US Navy to be ready for war with China in 2027.

In Australia, apprehensions are widespread about the continuity of the trilateral security partnership involving Australia, the United Kingdom and the US (AUKUS), a technical arrangement aimed at equipping Australia with eight Virginia class nuclear attack submarines. Moreover, Australia fears that under the 'America First' refrain, Trump may annul the agreement on the pretext of arming the US Navy which is already short of such submarines.

Trump's philosophy of withdrawal of US of American power to spread the world and change the US domestically will soon bump into global realities. Mass deportations and the use of military for political purposes are bound to create unimaginable chaos at home.

The world, meanwhile, sits on the edge, like millions of them watching on the US soil, waiting for the catastrophe to unfold.

Cable (vsn) [Muhammad Azam Khan](mailto:Muhammad.Azam.Khan@labore) Lahore

## Raw power struggle

THE state had to use force to crush the opposition party's so-called 'revolution'. Tragically, lives of security personnel were lost in this ill-conceived misadventure. The question is what were they even thinking? Reaching D-Chowk, perhaps, but then what? What was the grand plan? No idea. It was a clumsy, leaderless and headless endeavour.

Riding on the coattails of Donald Trump's victory in the United States, and a rather miscalculated reading of Pakistan's political landscape, the party mounted its 'final call'. But, after burning through whatever political capital the party had, what is the plan now? As for the complaints of state brutality, the state always uses force when its authority is challenged. This is a global thing.

The party supporters, now experiencing fitfulness, are simply walking the same path of repression that other political parties have long lamented. Only when it hits home does the reality sink in.

As such, the fact of the matter is that what took place on the streets was not a revolution. It was a raw, naked struggle for power. There is no higher cause, no quest for the betterment of the people; just an endless pursuit of vendetta.

Politics is the art of possibilities, not of certainties. If the party clings on to its obstinacy, it might remain popular on social media, but that popularity will amount to little more than cheap thrills.

[Abubakar Ah Khan](mailto:Abubakar.Ah.Khan@toronto) Toronto, Canada

## Airport as 'red zone'

THE area around Karachi airport and the entrances from Star Gate, Civil Aviation Club Road and the main Airport Road have been closed to the public since Nov 15. People have to move via Mall Road, which is inadequate to cater to the flow of traffic moving towards the Mall area around the airport and onwards till the Super Highway.

Similarly, people coming from Mall Cantonment, areas around Mall, Iko Model Colony, Taps Mallan Society, Jinnah Plaza, Fazaia Society and beyond, are not allowed to come towards the airport on their way to Shaheen Faisal. They all have to go to Mall Road using the road in front of the offices of the Pakistan Security Printing Corporation. The road is in a dilapidated shape, and traffic jams cause a delay of around an hour.

These are reports that the entire area around the airport will soon be declared a 'red zone', and closed to the public. The people at the helm of affairs, who are taking these decisions, are probably not aware of the traffic jams such a decision will cause, the cost of extra fuel people will have to pay for, and the suffering of the people with serious illnesses needing to reach hospitals.

Security is a big issue, but the authorities should install CCTV cameras along all the routes. In fact, this should have been done much earlier. There are other measures that could be taken, rather than all these decisions, causing problems to the public. Creating a nuisance and adding to the misery of the common man seem to be the only mission of the 'genitists' sitting in their ivory towers.

[Arshed Shahid](mailto:Arshed.Shahid@karachi) Karachi

## Daylight robberies

THIS is with reference to the letter 'Fraudsters at Plaza' (Nov 19). I have reasons to endorse the views of the victim who got ripped off in broad daylight at Karachi's busiest, but not enter a run-averse automobile parts, accessories and electronic items are sold, spreading from 'Plaza' to the 'Royal Chowk'.

The irritating thing is that such activities have been going on for a long time. I have been a victim myself of these fraudsters. Back in 1997, I went there just to buy a rubber seal for my father's 1979 model car. One little boy approached me, offering to fit that seal at a nominal charge. He was well-trained to convince me to move the car a few yards off the road which was actually the den of the group of goons. Six to eight well-built hoodlums, who looked more like doctors, surrounded my car and all of a sudden started removing old rubber linings of car doors, trunk, bonnet, etc. Despite my protests, they

did not listen, and since there were no witnesses at those times, I was completely at the mercy of those looters.

The goons gagged and said they would have a party later in the evening. After about an hour of putting in a few second-hand rubber linings, which were worth nothing more than Rs200, I was forced to pay them Rs2,000. The amount was my entire month's salary at the time.

They took me to an ATM and got the money taken out. I could not cry for help as it was Sunday and the area was deserted. Some locals showed sympathy and advised me to never come alone with a car in the area, and never let anyone touch the car unless the mechanic was known and from a reliable workshop in the vicinity. I wonder how such daylight robberies have continued unabated when the Present Police Station is hardly 50 metres away from the spot.

[Farruk Sajid](mailto:Farruk.Sajid@karachi) Karachi

## Garbage all around



PAKISTAN has been grappling with the menace of garbage for long, including its way towards a point of no return. The nation is beset with a garbage crisis. The manner in which trash continues to accumulate on the roads is a growing concern that needs to be addressed. The task is challenging in the face of fast-paced urbanisation.

Assessments have indicated that it would take around five years for big cities in Pakistan to become garbage jungles. The onslaught must be stopped before human health is dismal levels. Unless waste is disposed of by the relevant agencies, and people start behaving in a responsible manner, there will be no progress.

Waste management strategies that may factor in the safety, health and environment approach are needed. Policies geared towards raising community awareness, initiating community clean-up drives and incorporating waste management education in schools need to be initiated. Clearliness cannot be achieved alone; it takes individual and collective efforts.

[Farruk Naz](mailto:Farruk.Naz@karachi) Karachi

**MERITOCRACY:** While the job market in Pakistan continues to shrink due to recession, the reference culture rubs salt into the wound of unemployed youngsters, especially those who have earned their degrees after years of hard work and investment of millions of rupees. Those with 'connections' get hiring calls in the blink of an eye, while others continue to struggle to even receive an interview call. Meritocracy in Pakistan is something just confined to textbooks. Such a state of affairs pushes local talent to explore foreign destinations for better opportunities. [Abbas](mailto:Abbas@labore) Lahore

**CLASS CANCELLATION:** The lives of students in Islamabad have become increasingly challenging due to frequent protest. These demonstrations often result in class cancellations, causing prolonged disruption in the education process. It is essential to explore alternative solutions that may enable students to pursue their education without any interruption. [Abdul Haq Bondar](mailto:Abdul.Haq.Bondar@labore) Islamabad

**AGONYING TRANSIT:** The daily commute in Karachi has become extremely challenging and inconvenient. A first spending an exhausting day at the office, people have to deal with the mess on the roads. Hawkers and vendors occupy a substantial part of the roads as well as service roads which are not supposed to be used for this purpose. This overcrowding creates a chaos as well as makes the vehicles slow down. The relevant authorities ought to resolve this problem. [Muhammad Waqar](mailto:Muhammad.Waqar@karachi) Karachi

**EXHAUSTED STUDENTS:** The University College of Dera Murad Jeesai is the only university in the entire Nizamat division. It is a decent educational institution, but fails to provide proper transportation facilities to its students. The buses available for students do not have enough seats, forcing them to stand throughout their journey in overcrowded buses. The university must take remedial measures to overcome this issue. [Abub Ahmed](mailto:Abub.Ahmed@jehallah) Jehallah

**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: ali@siddiqimohammadi@gmail.com](mailto:Email:ali@siddiqimohammadi@gmail.com)



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## Remittances fall 5pc in November

Inflows jump 34pc to \$14.7bn in 5MFY25

By Shahid Iqbal

KARACHI: Remittances sent by workers during the first five months (July-November) of the current fiscal year (FY25) jumped 34 per cent, but fell last month compared to the preceding month.

The latest data issued by the State Bank on Monday shows that remittances could reach the target of \$35 billion set by the government for the current fiscal year.

According to the State Bank, overseas Pakistanis sent \$14.7bn during July-Nov 25 — an increase of 33.6pc over \$11.05bn sent in the same period during the last fiscal year (FY24).

The sharp increase is clearly an outcome of the crackdown on illegal currency businesses like Hundi and Havela. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said in Karachi on Saturday that the government expects an inflow of about \$35bn in the form of remittances during FY25.



The Rupee gained three paise against the dollar to Rs277.68 on Monday. —AFP/BB

Remittances totalled \$30.25bn in FY24.

The month-wise breakdown of remittances shows a decrease of 4.55 per cent as it fell to \$2.91bn last month from \$3.05bn in October. The November inflow, however, showed a growth of

29.1 per cent year-on-year. During the first five months of the present financial year, the government received \$3.7bn more in remittances than during the same period of last year. The rise in remittances stabilised the exchange rate and helped to keep a balance

between supply and demand. **Highest inflow**

Further analysis shows that the largest amount of \$5.53bn was received from Saudi Arabia during July-Nov 25 — a growth of 36.5 per cent year-on-year.

The second-highest inflow of \$2.95bn was from the UAE. This led to the highest growth of 54.6 per cent year-on-year. Inflows from the United Kingdom amounted to \$2.18bn — the third largest source.

The inflows from all destinations are showing a positive trend during the current fiscal year.

Other important inflows were \$1.77bn from the EU countries. This had exceeded the inflows from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the United States.

Some currency experts expressed concern over the changing political scenario in the Middle East as more than half of the remittances are received from this region.

Receipts from Saudi Arabia, the UAE and other GCC countries represented 55 per cent of the total inflows during the July-November period of FY25.

"Any political change in these countries could deal a blow to inflows from Pakistan," said a currency expert.

## ICA declares 84 textile mills 'defaulters'

Asks members not to enter into any deals with them

By Anjad Mahmood

LAHORE: The International Cotton Association (ICA) has placed at least 84 Pakistani textile mills on the defaulter's list and prohibited them from trading in the world cotton market.

The ICA website revealed on Monday that 84 Pakistani textile companies could not honour their cotton purchase agreements, and association members were asked not to enter into any deal with them.

Most of these units are in Karachi and Lahore, and a few are from Faisalabad, Multan, Hyderabad and Kassar.

Sources say some of these mills have closed or partially closed their operations.

Some of the defaulting units are owned by leaders of the All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (Aptma) and the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI). They have also been part of various government setups and are enjoying and demanding certain subsidies and other facilities from the government.

Aptma spokesperson Shabaz Nattar declined to comment when contacted.

The defaulting units included Acro Spinning & Weaving Mills Ltd, Amin Textile Mills PVT Ltd, Ayubia Textile Mills Limited, Badli Cotton Mills (PVT) Ltd, Chaudhry Spinning Mills Ltd, Crescent Fibres Ltd, D S Apparel Pvt Ltd, Ebar on Salween Textile Mills Ltd, Darwaz Spinning Mills (Pvt) Ltd, Dina Industries Ltd, Ejar Dyeing and Finishing Mills Pvt Ltd, Fiaz Textiles, Ghazi Fabrics International Ltd, Hashir Textile Mills, Jameel Almond Export Corporation (Pvt) Ltd, Kohistan Spinning Mills Ltd, Mawammy Lawri, Mian Textile Industries Ltd, Sargodha Spinning Mills Limited, Shadab Textiles Mills, Superior Textile Mills Ltd, Yousaf Weaving Mills Ltd, and Zafar Textiles Ltd from Lahore.

Cortek International, Fatima Enterprises Limited, General Import Corporation (Pvt) Ltd, Ghulam Rabbani & Co, Gulistan Spinning Mills Ltd, HMI Cotton Ginning Factory and Oil Mills, Jubbok Spinning & Weaving Mills Ltd, Khan Textile Mills (PVT) Ltd, Mohd Amin Mohd Bahar Ltd, Moonstar Cotton Mills (Pvt) Ltd, Primes Trading Corp (Pvt) Ltd, Quetta Textile Mills Ltd, Salim Yarn Mills (Pvt) Ltd, Shafran Cotton Mills Ltd, Silver Star (Pvt) Ltd, Suroiya Textile Mills (Pvt) Ltd, Tariq Textile Mills Ltd, and Zulfqar Trading Corporation from Karachi.

Ahmad Cotton Industries, Ahmad Hamam Textile Mills Ltd, Allawansaya Spinning Mills Limited, Anjad Textile Mills Ltd, Hussain Mills Ltd, and Masood Textile Mills Ltd from Multan; AN Textile Mills Limited, Balwara Retail Pvt Ltd, and Irbad Fabrics Pvt Ltd from Faisalabad; Deba Oil Mills (Pvt) Ltd from Nankana Sahib; Sayed Textile Mills Ltd from Kassar; Barkat Cotton Mills Ltd, and Patel Overseas Ltd from Hyderabad; while Kheber Spinning Mills Gadsdon Ltd from Gadsdon.

Being declared defaulters, these mills or groups of mills have also been declared ineligible to purchase cotton from international markets.

## Minister seeks plan to connect charities to underserved

By Mubarak Zeb Khan

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has directed accelerated efforts to finalise the proposed policy framework to connect philanthropic contributions with the underserved segments of society.

The minister issued the direction while chairing a meeting of the Prime Minister's Committee on Social Impact Financing at the Finance Division on Monday. The session focused on advancing innovative financial solutions to drive social impact, enhance financial inclusion, and uplift marginalised communities in Pakistan.

The discussion revolved around developing a policy and regulatory framework to connect philanthropic contributions, including Zakat and Zakat, to the underserved segments of society. It was also focused on mobilising philanthropic capital to achieve tangible and sustainable social outcomes.

Legal, financial, and regulatory challenges were also discussed to create an enabling environment for impact financing, enhance financial inclusion while adhering to religious principles, identify and mitigate risks to safeguard social impact investments, and promote digitalisation and impact evaluation to strengthen accountability mechanisms.

An official announcement said that the participants shared insights on blended financing models, public-private partnerships, and fostering microfinance initiatives. Proposals were made to ensure a comprehensive regulatory framework that encourages private sector innovation and safeguards investments.

Mr Aurangzeb highlighted the government's role in establishing a robust policy and regulatory framework for social impact financing, emphasising that the private sector would lead implementation efforts.

"The private sector has already been doing an outstanding job in this domain, and we must focus on creating an enabling environment rather than establishing another government institution. This aligns with the government's right-sizing objectives," the minister said.

He further stressed the importance of moving beyond charity to broader impact financing. "Transparency from philanthropy to the end beneficiaries is essential. Digital solutions must be integrated to ensure efficient systems, while accountability and impact evaluation will build trust and credibility among stakeholders," he added.

The minister appreciated the commitment and contributions of all stakeholders and directed accelerated efforts to finalise the proposed policy framework. He reiterated the government's resolve to support initiatives that foster inclusive growth, sustainable development, and community welfare while empowering the private sector to take the lead in driving meaningful social impact.

The meeting brought together a diverse group of stakeholders from the public and private sectors, both in person and virtually, including Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Ali Farooq Malik, Governor State Bank of Pakistan Jameel Ahmad, SBP chairman, Pakistan Banks' Association president, MDs of Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal and State Life Insurance Corporation, among others.

## NSS rates slashed

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Rates of profit on National Savings Schemes (NSS) have been revised with effect from Dec 10, reported Araf Habibullah on Monday.

The government has reduced the profits on savings but the biggest cut was made on Savings Account by 250 basis points. The profit fell to 13.5pc from 16pc.

The Regular Income profit was slightly reduced by 10pc to 12.1pc. However, the return on Savings Islamic Savings Account and Savings Islamic Term Account were reduced by 7.2pc to 10.44pc.

<b>US DOLLAR</b> BUYING: Rs277.15 SELLING: Rs278.95	<b>EURO</b> BUYING: Rs291.90 SELLING: Rs293.60
<b>GBP</b> BUYING: Rs250.31 SELLING: Rs252.94	<b>SAUDI RIYAL</b> BUYING: Rs75.41 SELLING: Rs76.00
<b>INR</b> BUYING: Rs73.64 SELLING: Rs74.20	<b>GOLD</b> SOLA: Rs275,400 10 GMS: Rs236,499



ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb briefs a US delegation on economic progress, on Monday. —FPF

## Govt commits to implementing economic reforms: Aurangzeb

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb assured a high-level delegation of US investors and business professionals on Monday that the government is committed to implementing economic reforms.

The delegation got together by Ambassador Ali Johangir Siddiqui comprised entrepreneurs, business practitioners, and professionals in technology, academia, and finance. Key members included Aaron Hoffman, Chief Executive Officer of SafeGraph, Kristin Edwards Margua (Hokley & Company), Michael Levi (The D.E. Shaw Group), Dr Jeff Chang (Rad AI), and others.

An official finance ministry announcement said that Mr Aurangzeb welcomed the delegation and briefed them about the country's recent macro-economic progress, highlighting significant achievements in overcoming longstanding challenges.

"Pakistan has historically struggled with twin deficits; however, due to improved export performance, the economy is now operating with a surplus in fiscal and current accounts. Foreign exchange reserves have crossed the \$12 billion mark, inflation has been brought down to single digits, and the policy rate is moving in the right direction," he noted.

He further elaborated on the government's comprehensive reform agenda, encompassing privatisation, SOE restructuring, right-sizing of the federal

government, and pension reforms. Mr Aurangzeb also addressed two existential challenges — rapid population growth and climate change.

"With a population growth rate exceeding 2pc, we face severe implications for food security, child nutrition, and out-of-school children. Climate change exacerbates these vulnerabilities, making it imperative to secure financial and technical assistance to tackle these issues effectively," he remarked.

He also noted that he has emphasised the importance of these priorities in discussions with international partners, including World Bank President Ajay Banga.

Addressing a query on implementing IMF conditions and structural reforms, the minister remarked that the willingness and ability to execute reforms are crucial. "While we have significant work ahead, as long as we maintain our commitment and momentum, and stay the course, we will achieve the desired outcomes," he added.

Responding to another question, he stressed the role of the private sector in driving economic growth. "Policy frameworks and continuity are the government's responsibility, but the private sector must lead the economy. The government's focus is on creating an enabling environment to support this transition," he stated.

The delegation appreciated the government's efforts in stabilising the economy and discussed opportunities for collaboration in areas such as innovation, investment, and financial inclusion.

## Pakistan emerges from crisis: US official

By Arin Ahmad

ISLAMABAD: The United States in Pakistan's indispensable partner as an economic partner between the two countries has been a cornerstone of the bilateral relationship, US Charge d'Affaires, Natalie Baker said on Monday.

Addressing the fifth Pakistan-American Business Forum Summit, Mr Baker said Pakistan looks to move beyond the economic crisis and implement difficult but necessary structural economic reforms to realise a more prosperous future.

Today, he said, Pakistan is emerging from serious economic challenges and is looking to undertake difficult but desperately needed economic reforms, and the US will support Pakistan through this transition.

"We want Pakistan and its citizens to succeed and to become an economic powerhouse," Baker said, adding that he was impressed by the optimism of Pakistani youth, their ideas, and their commitment to seeing a better and brighter future for their country.

That brighter future includes economic opportunities in technology, business, trade, climate resilience, and security. "If Pakistan realises its potential in these areas for growth and development, the result will benefit not only Pakistan but also the region and the world," US Charge d'Affaires remarked.

Mr Baker said that the US remains Pakistan's largest export market globally.

## Optimism tosses index to new highs

By Muhammad Kashif

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) maintained its record-setting spree on Monday, driven by aggressive buying on improved economic outlook, helping the KSE-100 index break the 110,000 threshold for the first time in intraday trade.

Topline Securities Ltd said the KSE-100 index closed at an all-time high of 109,970, recording a gain of 956 points, or 0.84pc day-on-day. The market opened with concern over the advance to deposit ratio, bringing banking scrips under pressure, reflecting a negative sentiment with a decline of 1,424 points.

However, as local institutions entered the market, it reversed course and moved into positive territory, resulting in an intraday high of 110,359.

Ahsan Mubani of Araf Habibullah said the equity market closed

PAKISTAN STOCK EXCHANGE			
THE TOP FIVERS			
GAINERS	LOSERS	LEADERS*	
Neelco Pakistan <b>671.59</b>	Lucky Core Int <b>47.84</b>	K-Electric <b>104.51</b>	
Sugar Eng <b>95.01</b>	Thal Limited <b>21.39</b>	WorldCall Telecom <b>101.90</b>	
Sapphire Fibres <b>91.05</b>	BP Existencies <b>20.38</b>	Changyia PK <b>113.02</b>	
Rafsan Mills <b>87.15</b>	Pak Services <b>15.12</b>	Bank of Punjab <b>69.10</b>	
Unilever Foods <b>76.83</b>	Thatta Cement <b>13.84</b>	Telecord Ltd <b>53.53</b>	

(Share values in rupees)

INDICATORS	Monday	Previous	Change
KSE 100-SHARE INDEX (Points)	109,970.39	109,013.84	▲ 956.54
KSE 30-SHARE INDEX (Points)	24,150.46	23,889.09	▲ 261.37
MARKET CAPITAL (Rs billion)	54,007.897	53,668.394	▲ 339.503
TRADING VALUE (Rs billion)	88.281	57.487	▲ 30.794

at an all-time high as investors weighed falling banking rates after a drop in the government bond yields amid speculation over an imminent significant rate cut in the RRP policy announcement next week.

He added that the exchange rate stability on surging foreign exchange reserves, the global crude oil price surge, and upbeat economic indicators kept buoying the bull run at PSX.

Mari Petroleum, Lucky Cement, Systems Ltd, Engro Corporation, and The Searc added 910 points to the index's rise.

All Najib, Head of Sales at Insight Securities, said investors cherry-picked blue-chip stocks ahead of a crucial announcement by the Monetary Policy

ACTIVITY	
Total listed	532
Active	467
Gainers	276
Losers	150
PARTICIPANTS	
Foreign	▲ \$1.44m
Companies	▼ \$2.35m
Banks	▼ \$0.70m
Mutual Funds	▲ \$4.82m
Individuals	▲ \$1.08m

Rs60.25bn day-on-day. Stocks contributing significantly to the traded volume included K-Electric (Rs4.51m shares), WorldCall Telecom (Rs4.90m shares), Changyia PK (Rs3.02m shares), Bank of Punjab (Rs3.90m shares) and Telecord Ltd (Rs3.53m shares).

The shares registering the most significant increases in their share prices in absolute terms were Neelco Pakistan (Rs667.15%), Saeed Engineering Works (Rs95.01%), Sapphire Fibres (Rs91.05%), Rafsan Mills (Rs87.15) and Unilever Foods (Rs76.83).

The comparative registering significant decreases in their share prices in absolute terms were Lucky Core Industries (Rs47.84%), Thal Ltd (Rs21.39%), BP Existencies (Rs20.38%), Pak Services (Rs15.12) and Thatta Cement (Rs13.84).

After a long break, foreign investors became net buyers, purchasing shares worth \$1.44 million.

# Macron eyes broad alliance to form new French govt

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron has called for a "meeting of different political forces" to hammer out a programme for a new government, the Greens party leader said on Monday amid a political crisis triggered by Prime Minister Michel Barnier's ouster.

Macron had suggested a "new method" to put together an executive, Greens chief Marine Tardieu said after meeting him at his Elysee Palace office.

After July's snap elections produced no clear majority, Macron took almost two months to name conservative Barnier as premier. He was then toppled last week in a no-confidence vote over a cost-cutting draft budget for 2025 meant to tackle France's yawning deficit.

Now polls are staled out until the summer, leaving Macron this time around to call for a "meeting of different political forces to discuss a platform" that could unite them in government, Tardieu said. Until now, Macron had only been meeting party leaders individually.

But cobbling together any majority will be tricky in a parliament almost evenly divided between the NFP left-wing alliance, Macron's centrists and conservatives, and the far-right National Rally (RN).

Macron was "very clear about the fact that as far as he is concerned, the RN is not within the circle of parties willing to talk", Tardieu said on Monday.

The RN had initially helped prop up Barnier's minority government before supporting his downfall. It leaves the left, centre and centre-right to try and find common ground after clashing fiercely over since Macron's first presidential win in 2017.

Macron's call for a broad-based meeting suggests a new executive will not be put together quickly. His ally, parliamentary speaker Yvel Bruneau-Pinot, had earlier said a name should come "within the next few hours".—AFP



VERNON (France): A handout image shows a person walking at the factory of Missespace, a France-based reusable rocket manufacturer. Europe hopes the reusable rocket will slow the meteoric rise of Elon Musk's SpaceX. Europe's largest rocket maker Ariane Group plans to launch the bloc's first partially reusable launcher in 2026, targeting mostly small commercial satellites.—Reuters

# Taiwan on high alert as Chinese warships sail near island

TAIPEI: Taiwan's military was on high alert on Monday after detecting Chinese warships near the island, Taipei said, as it prepared for likely drills by Beijing in response to President Lai Ching-te's US visit.

The Taiwanese defense ministry said it also spotted Chinese coast guard vessels and that Beijing's People's Liberation Army (PLA) had restricted the airspace off the Chinese coast.

There has been intense speculation about the possibility of China launching military exercises in response to Lai's trip to the Pacific last week which included stopovers in Hawaii and Guam.

"In response to these actions by the PLA, the MIND has initiated combat readiness drills, factoring in enemy threats, weather conditions, and tactical positioning," the Ministry of National Defense in Taipei said in a statement.

It added that military units were on "high" alert and those on nearby islands had "heightened their vigilance". The ministry said its forces had "isolated PLA Eastern, Northern, and Southern Theater Command naval formations, along with Coast Guard vessels, entering areas around the Taiwan Strait and the Western Pacific". There was no immediate public announcement by the PLA or Chinese state media about increased military activity around Taiwan. However, a Beijing foreign ministry spokeswoman said China would "firmly defend" its sovereignty, as Taiwan kicked off its drills.

Lai spoke with Republican US House Speaker Mike Johnson in Guam on Thursday — the highest-level US contact the Taiwanese leader had during a weeklong trip — which drew a barrage of criticism from Beijing.—AFP

# Zelensky suggests role for foreign troops in Ukraine

KYIV: President Volodymyr Zelensky made the case on Monday for a diplomatic settlement to Russia's 13-month-old war in Ukraine and raised the idea of foreign troops being deployed in his country until it could join the Nato military alliance.

The remarks at a joint press conference with German opposition leader Friedrich Merz were the latest to signal Kyiv's increasing openness to war negotiations, with Donald Trump preparing to return to the White House on Jan 20.

The US president-elect, who has said he wants to end the war quickly, called on Sunday for an immediate ceasefire and negotiations to end the "madness", after he met Zelensky and French President Emmanuel Macron for talks in Paris.

"Ukraine wants this war to end more than anyone else. No doubt, a diplomatic resolution would save more lives. We do seek it," Zelensky told reporters in Kyiv on Monday.

He said he discussed a "freezing" of the lines in the war when he met Macron and Trump. Russia controls nearly a fifth of Ukrainian territory after launching the 2022 invasion that unleashed the biggest conflict in Europe since World War Two.—Reuters

# New Delhi sends envoy to Dhaka to defuse tension

The two countries hope to clear 'cloud' over deterioration of ties after overthrow of Sheikh Hasina

DELHI: India's top career diplomat was in Bangladesh on Monday to defuse tensions between the two neighbours arising from the August overthrow of associate premier Sheikh Hasina in a student-led revolution.

Hasina's troubled role was strongly backed by India and the 77-year-old remains in New Delhi where she took refuge after her ouster, despite Bangladesh announcing it would seek her extradition.

Noted laureate Muhammad Yunus, leader of an interim government tasked with implementing democratic reforms, has condemned acts of "Indian aggression" that he alleged were intended to destabilise his administration.

Vikram Misri, the secretary of India's foreign ministry, arrived in Dhaka on Monday for the first in-person meeting between top officials of both countries since Hasina's ouster.

Bangladesh's interim leader Muhammad Yunus, who met Misri on Monday, has said the reports were exaggerated. Yunus "asked India to help clear the 'clouds' that have cast a shadow over the relationship between the two neighbours in recent times," according to a statement from his office.

"India desires a positive, constructive, and mutually beneficial relationship with Bangladesh," Misri was quoted as saying in a transcript published by the Indian foreign ministry after the meeting. "There is no reason why this mutually beneficial cooperation should not continue to deliver in the interest of both our peoples."

Misri said he discussed "some regrettable incidents of attacks on cultural, religious, and diplomatic properties", adding that India expected a constructive approach on these issues from Bangladesh. He also met his Bangladeshi counterpart, Muhammad Jahid Uddin.

Bangladesh has denied reports of attacks, asked India to stop sheltering Hasina and demanded her extradition.

India, for its part, has accused Muslim-majority Bangladesh of failing to adequately protect its minority Hindu community from reprisal attacks after Hasina's toppling.

Yunus's administration has repeatedly acknowledged and condemned attacks on Hindus, but also insists that in many cases they were motivated by politics rather than religion.

"Propaganda campaign"

Yunus has accused India of exaggerating the scale of the violence and mounting a "propaganda campaign" against his government. Adding to potential tensions between the two neighbours is Hasina's decision to re-emerge from her exile in New Delhi to address supporters abroad by video link.

On Sunday she spoke to several hundred of members of her Awami League party based in London, accusing Yunus' government of deliberately targeting minorities. Her supporters at the event insisted that Hasina remained the lawful head of Bangladesh despite the popular uprising that forced her to flee to India.—Agencies

# Gangster oversees killing of 200 in Haiti

PORT PRINCE: Nearly 200 people in Haiti were killed in brutal weekend violence reportedly orchestrated against vodou practitioners, with the government on Monday condemning an "object massacre" of "unbearable cruelty".

The killings were overseen by a powerful gang leader convicted that his son's illness was caused by followers of the religion, according to civil organisation the Committee for Peace and Development (COPD).

"He decided to cruelly punish all elderly people and vodou practitioners who, in his imagination, would be capable of sending a bad spell on his son," a statement from the Haitian-based group said.

UN rights commissioner Volker Turk said that at least 184 people were killed in the weekend violence. Calling the bloody episode an "act of barbarity, of unbearable cruelty," the office of Prime Minister Aline Dixiel Fil-Aime said his government "condemns in the strongest terms the object massacre." "This monstrous crime constitutes a direct attack on humanity and the republican order," it added. Both the COPD and UN said that the massacre took place in the capital's western coastal neighbourhood of Cite Soleil.

Haiti has suffered from decades of instability but the situation escalated in February when armed gangs launched coordinated attacks in the capital Port-au-Prince to overthrow then-prime minister Ariel Henry. Gangs now control 80pc of the city. Despite a Kerry-led police support mission, backed by the United States and UN, violence has continued to soar.—AFP

# 2024 'certain' to be hottest year on record, says EU monitor

This year witnessed \$310bn economic losses due to climate-induced disasters

PARIS: This year is "effectively certain" to be the hottest on record and the first above a critical threshold to protect the planet from dangerously overheating, Europe's climate monitor said on Monday.

The new benchmark affirmed by the Copernicus Climate Change Service caps a year in which countries rich and poor were hammered by disasters that scientists have linked to humanity's role in Earth's rapid warming.

Copernicus said an unprecedented spell of extraordinary heat had pushed average global temperatures to high between January and November that this year was sure to eclipse 2023 as the hottest yet.

"At this point, it is effectively certain that 2024 is going to be the warmest year on record," the EU agency said in its monthly bulletin.

Copernicus scientist Julien Nicolas said that 2025 would start with global temperatures "at near record level" and this could persist for the next few months.

In another grim revelation, 2024 will be the first calendar year 1.5 degrees Celsius hotter than before the industrial revolution when humanity started burning large amounts of fossil fuels.

According to provisional data, Copernicus said the year to date was almost 1.5C warmer than the pre-industrial era, taken as between 1850 and 1900.

Scientists say the risks of climate change increase with every fraction of a degree, and that exceeding 1.5C over a decadal-long period would greatly impact ecosystems and human societies.

Under the Paris accord on climate change, the world agreed to try and keep warming to this safer 1.5C threshold.

Copernicus Climate Change Service deputy director Samantha Burgess said a single year above 1.5C "does not mean that the Paris Agreement has been breached, but it does mean ambitious climate action is more urgent than ever."

Catastrophic warning

The world is nowhere near on track. In October, the UN said the current direction of climate action would result in a catastrophic 3.3C of warming.

Intensities from fossil fuels keep rising despite a global pledge to move the world away from coal, oil and gas.

When burned, fossil fuels release greenhouse gases that raise global temperatures, with extra heat trapped in the oceans and atmosphere. Scientists say this warming offset disrupts climate patterns and the water cycle, and makes extreme weather more frequent and ferocious.

2024 saw deadly flooding in Spain and Kenya, violent storms in the United States and the Philippines, and severe drought and wildfires across South America.

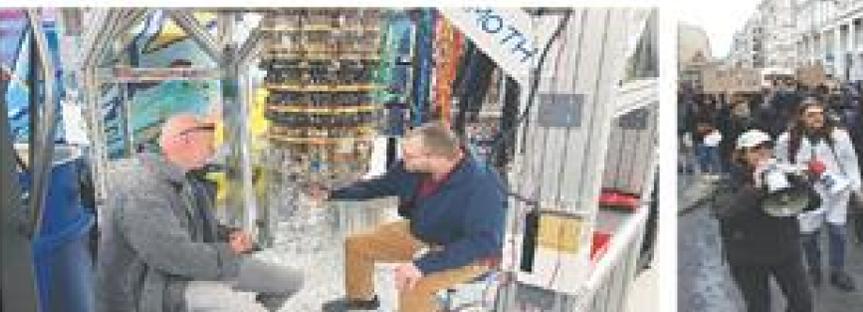
In total, disasters caused \$310 billion in economic losses in 2024, Zurich-based insurance giant Swiss Re said this month.

Developing countries are particularly vulnerable and by 2035 will need \$1.3 trillion a year in outside assistance for their energy transitions and to cope with climate change. At UN climate talks in November, 167 historic polluters most responsible for global warming committed to raising at least \$300 billion annually by 2035, an amount chipped as wealthy underpayers.—AFP



ACTRESS Mindy Kaling poses for a photo during the nominations announcement for the Golden Globe Awards at Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, California.—AFP

# NEWSMAKERS



GOOGLE Quantum AI's Hartmut Neven (left) and Anthony Megrant (right) examine a cryostat refrigerator for cooling quantum computing chips at Google's Quantum AI lab in Santa Barbara.—Reuters

# Google says it has cracked a quantum computing challenge

SANTA BARBARA: Google on Monday said that it has overcome a key challenge in quantum computing with a new generation of chip, solving a computing problem in five minutes that would take a classical computer more time than the history of the universe.

Like other tech giants such as Microsoft and International Business Machines, Alphabet's Google is chasing quantum computing because it promises computing speeds far faster than today's fastest systems. While the math problem solved by the company's Santa Barbara, California quantum lab does not have commercial applications, Google hopes quantum computers will one day solve problems in medicine, battery chemistry and artificial intelligence that are out of reach for today's computers.

The results released on Monday came from a new chip called Willow that has 105 "qubits," which are the building blocks of quantum computers. Qubits are fast but error-prone, because they can be jostled by something as small as a subatomic particle from events in outer space.

As more qubits are packed onto a chip, those errors can add up to make the chip no better than a conventional computer chip. So since the 1990s, scientists have been working on quantum error correction.

In a paper published in the journal Nature on Monday, Google said that it has found a way to string together the Willow chip's qubits so that error rates go down as the number of qubits goes up.

The company also says it can correct errors in real time, a key step toward making its quantum machines practical.—Reuters



PARIS: Protesters hold a banner reading "let's disarm the Bolloré empire" during a rally against the Bolloré group on the occasion of Vivendi's extraordinary "mixed general assembly", on Monday. Vivendi's shareholders are debating a proposal to split the French media giant into four entities.—AFP



MANILA: Eruption of Karlosan volcano, as seen from a village in Negros Occidental province, central Philippines. The volcano erupted on Monday, sending a huge ash column into the sky as the government ordered the evacuation of villages nearby.—AFP

ABU DHABI: Members of the audience listen to a panel discussion at the Bitcoin MENA conference, on Monday.—Reuters

# Syrians search for loved ones missing in jails

DAMASCUS: Syrian rescuers searched a jail synonymously with the worst atrocities of ousted president Bashar al-Assad's rule, as people in the capital flocked to a central square on Monday to celebrate their country's freedom.

Assad fled Syria as fighters swept into the capital, bringing to a spectacular end on Sunday five decades of brutal rule by his clan over a country ravaged by one of the deadliest wars of the century.

He oversaw a crackdown on a democracy movement that erupted in 2011, sparking a war that killed 500,000 people and forced half the country to flee their homes.

At the core of the system of rule that Assad inherited from his father Hafez was a brutal complex of prisons and detention centres used to eliminate dissent by jailing those suspected of stepping out of the re-

gime's party's line. Social media groups alight with Syrians sharing images of detainees reportedly brought out from the dungeons, some posting calls for help finding their missing relatives.

On Monday, rescuers from the Syrian White Helmets group said they were searching for potential secret doors or basements in Saydun's prison, though they said there was no immediate sign that anyone was trapped. "We are working with all our energy to reach a new hope, and we must be prepared for the worst," the organisation said in a statement, urging families of the missing to have "patience".

Aida Taha, aged 65, said she had been "scouring the streets like a madwoman" in search of her brother, who was arrested in 2012. "We've been oppressed long enough, we want our children back," she said.



PEOPLE gather as members of a Syrian civil defence group search for prisoners underground at Saydun's prison, on Monday.—Reuters

While Syria has been at war for over 13 years, the government's collapse opened up a matter of days, with a lightning offensive launched by the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). Based in Syria's branch of Al Qaeda, HTS is proscribed by Western governments as a terrorist group.

### 'Nightmare'

In central Damascus on Monday, despite all the uncertainty over the future, the joy was palpable. "It's indescribable, we never thought this nightmare would end, we are reborn," 49-year-old Rim Hamadan, a civil servant at the finance ministry, said. "We were afraid for 55 years of speaking, even at home, we used to say the walls had ears," Hamadan said, as people hoisted their car horns and rebels fired their guns into the air. "We feel like we're

living a dream," she added.

During the offensive launched on Nov 27, rebels wrested city after city from Assad's control, opening the gates of prisons along the way and freeing thousands of people, many of them held on political charges.

Social media groups were alight with Syrians sharing images of detainees reportedly brought out from the dungeons, in a collective effort to reunite families with their newly released loved ones, some of whom had been missing for years.

Others, like Fatma Mahomed, whose husband and son are missing, posted calls for help finding their missing relatives. "Where are you, Maber and Abdel Aziz, it's time for me to hear your news, oh God, please come back, let my joy become complete," wrote Mahomed, herself a former detainee.—AFP

# Houthi drone hits residential building in Israel

YAVNE: A drone claimed by Yemen's Houthi rebels exploded on the top floor of a residential building in the central Israeli city of Yavne on Monday, causing no injuries, the Israeli military and emergency services said.

Houthis have launched several attacks against Israel during Israel's conflict with Hamas that began more than a year ago in Gaza. The rebels say their attacks are in solidarity with Palestinians.

Following the initial report, a UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) that likely originated in Yemen impacted in the area of Yavne, the military said.

The Houthis later claimed responsibility for the strike, with a rebel spokesman saying "the drone units targeted a sensitive target of the Israeli enemy in Yavne".

A spokesperson for Israel's Magen David Adom emergency service said reports were received of "an explosion" on a balcony high up in the building in Yavne, and that after a search, no injuries were reported. Eli Avivi, whose home was damaged while she was at work, said she heard the explosion but thought it was "a sonic boom".

"I could see the smoke coming out of our balcony on the 16th floor from a distance," she

said. "I just started shaking because I real- ized something bad happened at home."

In July, a Houthi drone attack in Tel Aviv killed an Israeli civilian, prompting retaliatory strikes on the Yemeni port of Hodeidah. The Houthis, who control most of Yemen's population centres, have also frequently targeted ships in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

Britain and the United States have in turn repeatedly struck Houthi targets in what they say is an effort to secure the vital trade route as well as protect US and allied forces in the area.—AFP

# Turkiye to open border gate for safe return of Syrians, Erdogan says

ANKARA: Turkiye is opening its Yayladagi border gate with Syria to manage the safe and voluntary return of the millions of Syrian migrants it hosts, President Tayyip Erdogan said on Monday, after President Bashar al-Assad's sudden ouster by rebels.

In one of the biggest turning points for the Middle East in generations, opposition forces seized the Syrian capital Damascus and Assad fled to Russia, following 13 years of civil war and more than 50 years of his family's brutal rule.

"We are opening the Yayladagi border gate to crossings to prevent any congestion and ease traffic," Erdogan said, speaking after a cabinet meeting in Ankara.

The Yayladagi crossing close to the northwest edge of Syria has been closed since 2013 due to fighting near the border. "We will also manage the processing of immigrants' voluntary returns in a way befitting our hosting," Erdogan said.

Earlier on Monday, Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said Turkey would work for the safe and voluntary return home of the Syrian migrants it hosts.

Turkiye — which said it gave no support and had no involvement in the offensive by the Syrian opposition

forces it has backed for years against Assad — said on Sunday it wanted the new Syrian administration to be inclusive and for Syrians to determine their own future.

In an address to the Turkish Ambassadors' Conference in Ankara, Fidan said Turkiye was ready to provide support for Syria's rebuilding and that it was coordinating with all "regional actors and parties". He added that Ankara would stand with Syrians in this "new phase" in Damascus, but groups such as Islamic State and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which Ankara sees as terrorist organisations, must not benefit from the situation.

State member Turkiye hosts some 3 million Syrian migrants and refugees, making it the biggest host of Syrians who have fled the civil war. It also controls swathes of land in northern Syria after several cross-border incursions against the Syrian Kurdish YPG militia, which Ankara sees as an extension of the PKK.

Where in Turkish construction and cement companies surged on Monday, buoyed by expectations that they will benefit from rebuilding in Syria.—Reuters

# Concern in West as Syria starts transition

Continued from Page 1

people venturing out after a nightmare curfew, but most shops still remained shut.

Assad's Prime Minister, Muhammad Jahlil, told Al Arabiya TV he had agreed to hand power to the Salvation Government, an administration based in a small pocket of rebel-held territory in northern Syria.

He said the handover could take days to carry out.

The main rebel commander Ahmed al-Sharaa, better known as Abu Mohammed al-Golani, had met overnight with Jahlil and Vice President Faisal Mekdad to discuss a transitional government, a source familiar with the discussions told Reuters.

Al Jazeera television reported the transitional authority would be headed by Mohammed al-Bashir, who ran the Salvation Government before the 12-day lightning offensive that swept into Damascus.

Assad's Baath party also said on Monday that it would support transition efforts. "We will remain supportive of a transitional phase in Syria aimed at defending the unity of the country," party Secretary-General Ibrahim al-Hadid said in a statement.

### 'Shun violence'

Diplomatic acceptance would be a challenge for the new govern-

ment as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) is still designated as a terrorist group by the United Nations.

The EU is "not currently engaging with HTS or its leaders full stop", EU spokesman Andrej Szijarto said. Despite initially encouraging words from German, the bloc said it would reserve judgement on the Islamists.

"As HTS takes on greater responsibilities, we will need to assess not just their words but also their actions," said Szijarto.

Germany noted that HTS has taken measures to plot a different course from its Al Qaeda past, noting that Berlin would be paying attention to how the group "deals with civilians and, in particular, minorities in the areas they now control".

Meanwhile, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer has said HTS must reject "terrorism and violence" before Britain can engage with the rebels.

Starmer, who was in Saudi Arabia on Monday, said it was still "far too early" to consider a change of policy, and he will be "absolutely clear on that red line in relation to terrorism and violence" going forward.

Turkiye's top diplomat, meanwhile, called on the UN to help HTS and other Syrians establish "an inclusive administration". The US, meanwhile, said it is determined to prevent the mili-

tary Islamic State group from re-establishing safe havens in Syria, as well as the fragmentation of the country, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Monday.

### Israeli attacks

Israel will stop air strikes on Syrian stores of advanced weaponry, Israeli officials said on Monday, and keep a "limited" troop presence on the ground, hoping to head off any threat that could emerge in the fallout of ousted Bashar al-Assad's overthrow.

On Monday, Tel Aviv said it had launched more than 100 air strikes on military targets in Syria, including a research centre Western countries suspect of having links to chemical weapons production in Damascus, a war monitor said.

"Israeli warplanes launched over 100 strikes in Syria today, including on the Barzakh scientific research centre," said Rami Abdel Rahman, who heads the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The UN's chemical watchdog Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) said Monday it had warned Syrian authorities to make sure state-owned stockpiles of chemical weapons were safe after the regime change.

The OPCW said it had contacted Syria "with a view to

emphasising the paramount importance of ensuring the safety and security of all chemical weapons related materials and facilities" in the country.

Blinken also said that the US has a "clear interest in ensuring that whatever weapons of mass destruction or components are left in Syria do not fall into the wrong hands".

### Asylum applications

Meanwhile, European countries have put asylum applications from Syrians on hold until further notice.

The decision, which affects tens of thousands of open claims, reflects the rapidly changing political situation in Syria as well as a resurgence of right-wing parties across Europe keen to restrict immigration.

The interior ministry of Germany, now home to nearly a million Syrians, said on Monday it would not process asylum requests until there was more clarity on political developments in Syria.

Britain passed decisions on asylum claims as well, with the interior ministry saying it was assessing the situation.

Other countries including Norway and Austria also announced a suspension of Syrian requests, and France said it hoped to announce a similar decision shortly.—Agencies

# Man held in connection with UnitedHealth CEO killing

NEW YORK: Authorities on Monday detained a man in central Pennsylvania in connection with last week's murder of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson after finding him in possession of a gun, a silencer and false identification cards similar to those used by the killer, several media outlets reported.

Investigators received a tip about the man after he was spotted at a McDonald's in Altoona by someone who thought he looked like the suspected killer, CNN reported, citing unnamed officials.

The man being questioned had a handwritten "massive" criticizing healthcare companies for prioritising profits over care, the New York Times reported, citing a law enforcement official.

One of the false cards found on the man also matched the ID used by the suspect to attack, into a hotel in Manhattan before the shooting, the Times reported. The man has been arrested on local charges, possibly in connection with presenting a false ID to police, and New York detectives are headed to Altoona, according to the Times.

Neither the New York City Police Department nor the Altoona Police Department responded to a request for comment.—Reuters

# No immediate outcome

Continued from Page 1

government that such disruptions were affecting businesses in the country. They warned that if prompt measures were not taken to rectify the situation, future investments, particularly foreign investments, would be at risk.

According to the sources, the PPP leaders also raised concerns about the proposed construction of six dams on the Indus River in Punjab's Cholistan area, saying the project would render lands in Sindh "completely barren". They drew the attention of the PML-N leaders to ongoing protests in various parts of Sindh against the project.

A PPP leader, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the row sides discussed political and legislative matters, including the contentious issue of water distribution among the provinces. The PPP leaders sought an explanation from the PML-N on where they would source water for the Cholistan area. The PPP warned that this project could lead the country toward a drought-like situation.

Additionally, representatives from KP and Balochistan raised concerns over the deteriorating law and order situation in their provinces.

The teams of both sides met under an assurance given by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar in a recent meeting with PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari to address the PPP's concerns. It was decided that the teams of both parties would hold regular meetings to resolve their differences.

This marks the first visible breach between the two main coalition partners since the formation of the PML-N-led government following the February 2024 general elections.

**FFBL, Fauji Fertilizer Bin Qasim Limited**

**Notice for Shareholders pursuant to Scheme of Arrangement**

It is hereby notified that the Scheme of Arrangement (Scheme) pertaining to the merger of Fauji Fertilizer Bin Qasim Limited (FFBL) with and into Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited (FFCL) has been sanctioned by the Honourable Lahore High Court, Rawalpindi Bench.

In accordance with the Scheme, and in consideration for the merger in terms thereof, FFCL will allot and issue an aggregate of 150,870,449 ordinary shares of FFCL (FFCL Shares) to the FFBL Shareholders (being the members of FFBL, other than FFCL and its nominees, if any), based on a swap ratio of 1 (one) FFCL Share for every 4.29 ordinary shares of FFBL held by each FFBL Shareholder (subject to the adjustment of fractional shares / entitlements, if any), in the manner detailed in the Scheme.

In order to implement the terms of the Scheme, the Board of Directors of FFBL have resolved that the Record Date (being the final Book Closure date of FFBL) to determine the identities of the FFBL Shareholders and their corresponding respective entitlements to the FFCL Shares, shall be **Thursday, December 26, 2024**.

Accordingly, the share transfer books of FFBL will remain closed permanently from **Thursday, December 26, 2024**. Transfers received in order at the office of FFBL's share registrar, M/s CDC Share Registrar Services Limited, CDC House, 99-B, Block-B, S.M.C.H.S, Main Shahrah-e-Faisal, Karachi by the close of business on **Tuesday, December 24, 2024** will be treated in time for determining the identities and entitlements of the FFBL Shareholders for the allotment of FFCL Shares.

The allotment of FFCL Shares to entitled FFBL Shareholders pursuant to the Scheme shall be made in the manner prescribed under the Scheme (including subject to disposal of fractional shares / entitlements (if any) by the Board of Directors of FFCL), which shall be intimated to stakeholders through a notice by FFCL at the Pakistan Stock Exchange Limited in accordance with the Scheme. FFBL Shareholders existing on the Record Date (i.e. being entitled to FFCL Shares), holding physical share certificates representing shares of FFBL, are directed to send their share certificate(s) to FFBL at Sona Tower, 156-The Mall, Rawalpindi for cancellation (against which they shall subsequently receive certificates representing FFCL Shares). Further, if shareholders, having physical shares desirous to receive their entitlement of FFCL Shares in book entry form through the CDC, they are advised to arrange to deposit their physical certificate(s) of FFBL shares into CDC through Broker/CDC Participant before **December 26, 2024**, otherwise it will be assumed that physical shareholders require issuance of their respective entitlements of FFCL Shares in the form of physical share certificates.

All FFBL Shareholders are also advised to coordinate / update their records with their respective Participant / CDC Investor Account Services / the share registrar in connection with communication with respect to the Scheme and provision of mandatory registration details in terms of Section 119 of the Companies Act, 2017 and Regulation 47 of the Companies Regulations, 2024, including mobile number / landline number, email address (if available) and registered postal addresses to ensure that the CDC can be validly instructed to credit the CDC accounts of such FFBL Shareholders with book entries relating to the corresponding number of FFCL Shares which the FFBL Shareholder is entitled to in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme.

In accordance with the provisions of the Scheme, FFBL shall, without winding up, stand dissolved from the date on which the FFCL Shares, to be allotted by FFCL to the FFBL Shareholders, have been allotted. Furthermore, FFBL shall automatically stand de-listed from the Pakistan Stock Exchange Limited.

**Fauji Fertilizer Bin Qasim Limited**  
 Place: Rawalpindi  
 Date: 10-12-2024  
 Brig (Retd) Khuram Shahzada, S(M)  
 Company Secretary

**CONCORDIUM**

The following tender which was solicited in BPPRA website and published in daily newspaper on 20-11-2024 & 23-11-2024 vide AB No. 99/13-11-2024 & AB No. 518/23-11-2024. The date of submission and opening of bids has been extended, due to correction of proposal in BPPRA website.

S#	Name of Work	TBE No.	Date of submission & Opening	Estimated Date & Time of Submission & Opening
1	CONSTRUCTION OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT FOR CHALAN FAROOQ MEMORIAL HOSPITAL BLEIDA	TBE-242311002373	09-12-2024	09-12-2024 11:00 AM
2	CONSTRUCTION OF PARAMEDICAL STAFF QUARTERS (12 UNITS) FOR CHALAN FAROOQ MEMORIAL HOSPITAL BLEIDA	TBE-242311002380	09-12-2024	09-12-2024 11:00 AM
3	CONSTRUCTION OF STAFF QUARTER (PACKAGE 2) FOR CHALAN FAROOQ MEMORIAL HOSPITAL BLEIDA	TBE-242311002323	09-12-2024	09-12-2024 11:00 AM
4	CONSTRUCTION OF STAFF QUARTER (PACKAGE 1) FOR CHALAN FAROOQ MEMORIAL HOSPITAL BLEIDA	TBE-242311002320	09-12-2024	09-12-2024 11:00 AM
5	IMPROVEMENT & DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE BLEIDA TOWN PACKAGE 1 (CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC PARK)	TBE-242311002423	10-12-2024	09-12-2024 11:00 AM

The other terms and conditions remain the same.

AB No.591/09-12-2024

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## The climate paradox: how AI can save and sabotage the planet

Concentration of talent and computing power in the Global North risks creating solutions that may not account for the needs and constraints of the developing world

By Abdul Sattar Abbasi

**COMMENT**

IN A world racing to combat climate change, the newest weapon in our arsenal comes with an ironic twist. Artificial Intelligence (AI), the digital saviour in the fight against global warming, has developed quite a thirst of its own.

It seems the very machines we're building to help save our planet are quenching water and energy at rates that have scientists worried.

Every time you ask ChatGPT a few dozen questions, it 'drinks' roughly 500ml of clean water to cool the computers that power behind its intelligence.

For Pakistan, perched precariously on the frontlines of the climate crisis, this paradox holds particular significance. With temperature records being shattered each summer and water scarcity looming, the environmental cost of these digital solutions cannot be ignored.

### Essential applications

At its best, artificial intelligence acts like a planetary nervous system — sensing, predicting, and helping us respond to environmental threats. Google's Flood Hub, for instance, provides flood forecasts up to seven days in advance across more than 80 countries, helping protect communities across Africa, Europe, South and Central America, and the Asia-Pacific region, including Pakistan.

As of 2023, these forecasts cover areas where over 460 million people live. In October 2023, this service expanded to the US and Canada, covering more than 800 riverbanks where over 12m people live.

These applications aren't just impressive — they're essential. The World Meteorological Organisation estimates that improving early warning systems could reduce climate disaster damages by 30 per cent.

And AI is already delivering real climate action results. For example, Global Forest Watch uses AI and satellite imagery to create a real-time tool to monitor and combat deforestation.

But running these powerful AI systems requires enormous computing power, and their carbon footprint is equally large, according to researchers at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, training one of these models can generate carbon emissions equivalent to the lifetime emissions of five average American cars.

The water footprint is equally startling. Modern data centres use vast amounts of water for cooling — up to 500,000 gallons per day for a large facility. By 2025, some experts predict that AI systems could demand as much water as half the UK's annual consumption.

### Geography of AI

While the benefits of AI — improved climate predictions, optimised energy systems, faster disaster responses — can be global, the environmental costs fall disproportionately on certain regions and communities.

In water-stressed regions like Pakistan, where every drop counts, the water demands of AI infrastructure could compete with basic needs like agriculture and drinking water.

This disparity extends beyond resources to expertise. According to a Stack Overflow survey published by the OECD, North America leads the world's AI experts (who are active online), while Pakistan accounts for 0.5%. This concentration of talent and computing power in the Global North risks creating solutions that may not fully account for the needs and constraints of developing nations.

But the real innovation is happening at the intersection of efficiency and design.

"Training better models can actually save more energy over time," explains Justin Barr from Google AI. "Given the number of times they're used each day for inference, in less than a week they save more in energy than the old hardware versions."

Location matters too, and the carbon intensity of AI training can vary dramatically depending on where the data centres are located. Norway's electric grid, for instance, produces just 29g of CO<sub>2</sub>/kWh, compared to 209g in South Africa.

### Pakistan's challenge

For Pakistan, these developments present both challenge and opportunity; choices made today will shape the environmental impact for years to come.

Dr Kashif Talpur, a machine-learning researcher in UK's Solent University, emphasises the importance of considering the full lifecycle of AI models.

"An AI model has to go through two stages: training and inferring. Inferring, which occurs when the AI model is in the hands of end users, constitutes about 90pc of its lifecycle. This stage incurs significantly higher costs... the more complex the problem... the more computational resources each inference requires."

"Today's large language models, such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and various other copilots, are equipped with billions of parameters. Maintaining and cooling the infrastructure, like data centres, adds to the ongoing costs in terms of energy consumption, hardware wear and tear, and operational expenses," Dr Talpur notes.

For Pakistan, charting a path forward means investing not just in AI adoption, but in making that uptake sustainable. It means embracing local talent and ensuring Pakistani voices are heard in the global dialogue about responsible AI.

Most of all, it means recognising that embracing AI's transformative potential comes with a responsibility — a duty to deploy these tools in a way that doesn't exacerbate the very problems they're meant to solve.

A detailed version of this article can be accessed on Dawn.com

## US to step up truce efforts amid Israel's optimism

Trump's Mideast aide warns of consequences if prisoners not released before Jan 20



PEOPLE ride on a truck in Khan Yunis, in the southern Gaza Strip, on Monday.—AFP

DUBAI: US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan will travel to Israel on Thursday to discuss efforts to broker a Gaza prisoner swap and ceasefire deal, besides the situation in Syria following the regime change, according to the White House.

Sullivan will meet Israeli officials to discuss efforts to reach a prisoner release and ceasefire deal in Gaza, the latest developments in Syria, and for discussions about Lebanon and Iran, National Security Council spokesman Sean Savett said.

The statement comes after Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar said Israel had become "more optimistic about a possible deal in Gaza, amid reports that Hamas had asked for lists of Israeli prisoners the Palestinians wanted.

He said indirect negotiations were under way about the return of about 100 prisoners and that, while it was still too early to be sure, prospects had improved.

"We can be more optimistic than before but we are not there yet. I hope we will be there," Sa'ar told a press conference in Jerusalem, reiterating the stance that there would not be a ceasefire without a prisoners' release deal.

A Palestinian official with knowledge of the mediation effort said Hamas had asked all groups in Gaza to start listing the names of all prisoners in their custody, whether alive or dead due to the Israeli bombardment that has continued for over 14 months.

Hamas officials, however, declined immediate comment.

Hamas took more than 250 prisoners in an attack on Israel-occupied territory on Oct 7, 2023. Since then, Israeli forces have killed over 44,700 Palestinians, mostly women and children, in Gaza.

Each side accuses the other of standing in the way of a deal, but Sa'ar said Hamas' previous position "might have changed during recent times". "So if both parties are interested in an agreement, there is a better chance it will be achieved," he said.

## CM Maryam vows to transform healthcare, transport

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Punjab government has signed an agreement with a China firm to procure machinery and advanced cancer treatment methods for the first public-sector cancer hospital in Lahore, which is likely to open next year.

The deal was signed during Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's meeting with Hygiene Medical Technologies President Lu Fu Liang in Beijing on Monday.

Lu Liang and his team briefed her on interventional oncology and radiation treatment techniques, including the use of freezing and heating techniques.

In addition, an MoU was signed between AI Fortis Tech and the Punjab agriculture department to set up a robotic agricultural equipment manufacturing plant in Punjab.

CM Maryam inspected the latest agricultural tools equipped with robotic technology.

According to APP, she vowed to transform Punjab's healthcare and transport systems during a series of engagements in Beijing.

She also visited Beijing Municipal Commission of Transport, where she discussed sustainable transportation initiatives with deputy director general Sheng Wangyan. She explored Beijing's state-of-the-art control room and command centre and commended its eco-friendly and smart transport infrastructure.

CM Maryam expressed her ambition to replicate this model in Punjab.

## Despite improvement, Pakistan's internet among slowest globally

KARACHI: Pakistan has one of the slowest internet in the world despite improvement in average mobile and fixed broadband speeds in October, according to global speed test data.

Okla's Speedtest Global Index for October showed that for fixed broadband — wired connections to your homes or offices — Pakistan ranked 141 out of 158 nations with a median speed of 15.6mbps.

In terms of mobile data, the country ranked 100 out of 131 countries with a median speed of 20.6mbps.

Compared to the previous month, Pakistan maintained the same ranking for mobile data speed, but improved by two points — from 143 to 141 — for fixed

broadband.

In September, the average speed for fixed broadband and mobile data was 15.58mbps and 20.02mbps, respectively.

Karachi and Lahore, the two biggest cities in Pakistan, had the fastest internet speeds in the entire country.

Lahore stood at 138 among 158 cities worldwide, with a median mobile data speed of 24.0mbps. Karachi was 144th with 20.97mbps. Lahore was at 179 with 15.98mbps.

Overall, the country with the fastest mobile data was the United Arab Emirates (426.5mbps) and for fixed

broadband, Singapore (314.99mbps).

The fastest city for mobile data was Abu Dhabi and for fixed broadband, Valparaiso, Chile.

For the last few months, users across Pakistan have experienced sluggish speeds, difficulty downloading media on WhatsApp, and intermittent connectivity issues.

The frequent internet disruptions were coupled with limited access to virtual private networks used by many Pakistanis to access X, among other restricted websites. Since July, the country has improved its ranking for fixed broadband speed from 145 to 141 and mobile data from 101 to 100.— Dawn Report

## Team including Pakistani researcher wins super-computing 'Nobel'

Group bags honour for smart predictive modelling for climate events

By Zaki Abbas



Dr Zubair Khalid

ISLAMABAD: A team of researchers, including a Pakistani academic, has been awarded the 'Nobel Prize of super-computing' for developing a smart predictive modelling for climate.

The Gordon Bell Prize is an annual award for groundbreaking achievements in high-performance computing (HPC) and innovative parallel computing contributions toward solving the climate crisis.

Dr Zubair Khalid, an associate professor at the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), is the first Pakistani to have been selected for the award.

In a statement, the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), which presented the award, said the

team won the award for their project "Boosting Earth System Model Outputs and Saving Petabytes in Their Storage Using Ensemble Climate Emulators".

Dr Khalid told Dawn that their project was a "smart climate model" that surpassed traditional climate models that take a "long time to run and produce enormous amounts of data that are difficult to store and analyse".

"Our emulator acts like a highly intelligent, compact version of these models," he said, adding that their tool also reduces the energy footprint of climate modelling.

"Instead of running full simulations, it can predict climate patterns accurately and quickly by using smaller data inputs and advanced algorithms."

The emulator would enable "significant advancements" in how "we understand, predict, and respond to climate-related phenomena both at the local and global scale".

An extreme weather event becomes a new normal, traditional climate models, Dr Khalid said, often struggle to provide precise, localized predictions due to computational limitations.

"The EarthScale Climate Emulator significantly improves accuracy and speed in forecasting these events and therefore enabling timely and accurate flood predictions, enhanced forecasts of hurricanes and tropical storms, and precise hardware predictions," he added.

It also provides climate data at an exceptionally fine scale (km scale in space and hours in time) that enables localised disaster readiness in small towns and communities overlooked by broader models.

Their tool can be used to help farmers optimise sowing schedules and irrigation strategies based on highly localised weather and climate forecasts.

This emulator would make a "tangible difference in Pakistan" by bringing climate science closer to real-life solutions that protect lives and livelihoods, according to Dr Khalid.

Speaking about his role in the research team, Dr Khalid said his work focused on "integrating spatial data analysis and modelling tools" for faster and accurate simulations.

It is an "incredibly humbling honour" to be the first Pakistani to receive this prestigious award, he told Dawn.

For now, this recognition is not merely personal; it is a profound honour to represent Pakistan on the global stage and contribute to addressing one of the most pressing global challenges of our time," he said, hoping the achievement would inspire young scientists in Pakistan to pursue research and innovation, knowing that their work can make a global impact.

## Yoon barred from fleeing ahead of planned impeachment

Former defence, interior ministers besides top military, intelligence officials face travel bans

SEOUL: South Korea's President Yoon Suk Yeol was barred from leaving the country on Monday, the justice ministry said, less than a week after he plunged the country into chaos by briefly imposing martial law.

Yoon sent special forces and intelligence agencies to parliament on the night of Dec 3 before lawmakers forced him to rescind the order by rejecting his decree.

Later, he narrowly survived an impeachment motion in parliament, while huge crowds braved freezing temperatures to call for his ouster. However, despite remaining in office, a batch of investigations has been closing in on Yoon and his close allies, including a probe for alleged insurrection.

The ministry of justice confirmed on Monday that Yoon had become the

first sitting South Korean president to be barred from leaving the country.

A lawmaker was asked at a parliamentary hearing on Monday whether Yoon had been barred from leaving the country. "Yes, that's right," Bae Sang-yeop, an immigration services commissioner at the ministry, replied.

Also under travel bans for their roles in last week's events are former defence minister Kim Young-hyun, who is currently in detention, and ex-interior minister Lee Sang-min. Choi Park An-su, the officer in charge of the martial law operation, and defence counterintelligence commander Yoo In-hyung are also barred from leaving the country.

Investigators hauled Park to his further questioning on Monday.

### 'Second coup'

The impeachment push failed to gain after members of Yoon's own People Power Party walked out of parliament, depriving it of the necessary two-thirds majority. The party says that in exchange, Yoon has agreed to hand power to the



DEMONSTRATORS hold posters ahead of a rally seeking the impeachment of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol in front of the headquarters of the ruling People Power Party in Seoul, on Monday.—Reuters

prime minister and party chief, prompting levels of protest from the opposition.

"This is an unlawful, unconstitutional act of a second insurrection

and a second coup," Democratic Party floor leader Park Chan-doo said on Monday.

Under South Korea's constitution, the president remains head of gov-

ernment and commander in chief of the army unless he or she is impeached, resigns or steps down.

In such a case, power would then be handed to the prime minister on an interim basis until elections could be held.

Claiming that Yoon can remain in office but has delegated his powers to the prime minister and leader of his ruling PPP — who is not an elected official — is "a blatant constitutional violation with no legal basis", Park said.

"Their attitude of placing themselves above the constitution mirrors that of insurrectionist Yoon Suk Yeol," he said.

Interestingly, the defence ministry confirmed on Monday that the unimpeached Yoon remained at the head of the country's security apparatus. "Legally, covered by military forces currently lies with the commander in chief," defence ministry spokesperson Jeon Ha-yeon said.

Yoon has apologised for "anxiety and inconvenience" caused by his declaration of martial law but has

not stepped down, saying instead he would await decisions about his fate to his party.

He also said he would accept all political and legal responsibility for the martial law fiasco.

There is no constitutional basis supporting the ruling party's claim that Yoon can stay in office but hand over his power to unelected party officials, said Kim Hui-won, a constitutional law professor at Pusan National University Law School.

"It seems to resemble an unconstitutional soft coup," he told AFP.

"If there are issues with the president, there are ways laid out in the constitution such as suspending the president from his duties, and then move on to proceedings set out in the constitution, such as impeachment," he said.

The opposition has already said they would try again to impeach Yoon, with leader Lee Jae-myung saying another vote would be held on Dec 14. Huge crowds are expected to gather again outside the National Assembly building.—AFP

# SPORT

## Griezmann brace leads Atletico to win over Sevilla

MADRID: A second-half double from Antoine Griezmann earned Atletico Madrid a stunning 4-1 comeback home win over Sevilla in La Liga on Sunday, as the hosts claimed their ninth straight win in all competitions.

Atletico made a dominant start at home, with Griezmann hitting the crossbar before Rodrigo De Paul opened the scoring in the 10th minute, hammering a rocket from the edge of the box and into the top corner.

Sevilla's Dodi Lukosevic equalised just two minutes later with a powerful low strike following a corner before Isaac Romero put them ahead after a quick counter-attack in the 32nd minute, shooting across goalkeeper Jan Oblak, who could only get a finger to the ball.

Atletico thought they had levelled the score just before halftime when Julian Alvarez put the ball in the net from a De Paul pass, but the VAR disallowed the Argentine striker's goal for an offside in the build-up.

Juanlu Sanchez then extended the visitors' advantage in the 57th minute with a close-range finish off Kike Salas's second assist of the game before Griezmann pulled one back for Atletico five minutes later.

Substitute Samuel Lino struck from long range to beat Sevilla keeper Alvaro Fernandez, who had pulled off some key saves but could not prevent the Brazilian's first goal of the season.

Griezmann found the net again four minutes into stoppage time to seal the victory that left Diego Simeone's side third in the standings with 35 points, one behind Real Madrid and three shy of leaders Barcelona.

Despite Atletico's fine form, Simeone remained cautious and said his team will face more challenges during a very long season.

"In a long season, with so many games, with La Liga, Champions League, Copa del Rey, Club World Cup, there are many games and obviously we are going to have to go through different stages," he said.

"The most important thing is to be strong and to make sure that these situations do as little damage as possible."

Sevilla, who came close to their first win away to Atletico since 2008, remain 11th on 19 points.

Earlier, Athletic Bilbao tightened their hold on fourth place with a 2-0 victory over Villarreal, fifth.

Alfonso Pedraza and Isaki Williams struck to help the Basques move six points clear of their opponents, who have played two fewer games.

Bilbao have won four consecutive games in the top flight, including beating champions Real on Wednesday, and are aiming for Champions League qualification next season.

"We're establishing ourselves in fourth, which is what we wanted," said Williams. "I think we competed really well, when you're in form, you have to seal the win." —Agencies



MADRID: Antoine Griezmann (C) of Atletico Madrid scores during the La Liga match against Sevilla at the Metropolitan Stadium. —AFP

## Wind blows Wolfsburg to late victory against Mainz

BERLIN: Jonas Wind scored a brace inside the final 10 minutes to secure a comeback 4-3 win for VfL Wolfsburg at home to Mainz 05 on Sunday, sending the Wolves up to fifth in the Bundesliga.

Wind's winner came in the 94th minute after he had levelled the scores with seven minutes remaining at the Volkswagen Arena.

Paul Bebel opened the scoring for Mainz early in the first half, Mohammed Amara quickly levelled for the hosts.

Jonathan Burkardt sent the visitors back in front before half-time, only for Wolfsburg to hit back again through Tiago Tomas near the hour.

A second for Nebel seemed to have secured Mainz fifth place but Wind's late three-point Wolfsburg climbbed above Borussia Dortmund into the Europa League spot.

Wolfsburg sit on 21 points, the same as Dortmund and Freiburg in sixth and seventh, respectively, Mainz are ninth, two points behind Wolfsburg.

Freiburg passed up the chance to leapfrog Wolfsburg into fifth as they drew 1-1 at lively Hoffenheim in the weekend's final match.

Matthias Ginter sent the visitors ahead on 68 minutes, only for Hoffenheim's Tim Rieder to level five minutes later.

The draw leaves the hosts in 14th, three points clear of the relegation zone. —AFP

## Stallions go top with triumph over Lions

RAWALPINDI: Stallions went top of the Champions T20 Cup points table with an impressive 11-run win over Lions here at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Monday.

To win their second match in a row, Stallions were helped to 162-5 in 20 overs by a solid batsman 36-ball 51 by Hassan Talat who knocked his maiden T20 hundred in the team's victory over Panthers on Saturday. They then restricted Lions to 150-7 in 20 overs.

Shoaib Malik (2-23), Usman Tariq (2-23) and Zaman Khan (2-38) put breaks on the rival batting as Lions continued to wait for a win in the tournament.

Panthers have won one and lost one while Markhams have one win in one and Dolphins have lost their only game.

Chasing 163 for victory, Lions got off to the worst possible start with opening batter Zeshan Malik dismissed for a three-ball duck. It brought Imran-ul-Haq and Hassan Nisar together for a 71-run stand. Nisar's 43 came off 28 balls inclusive of four boundaries and a six while Hassan's 25-ball 39 were studded with a six and three boundaries.

Rohail Nazir and Mohammad Asim Zafar fell for three each, leaving the Lions in a spot of bother. With the asking rate soaring, Khushdil Shah and Ameer

Yasin came together with 66 needed in 43 deliveries which came down to 20 in 12. Mohammad Ali conceded just four runs in the penultimate over to almost seal the match.

Zaman Khan, known for his death overs mastery, gave away just nine to give Stallions victory. Khushdil scored 28 and Ameer made unbeaten 27 off 24 balls with the help of one six.

Hussain was once again the architect of Stallions innings as first they were sent into bat by Lions. He cracked five boundaries in his knock, adding an invaluable 88 for the fifth wicket with team mentor-cum-player Shoaib Malik

to steady the innings.

Shoaib scored a 30-ball 39 with four boundaries. Mohammad Harris hit the only six of the innings in his 18-ball 25, also hitting two boundaries. Muzaf Sadique once again showed his promise with a 29-ball 32 including five hits to the rope.

Pacer Muzaf Khan was the pick of Lions' bowlers with 2-31.

Score by Innings: Stallions 162-5 in 20 overs (Shoaib Malik 51 not out, Shoaib Malik 23, Usman Tariq 23, Zaman Khan 38, Hassan Talat 51, Ameer Yasin 39, Khushdil Shah 28, Ameer Yasin 27, Shoaib Malik 2-23, Usman Tariq 2-23, Zaman Khan 2-38). —Sports Report

## Greenwood strikes as Marseille close in on PSG

PARIS: Mason Greenwood scored his 10th Ligue 1 goal as Olympique de Marseille won 2-0 at St Etienne on Sunday to climb to second place in the table, five points behind leaders Paris St Germain.

Adrien Rabiot gave Marseille a first-half lead and Greenwood added the second just after the hour mark, following up to score after his penalty was saved.

St Etienne have now lost nine of 14 games since winning promotion back to Ligue 1. They sit in the relegation play-off place.

Elsewhere on Sunday, Lens stayed in touch with the European places thanks to a 2-0 home win over Montpellier, who are now four points adrift at the bottom.

Nantes claimed a precious win in their fight for survival, beating derby rivals and fellow strugglers Rennes 1-0 at the Stade de la Beaujoire.

Strasbourg drew 0-0 with Reims in the day's other match. —AFP

## Ding levels world chess championship score

SINGAPORE: Defending champion Ding Liren bounced back strongly on Monday to beat his teenage challenger in the 12th game and level the score in the World Chess Championship match.

India's Gukesh Domaga was forced to resign after finding his king cornered by the Chinese title holder's white pieces which had advanced deeply into enemy territory.

Ding's victory put both players at six points apiece, with only two more games to go in the classic 12-game format chess.

"It's maybe the best game I played in recent times," Ding said.

Ding, 32, took control of the board early on as he dominated throughout.

Gukesh seemed to gain the momentum for the title when he forced Ding to resign in the eleventh game to take the lead.

Next games will be played on Wednesday after a rest day on Tuesday.

"Obviously, it's not pleasant to lose this game," said a dejected Gukesh.

"At least the score is still tied and there are two more games remaining. So let's see." —AFP



LIONS' Khushdil Shah plays a shot during the Champions T20 Cup match against Stallions at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium. —Online

## Napoli denied top spot after another loss to Lazio

NAPLES: Lazio denied Napoli the chance to return to the top of the Serie A standings with a 1-0 away win on Sunday, their second victory this week over Napoli, following their midweek Coppa Italia success.

Napoli remain second on 32 points, two behind leaders Atalanta and while Lazio may fifth, the win moved them level on 31 points with Inter Milan and Fiorentina, who won 1-0 over Cagliari in their first league match since midfielder Eduardo Bove's sudden collapse last weekend.

Marco Baroni's Lazio advanced at the expense of Napoli in a 1-1 win at the Stadio Olimpico on Thursday, and while two-match charged sides took to the pitch in Naples, the league meeting finished with the same outcome thanks to Gustavo Isaksen's 25th-minute goal.

In looking wet Napoli, Isaksen struck the home fans with a brilliant strike, set on his way by substitute Tijjani Nosir, Isaksen twisted and turned to go past Matthias Olivera before striking a stunning curling effort into the far corner past Napoli goalkeeper Alex Meret.

"The boys showed how fired up they were and their work ethic," Lazio manager Baroni told DAZN. "We're facing teams built to win, and the only way we can get there (to their level) is with good football. That's the only way we can play."

Baroni knows what it takes to win a Scudetto. He scored the only goal for Napoli, against Lazio, on the final day of the season in 1990 to guarantee them the league title, but he isn't getting carried

away with his side's success. "It's hard to make the climb and it takes a moment to drop back down again," Baroni said. "I know the league very well, the teams that are at the top, and we have to face them with this attitude. And then in the end we will see."

Khвича Kvaratskhelia and Andre-Frank Zambo Anguissa both struck the woodwork for Antonio Conte's Napoli, who are hunting a fourth league title after being crowned champions in 2023.

But the hosts were frustrated by dogged Lazio, who were largely on the back foot but came close on a couple of occasions before Isaksen smashed in his second Serie A goal of the season.

"I'm not disappointed or unhappy, during this journey there are some stumbles, there will probably be others, this is the team I want to see but we need to have more quality in the final metres," Conte said.

Earlier, Davide Cattolici fired in the only goal of the game in the 24th minute to give Fiorentina an eighth straight win in Italy's top flight, not counting their interrupted match with Inter Milan which was goalless when Bove collapsed.

Promising midfielder Bove, 22, has been in Fiorentina's Carragi hospital for a week as he undergoes tests, with reports in Italian media saying that his career in Italy is effectively over.

Before kick-off, Fiorentina captain Luca Ranieri expressed anger at reports that Bove was set to have a debilitating faked, which would force him to look for a club abroad due to stringent

health regulations in Italian sport.

Cattolici dedicated his superb opener to his good friend and fellow Roman Bove, with the pair on loan at Fiorentina from capital city clubs Lazio and Roma.

The 30-year-old ran to a pitch-side camera to make the number four — Bove's shirt number — and a heart with his fingers after cuffing Luca Ranieri's lay-off into the top corner.

Cattolici's goal left spirited Cagliari 15th, two points above Hellas Verona who dropped into the relegation zone on goal difference after being flattened 4-1 by Empoli.

Verona dropped behind Como following a heavy home defeat — their seventh loss in eight league matches — and an entertaining 2-2 draw for Cesc Faboraga's side at bottom club Venezia. —Agencies



NAPLES: Lazio's Gustavo Isaksen (C) shoots to score against Napoli during their Serie A match at Stadio Diego Armando Maradona. —Reuters

## Perfect win, says Maresca, as Chelsea storm back to sink Spurs



CHELSEA'S Enzo Fernandez (not pictured) scores past Tottenham Hotspur goalkeeper Fraser Forster during their Premier League match at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. —Reuters

LONDON: Enzo Maresca hailed the perfect win as his Chelsea side roared back from two goals down after 11 minutes to beat Tottenham Hotspur 4-1 and move second in the Premier League on Sunday.

The visitors were in big trouble after two slips by Marc Cucurella led to goals for Dominic Solanke and Dejan Kulusevski but they responded in powerful fashion.

Cole Palmer started two penalties, the second an audacious Paterson dink, while Jordan Sanchez and Enzo Fernandez were also on target as Chelsea cut Liverpool's lead to four points.

Sam Hoggart's 56th-minute goal was little consolation for Spurs, who have now lost once in seven games and remain 11th in the table.

It was Chelsea's fourth win in a row in the league and while Maresca continues to dismiss his side's title ambitions, few fans are taking that opinion seriously.

"To come to this stadium and think you are going to win and not suffer, it's impossible. It's the perfect win probably because of this," the Italian told reporters.

"After the game, my message to the players is to be focused in the day by day, our sessions, the next game on

Thursday and then Sunday. The main focus has to be to enjoy the day off and when we come back, 100%, train well, go for the game."

"The fans can dream because from the outside, it is quite clear and inside, the reality is we are not ready but the important thing is we improve day by day."

Cucurella was left red-faced after his choice of footwear proved his undoing, twice falling over and being punished as Tottenham took advantage to surge ahead.

It was all smiles between the Spaniard and Maresca at the end, however. "He said to me after the

game that he was trying to bring something to the game?" Maresca told Sky Sports.

"No, being serious, to come to this stadium against this team and be 2-0 down, ten minutes there with the same plan on and off the ball and then second half we changed things tactically. I think overall we deserved to win."

"It's more a question for Marc. They are mature enough to decide what boots they need for the game. The most important thing is that we were 2-0 but we continued the same way to create chances."

Palmer has now been involved in 50 Premier League goals in 48 games for Chelsea

since signing from Manchester City — 33 goals and 17 assists.

"The Premier League is full of top players and top talent. Cole belongs with those players," Maresca said.

Tottenham manager Ange Postecoglou said his side must show more discipline. Spurs have won just nine in seven games in all competitions to pile the pressure on Postecoglou's position.

"It is a sore one, a painful one," said Postecoglou. "We started the game really well but as our season has been going, we lose Romero after 20 minutes and that disrupts us a bit and they score straight after." —Agencies

# Bavuma hails team effort after SA seal series against Sri Lanka

CAPE TOWN: South African captain Temba Bavuma said his team's 100-run win in the second Test against Sri Lanka at St George's Park on Monday was a big step forward for a largely inexperienced group of players.

"For a lot of the guys it was a proper taste of what Test cricket is about," said Bavuma of a hard-fought match. "It's rare when you get to play for five days and it's also rare when the game is always in the balance. There were times when we were on top and times when Sri Lanka were getting the momentum on their side."

The win put South Africa on top of the World Test Championship table, which is based on average points gained.

South Africa can make certain of qualifying for the final at Lord's in England next June if they beat Pakistan in a two-match series which starts on Dec 26.

"The WTC table looks good," Bavuma told media. "We see ourselves in number one with two games to go. I don't know what the match looks like but we're playing good cricket and we want it to continue."

Bavuma was named player of the series after scoring 327 runs in four innings, with a century and three fifties, but said other individuals in the team were making major contributions.

Three South Africans made centuries

Scoreboard table showing South Africa's performance against Sri Lanka, including runs scored by various players like Temba Bavuma, Faf du Plessis, and Aiden Markram.

and three bowlers had five-wicket hauls, including Keshav Mahara, who took five for 76 to seal Monday's win. Sri Lanka lost their remaining five wickets for 23 runs on Monday.

# Pakistan make strong start at World Team Squash

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan made a strong start at the WSF World Team Squash Championship, securing victories in both of their pool-stage matches against Peru (2-0) and Hong Kong, China (2-1) on Monday.

According to the Pakistan Squash Federation, Nour Zaman and Nasir Iqbal played pivotal roles in the team's success, winning their respective matches against Peru before defeating Hong Kong.

In the match against Peru, Azim Khan lost to Diego Elias 3-0, with the scoreline reading 4-11, 2-11, 3-11 in just 23 minutes. However, Nour bounced back for Pakistan, defeating Rafael Alvarez 3-2 in a thrilling contest that lasted 58 minutes.

Nasir completed the win for Pakistan, beating Alonso Escudero 3-0 in just 23 minutes, with a dominant performance (11-3, 11-4, 11-2).

Pakistan's next challenge came against Hong Kong, China, where Azim faced Alex Lau. In a hard-fought match, Azim was defeated 3-2, with the scores reading 5-11, 11-7, 9-11, 11-11, and 4-11 in 64 minutes.

Nour once again stepped up for Pakistan, overcoming Henry Leung 3-2 in 44 minutes. Nour recovered from a slow start, winning 7-11, 11-8, and 5-11 before claiming the final two games 11-8 and 11-5.

Nasir sealed Pakistan's victory by defeating Chi Hin Wong 3-0 in just 21 minutes, with a commanding performance (11-5, 11-5, 11-5). —Sports Reporter



SOUTH AFRICA'S close-in fielder Tony de Zorzi attempts to take a catch of Sri Lanka's Prabath Jayasuriya during the second Test at St George's Park on Monday.—AFP

# South Africa set to take on Pakistan in T20 battle

DURBAN: While South Africa's Test team were on the field against Sri Lanka in Cape Town, a separate group of players were in Pretoria preparing for a Twenty20 International series against Pakistan.

The T20 squad, captained by Heinrich Klaasen, flew to Durban on Sunday where the first T20 will be played on Tuesday — the day after South Africa wrapped up a Test win in Cape Town.

It is the first of six white-ball matches — three T20 Internationals and three One-day Internationals — to be played by Pakistan before they meet South Africa in two Test matches.

Only Ryan Rickelton of the current South African Test team is due to play in the T20 series — a although regular white-ball captain Aiden Markram as well as Tristan Stubbs, Kagiso Rabada and Marco Jonckes would all be likely choices in a full-strength team.

Pakistan, too, will make multiple changes between formats, with only white-ball captain Mohammad Hafeez, Babar Azam, Saad Azhar and Salman Ali Agha due to play in all three series.

South African white-ball coach Rob Walter has called up fast bowler Anrich Nortje and left-arm wrist spinner Tabraiz Shamsi for the T20 series.

Nortje and Shamsi were South Africa's leading bowlers at the T20 World Cup, helping the team reach the final, but they have opted out of

Match starts at 9:00pm (PST)

national contracts in order to play in franchise tournaments around the world.

Despite their successful World Cup campaign, Walter is under pressure because of South Africa's poor record in bilateral series — they have lost five and drawn two of seven series — but he has seldom been able to field a full-strength team.

Pakistan are coming off a white-ball tour of Zimbabwe, where they won both the ODI and T20 series. Before that they were in Australia where they lost all three T20 matches but won an ODI series 2-1.

Pakistan will field a strong fast bowling line-up in both white-ball series, including Shaheen Shah Afridi and Haris Rauf, who are not part of their Test squad.

The T20 squad includes left-arm wrist spinner Safyan Mogaj, who took five wickets for just three runs in the second T20 against Zimbabwe in Bulawayo last Tuesday.

"We have been on the road since last month and this is our third consecutive overseas tour, which has made the team more proactive in terms of the preparations and getting used to the local conditions as soon as possible," Hafeez told in a statement on Monday.

"SA TRACKS TO HELP OUR PACERS"

Talking on the series in South Africa, Pakistan's T20 captain Mohammad Rizwan said his team was a good blend of youth and experience that could deliver their best against Pretoria.

"The return of Babar, Naseem and Shaheen to the white-ball squads is a welcome development for the team and with a fine blend of youth and experience, we look forward to do our best against South Africa in this T20 series before the focus shifts to the other two formats," the wicket-

keeper/Dattar added.

The skipper said that the South African tracks would be tough but useful for the touring pacers.

"The wickets in South Africa will challenge us but at the same time our pacers will benefit from the conditions as well. With the help of Allah, we are eager to continue the winning momentum from the last tour against Zimbabwe."

The second and third T20s are scheduled to take place on Dec 13 and 14 at the SuperSport Park, Centurion and the Wanderers in Johannesburg, respectively. The three ODIs will be staged on Dec 17 (Pretoria), 19 (Cape Town) and 22 (Johannesburg) followed by the Tests in Centurion (Jan 26-30) Cape Town (Jan 31-3).

South Africa's franchise squads, the new franchisees, include Franchisee 1 (Durban), Franchisee 2 (Cape Town), Franchisee 3 (Pretoria), Franchisee 4 (Cape Town), Franchisee 5 (Durban), Franchisee 6 (Cape Town), Franchisee 7 (Durban), Franchisee 8 (Cape Town), Franchisee 9 (Durban), Franchisee 10 (Cape Town), Franchisee 11 (Durban), Franchisee 12 (Cape Town), Franchisee 13 (Durban), Franchisee 14 (Cape Town), Franchisee 15 (Durban), Franchisee 16 (Cape Town), Franchisee 17 (Durban), Franchisee 18 (Cape Town), Franchisee 19 (Durban), Franchisee 20 (Cape Town).

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# Pakistan to face Syria, Myanmar and Afghanistan in bid to reach Asian Cup

KARACHI: Pakistan face a tall order in their bid to qualify for the AFC Asian Cup for the first time in their history after being drawn with Syria, Myanmar and Afghanistan in Group 'C' of the third round of qualifying for the 2027 tournament in Saudi Arabia.

Eighteen teams have already booked their spots following the second round of qualifying, which continued with the preliminary round for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, with six berths — group winners of each of the groups — up for grabs in the third qualifying round.

The draw was conducted in Kuala Lumpur on Monday with Pakistan and Chinese Taipei the only two teams who failed to gain a point in the second qualifying round.

Pakistan open their campaign away on March 25 next year against Syria, who failed to advance from the second round of qualifying for the first time in three editions.

Syria, who were in the first pot as the top six seeded teams for the draw, came agonisingly close to securing a spot in the 2018 FIFA World Cup and its football federation on Monday changed the colour of their national team's kit and logo from red to green after the resignation of president Bashar al-Assad was toppled.

Pakistan have advanced this far in qualifying for the Asian Cup for the first time following their historic victory against Cambodia in the first round before they finished winless and pointless in the second round to parachute into the race for 2027 as one of the bottom two teams.

Syria finished third in their group behind Japan and North Korea and ahead of bottom side Myanmar in their second-round group. They thrashed Myanmar 7-0 in their home fixture while drawing 1-1 away. That was the only point Myanmar secured in the second round.

Myanmar travel to Pakistan's in the second game of their qualifying campaign on June 18. Pakistan have played Myanmar, formerly Burma, several times in the 1960s and 1970s — making up on the losing side (1-3) in the team's last fixture at the 1974 Asian Games.

Pakistan, who are head-coach Stephen Constantine depart at the end of his contract last month, face Afghanistan in a double header in October next year — matches taking place on the 16th and 18th with the first at home.

Pakistan won 2-1 against the Afghans in Lahore in 2015 — the last time the two teams met on the football pitch. Pakistan's peripatetic fixture is at home to Syria on Nov 18 before they end their campaign away in Myanmar on March 31, 2026. —Sports Reporter

# Rutherford ton steers West Indies to victory over Bangladesh

BASSETERRE: A superb maiden hundred from Sherfane Rutherford led the West Indies to a five-wicket win over Bangladesh in the first One-day International at Warner Park on Sunday.

Rutherford, playing in his 10th One-day International, slammed seven fours and eight sixes in his 80-ball innings of 113 which ended with West Indies just seven runs short of completing the highest ever run chase on the ground.

The 26-year-old, who was named player of the match, came to the crease with West Indies 94-3 chasing the 294-6 that Bangladesh posted in their 50 overs.

He added 99 for the fourth wicket with captain Tai Haque who made 86 from 88 balls, before drilling off-spinner Mehidy Hasan Miraz down the throat of Jaker Ali

at midwicket.

Rutherford and partner Justin Groves (41 not out) to add 95 for the sixth wicket, taking West Indies to the brink of victory.

"I think he's really improved his batting," said Haque of his matchwinner.

"We ask for consistency, we always speak about it, and he's showing that.

"He strikes the ball really well and the hard work is paying off in the middle. He was disappointed not to finish the game."

After winning the toss and choosing to bat first, the Bangladesh team made a solid start through opener Tarek Hasan (50) and skipper Mehidy (74).

Mahmudullah, with 59 not out, and Jaker, who made 48 runs, added 90 for the sixth wicket but it was not enough to get off Rutherford.—AFP

Scoreboard table showing West Indies' performance against Bangladesh, including runs scored by Sherfane Rutherford, Justin Groves, and Tai Haque.



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool players take part in a practice session at the AXA training centre on Monday. Arne Slot's men travel to Girona for their Champions League match on Tuesday with Liverpool the only team to have won all three five matches and guaranteed to be playing in the knockout stage.

# Hazlewood could be back for third India test

SYDNEY: Australia quick Josh Hazlewood bowled two spells at full pace at Adelaide Oval on Monday and thinks he will know in the next 24 hours if he will be available for the third Test against India in Brisbane.

Hazlewood missed the 10-wicket win over India in Adelaide on Sunday with the latest in a series of side strains that have blighted his career.

"I think it'll be how I pull up in the 24 hours following it really," Hazlewood told reporters. "It's just that report (on function) and obviously

two spells makes a big difference. Cooling down pretty much fully and then going again in the same day, and the intensity has got to be right up there as well."

"So a few boxes to tick, but it's probably the 24 hours that follow and pulling up again the next day and then thinking 'yeah, I'd be right to go again if I had to'."

Scott Boland, playing his first Test in 17 months, stood in for Hazlewood in the pace attack for the second Test and finished with match figures of

5-105 as Australia wrapped up victory to level the series at 1-1. Hazlewood said he might have been able to play through the pain in Adelaide but always took a cautious approach.

"I think I would have been in a pretty bad state by the end of the game — even though it was only a short game, it just wasn't quite right," he said. "Obviously get Scotty there, who does a fantastic job every time he plays. Sometimes you've got to be pretty much 100 per cent to play." —Reuters

# India's Adelaide drubbing puts 'subdued' Sharma under scrutiny

NEW DELHI: India's second Test drubbing in Adelaide showed that captain Rohit Sharma was failing to bring the aggression needed to beat Australia on their own turf, leading cricket historians said.

The tensions were thrashed by 10 wickets inside three days of the pink ball match on Sunday, as Australia levelled the series 1-1.

Sharma, 37, returned to lead the team after missing India's opening win in Perth due to the birth of his second child, but crashed out with scores of three and six.

He had dropped down to number six in the batting order from his usual opening slot in favour of R.L. Hazard, who played a key part in the Perth Test victory.

Former India all-rounder Ravi Shastri said Sharma should revert to the top to allow him to play to his attacking strengths.

"Thought he was a little too subdued, just seeing his body language," Shastri told broadcasters on Sunday. "That's the reason I want him at the top. That's where he can be aggressive and expressive... I just wanted to see him more involved, and a little more animated."

Former opener Aakash Chopra was more than in his criticism of the skipper.

"Let's call a spade a spade," he said. "We need defensive captaincy,

He allowed the match to drift." India's loss was greeted with derision by new spinner on Monday with a hoodlum in the Times of India calling the third-day finish "short and not so sweet."

The Indian Express branded the spectacle "Sad episode".

Sharma conceded after the loss that India's batting fell short after the tourists were bundled out for 180 in the first innings of the day-night Test.

Former captain Sunil Gavaskar urged Indian batsmen to show more patience and better shot selection in the third Test, starting Saturday in Brisbane.

He also said Sharma should be brought back to the top of the order to take advantage of the new ball and make a quick and early total.

► Bireh and Head punished
ADELAIDE: India fast bowler Mohammed Bireh and Australia batsman Travis Head were both charged with misconduct on Monday following a fiery exchange that took place during the second Test in Adelaide. Bireh was fined 20 per cent of his match fee by the International Cricket Council after he gave Head a send-off after bowling the Australian for 140 in the first innings. He admitted a charge of 'using language, actions or gestures which disparage or which could provoke an aggressive reaction from a batter upon dismissal'. Bireh received one demerit point, as did Head who was sanctioned for his reaction. Head's charge related to the 'abuse of a player, player support personnel, umpire or match referee'. A verbal exchange followed Bireh's dismissal of Head after the bowler pointed in the direction of the Australia dressing room. However, the pair appeared to reconcile later in the match when Bireh came out to bat in India's second innings.—AFP

# METRO South



**Bavuma hails team effort after SA seal series against SL**

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**KARACHI**  
 Sunset 05:44 pm  
 Sunrise (Tomorrow) 07:05 am  
**NEXT 24 HRS**  
 Minimum 12°C  
 Maximum 27°C  
 Humidity 25%  
 Outlook Partly Cloudy

## Mercury drops to 11°C as cold wave grips city

By Our Staff Reporter

**KARACHI** The minimum temperature dropped to 11 degrees Celsius on early Monday morning as a cold wave gripped the metropolis.

According to a Met department's advisory, the cold wave is likely to prevail across the province this week with night temperature dropping to 7-9°C in upper Sindh.

It said that the temperatures during night-time will drop to 5-11°C in central Sindh, while 10-12°C in southern Sindh.

In Karachi, the maximum temperature recorded was 28.4°C on Monday.

Relative humidity was 14 per cent in the evening.

The Met Office has forecast dry weather with cool night with minimum temperature ranging between 11°C and 12°C in Karachi over the next two days.

The maximum temperature is expected to range between 25-28°C.

## PAC not happy with unfinished uplift work

By Our Staff Reporter

**KARACHI** Expressing dissatisfaction over the performance of the local bodies, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Sindh Assembly observed that despite a massive annual budget, only 50 per cent development was being seen in the civic infrastructure across the province.

In a meeting chaired by its chairman Nisar Khudro on Monday, the committee also sought details of all expenditures from all local councils and local bodies across the province.

The PAC reviewed the audit records of the local bodies in Hyderabad and unearthed several financial irregularities in the audit records of the district councils and town committees between 2018 and 2020 and recommended action by the authorities against the responsible officials.

Mr Khudro ordered an investigation into the matter of purchasing machines and hand pumps at excessive prices and issued order to suspend the town officer.

The PAC also ordered the additional chief secretary of the local government department to submit a report to the issue of spending Rs2.9 million by making multiple quotations of Rs95,000 for the construction of a cemetery wall in Mir Shah.



PEOPLE buy warm clothes from roadside vendors in the city, on Monday.—Online

## 30 held as police thwart MQM-L rallies in Karachi, Hyderabad

Case registered against 24 workers for violating Section 144 in district Central; six picked up in Hyderabad

By Imtiaz Ali and Mohammad Hussain Khan

**KARACHI/HYDERABAD** As many as 30 leaders and workers of the Ahaf Hussain-led Murtazab Qasbi Movement, commonly known as MQM-London, were picked up in Karachi and Hyderabad for violating a ban on rallies on Monday, officials said.

In Karachi, they said that the 24 activists were arrested along with a large number of MQM-L workers and sympathisers, including women, tried to reach the Jinnah ground on the call of their London-based leadership, who asked their followers to go there and pay respect at the monument built there in memory of MQM activists and supporters killed over the years to mark 'Yaumi Shuhada'.

In view of the MQM-L call, the Karachi

commissioner, on the request of the city police, on Monday issued a notification and imposed a ban under Section 144 of the criminal procedure code on public gathering, rallies and assembly of more than four persons in district Central for two days.

Witnesses said that since early morning the police and paramilitary Rangers sealed the road from Mukka Chowk to the Jinnah ground in order to stop the MQM-L workers from going there.

Footage went viral on social media showed policemen chasing and arresting MQM-L workers near Mukka Chowk. However, they did not arrest any woman worker who were seen shouting slogans in the videos posted on social media. SSP Central Zoodan Shafiq Siddiqui confirmed to Dawn that total 24 workers of the MQM-L had been detained for violation of Section 144.

He, however, denied that the law enforcers resorted to baton charge to stop the workers from heading towards the Jinnah ground.

Later in the evening, the Ahazab police registered a case against the 24 activists under Section 188 (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) of the

Pakistan Penal Code.

Meanwhile, senior London-based MQM leader Murtaza Ahazab said in a statement that former MNA Nisar Parbhwar and Aftab Bageer were among "a large number of held workers".

He condemned the police action against peaceful participants of the rally and demanded their immediate release.

In Hyderabad, police picked up around half a dozen activists of the MQM-L when they tried to march towards the Shuhada graveyard in Pooza Qilla on Monday.

SPD Inayat Hussain of the first police station said that the activists, who had arrived from various parts of the city, gathered in Cell No.1 of the historic fort and headed towards the graveyard to offer garba on the graves of their party colleagues killed in different incidents in past.

The activists, including women, raised pro-Ahazab slogans and carried banners as they began their march to the graveyard. They insisted that they should be allowed to pay their respects to their slain colleagues.

Hyderabad SSP Dr Farooq Ali said that a case would be registered against the arrested workers.

## Water shortage persists despite repair of major supply line

KWSC official promises early restoration of water in affected localities

By Tahir Siddiqui

**KARACHI** Water woes for residents in major parts of the city, including Clifton, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, and Liaquatnagar have not come to an end despite the completion of repair work on the crucial 84-inch water main along the University Road as people in the affected areas are still facing acute shortage of water that is continuing for the past many days.

The city remained short of 150MDC of water for the past one week after the main burst, leading not only to water shortage but

also a great deal of hardship for commuters and residents due to the flooding of the main road near Karachi University.

While the Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation (KWSC) had set a 72-hour dead line for the repair work, it took the water utility to complete the work in one whole week as the main line was found burst in another nearby section, delaying the timely restoration of the water supply.

The KWSC in a statement on Monday said that the repair work on the main had been completed and the water had been released from the Dhabaji Pumping Station.

However, residents of Clifton, Lyari, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Saddan, Baran Road and old city areas continued to suffer as the shortage persisted and is expected to remain so for a couple of more days to overcome the week-long

shortage of water.

Similarly, people in Landhi, Korangi, and their neighbourhoods also faced shortage of water as the Landhi and Sheerpoa Hydrants were also closed during the period after the suspension of online tanker service in those localities.

The city faced a temporary shortage of 150MDC of water since last Monday when the supply was disrupted to carry out repair work on the portion of the water main reportedly damaged due to construction work on the BRT project.

The KWSC had claimed that the repair was set to last for 72 hours and the supply to the affected areas would be restored a few hours after the repair work was completed, advising people to store water and use it carefully.

Sources in the water utility said that while almost 50 per cent

## Soldier shot dead in suspected targeted attack

By Our Staff Reporter

**KARACHI** A soldier was shot dead in a suspected targeted attack in the presence of his family in the Bahadurabad area on Monday, police said.

They added that Lance Naik Adnan Abbas, 47, was killed by an 'unknown suspect due to unknown reason' near Masjid-e-Azhar, Azhar Nagar, at around 10pm when he was heading home on a motorcycle along with his wife and children.

A police spokesperson in a statement said that the suspect was wearing a helmet while his accomplice was standing at a 'considerable distance' from the place of the incident. The suspect opened fire on Adnan, ran towards his accomplice and managed to escape.

Adnan suffered critical bullet wounds and was taken to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre where doctors declared him dead.

Karachi police chief Javed Odho told Dawn that the police were probing the incident from various angles. He opined that circumstances suggested it was a targeted attack, apparently motivated by personal enmity.

The suspects had been waiting for the victim for around 20 minutes and did not attempt to look any bike rider passing through the area, though the investigators did not 'completely' rule out the possibility of a robbery, he added.

He said the family insisted on lodging the FIR under Section 302 (premeditated murder) of the Pakistan Penal Code, and not under a robbery-related section, which meant they had some information about the killers.

Station Investigation Officer (SIO) Bahadurabad Amir Akbar told Dawn that the police had registered a murder case on the complaint of the family and an investigation had been launched.

## Elephant Sonia buried in Safari Park after autopsy

By Faiza Ilyas

**KARACHI** Elephant Sonia, who was found dead a day before in her Safari Park enclosure, was buried in an 18-foot deep grave after a team of vets carried out a post-mortem examination on Monday.

Sources said the autopsy was carried out by Dr Ghulam Mustafa, who had especially come to Karachi on the request of Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and its partner Four Paws.

The sources said the only other veterinary expert in the team was Dr Amir Ismail, deputy director of the Karachi Zoo. The two vets were assisted by eight volunteers.

Sharing details of the autopsy, Safari Park Director Amjad Zaidi said it was a five-hour-long procedure during which the team collected several samples from Sonia's body for analysis.

"The autopsy report will take at least two weeks. It will definitely help understand the cause of Sonia's sudden death," he said, adding that Sonia was later buried in an 18-foot deep grave near her enclosure.

In a statement, Four Paws said the veterinary team was supported by Dr Amir Ismail online from Vienna during the procedure.

"Madhubala and Malika are both in good health despite their tragic loss. Based on the autopsy's results, the treatment of the two remaining elephants will be potentially adjusted," it said.

# SHC proceeds with hearing on challenges to 26th Amendment

CJ-led bench asks federal, provincial law officers to file written replies on issue of jurisdiction

By Ishah Tanol

**KARACHI** The Sindh High Court (SHC) on Monday moved forward with the hearing of two petitions challenging the 26th Amendment to the Constitution and directed the federal and provincial governments to file written replies on the issue of jurisdiction at the next date of hearing.

The petitioners challenged the amendment and asked the SHC to set aside the controversial legislation and declared it ultra vires to the Constitution.

However, when a division bench comprising SHC Chief Justice Muhammad Shah Siddiqui and Justice Javed Akbar for weeks took up the matter on the previous date, a federal law officer had objected that the regular bench could not hear these matters and the petitioners might be referred to the constitutional benches of the SHC for hearing.

However, the bench issued notices to the cabinet division, ministry of law and justice and other respondents to file comments by Monday.

At the outset of the hearing on Monday, Additional Attorney General (AAG) Zahir Haq Makhdoom again raised a similar question over the jurisdiction of the bench to hear these matters.

He also filed a response on behalf of the cabinet division and sought more time to submit a reply of the law ministry.

However, the bench noted that the

petitioners' side had been raising verbal objections on the jurisdiction of this bench to hear these petitions.

Petitioners' counsel Ali Tahir and others admitted that this bench was competent to hear and decide their petitions as the SHC had recently passed a detailed judgment on the issue of jurisdiction of regular and constitutional benches of the high court.

The bench in its order noted that on Nov 14, it had directed the additional attorney general to file a proper response on the two petitions after hearing certain objections raised by him.

"The federal law officer said that the reply of law ministry was still awaiting which would not take more than three weeks, and he was also of the view that these matters perhaps will be heard by the constitutional benches of the SHC," the bench stated in its order.

"We have already perused the proper

class and are of the tentative view that since it seeks declaration to the extent of such amendment, it would fall under Article 199(1)(a)(v), subject to further assistance of learned AAG for Pakistan and AAG for Sindh. This is also covered in view of the latest pronouncement of this Court in the case of Attock Cement Pakistan Ltd and others Vs Federation of Pakistan and others (Const. Petition No.D-1590/23 etc.) whereby the concept of dominant relied as being claimed in a LIA was also applied, as the main basis for deciding the roster of the constitutional courts/constitutional benches."

It noted that since the bench had been hearing verbal objections from the respondents over the issue of jurisdiction, "they had again been directed to file written response in this regard which should include a reply on merits as well as including any legal ground as to the jurisdiction of the constitutional high court (regular bench)".

The hearing was adjourned to a date to be fixed next month, a week after winter vacation of the court.

The cabinet division in its reply admitted that the matter primarily related to the law, justice and parliamentary affairs division as its role was to place the summaries moved by the ministries concerned before cabinet or its committees, record minutes of cabinet meetings and issue decisions.

It may be recalled that on Dec 2, the same bench had ruled that the constitutional benches of the SHC did not have the same powers and jurisdictions as enjoyed by its parent constitutional high court or regular benches.

It had also said that in its infinite wisdom, the legislature had not intended the constitutional benches with entire gamut of constitutional reliefs/remedies, powers, and jurisdiction, but kept the same reserved for the regular benches to grant remedy.







# METRO

North



Bavuma hails team effort after SA seal series against SL

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**ISLAMABAD**  
Sunset 05:02pm  
Sunrise (Tomorrow) 06:58am  
**NEXT 24 HRS**  
Minimum 08°C  
Maximum 18°C  
Outlook Partly Cloudy

## Saddar's Bank Road turned into 'pedestrian street'



HUTS introduced on Bank Road to sell food items. The other picture shows visitors sitting on the benches installed in the street in Rawalpindi. — Photos by Muhammad Asim

### Shopkeepers unhappy with the move

By Aamir Yasin

ISLAMABAD: As the Rawalpindi Cantonment Board undertakes a task to turn Bank Road in Saddar into a car-free zone, the decision has been criticised by the shopkeepers who claim it's hurting their businesses since the shoppers have trouble accessing the area due to "lack of parking spaces".

In 2015, a similar move to turn the road into a pedestrian zone had been introduced, but after only a year traffic was allowed back on this road.

At the time, the vehicle-free zone started from Capital Cinema to Kashmir Road and gates were installed at the entry point. Besides, the RCB also set up a sitting area in front of the National Bank of Pakistan around a century-old peepal tree (also known as the Badliya tree).

The administration had hung pictures of 19th-century Bank Road and also installed a replica of the 1908 model of Ford on the road.

But only after a year, the project came to an end. This time, the project aims to turn the area from Murray Road to Capital Cinema square — a stretch of over 1.1km — into a 'pedestrian street'. Sitting areas have been constructed in front of the Singapore Plaza from Murray Road to Canning Road.

Besides, uniform signboards for shops, benches and lampposts have been installed to facilitate the visitors. Though the visitors appreciated the view that due to the pedestrian street, the number of 'window shoppers' had increased and most of their customers had moved to

the Commercial Market in Satellite Town and Islamabad.

Cantonment Traders Association General Secretary Zafar Qudus told Dawn that in order to remodel the banner, the Rawalpindi Cantonment Board started a project to move electricity cables underground on the Bank Road, Adamjee Road, and Saddar Road, followed by the replacement of signboards on the Bank Road. Now, this road has been turned into a pedestrian street.

He said an audit should be conducted to find out how much was spent on the beautification of the Bank Road. He said these roads

were reconstructed two years ago, but the construction work had started again. He said the closure of the Bank Road had led to traffic congestion on Murray Road, Haider Road, and Kashmir Road.

Speaking about the flaws in the pedestrian street project, he said there was no parking for the customers which discouraged shoppers from coming to Bank Road for shopping after walking more than one kilometre. "The shopkeepers are sitting idle," he claimed.

"Daily more than 2,000 cars entered Bank Road. A total of 200 cars are parked in Mania Plaza parking, 150 cars each in Gikhar

Plaza and City Plaza, 400 cars on Bank Road, and the remaining in other parking lots. But due to the closure of Bank Road, all these cars will be parked on Haider Road, Adamjee Road, and other parts of the city centre, an existing parking places are not enough," he said.

The visitors appreciated the pedestrian zone, however, but asked the administration to construct parking plazas or dedicated spaces in Saddar for parking. Muhammad Imran, a visitor, said that the sitting area on the Bank Road was beautiful, but they had to park their cars at a distance, which, he believed, was a waste of time.

## Only 5pc children receive good quality education: report

### National Education Policy Development Framework also points out challenge of stunting

By Kashif Abbasi

ISLAMABAD: Apart from the challenge of around 26 million out-of-school children, Pakistan's education system is rife with the quality issue as only five per cent children are receiving good quality education.

Moreover, only 12pc of the eligible age group has access to higher education, according to the education ministry's "National Education Policy Development Framework 2024" launched on Monday.

"Roughly, not more than 5% of children are receiving good quality education. No province can claim to be free of these educational crises."

Given the centrality of an educated workforce in economic and social development, it can be claimed that these deep-seated crises contribute to the overall low ranking in the human development index (HDI). Pakistan ranks at 164 out of 193 countries," read the framework launched by Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr Khadim Masood Siddiqui at a ceremony.

The event was organised by Pakistan Institute of Education (PIE) — a subsidiary of the education ministry. The country has no updated education policy as it has national education policy of 2009. In 2018, an education framework was launched, and now this document, according to the education ministry, will be a guiding principle for development of provincial education policies.

Besides highlighting poor quality and out-of-school children, the framework also pointed out the challenge of stunting, stating that about 40pc children were irreversibly stunted by the age of five, while despite restrictions the practice of corporal punishment continued.

It said "bullying and child abuse are neglected areas."

The framework stated that in recent years the higher education sector in Pakistan had seen rapid expansion, but the changing global landscape and national requirements demanded a deeper evaluation of its needs.

It said higher education sector continues to face several challenges that hinder its ability to deliver high quality education, perform cutting-edge research, and contribute effectively to the socio-economic development of the country.

"The primary need is to improve the quality of education. Many universities struggle to provide education that is relevant to modern industries and global standards. There is a critical need to enhance the quality of teaching, improve learning outcomes, and ensure that research outputs meet global benchmarks. Another key need is increased access to higher education. Despite the expansion of educational institutions, only 12% of the eligible age group currently has access to higher education, leaving a significant gap in participation," it said.

To address quality issues in higher education, the Quality Assurance Framework needs to be streamlined based on general realities and implemented effectively. "Pakistan's research output, particularly in critical areas such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), remains below global standards. "There is an urgent need to invest in research facilities, foster collaboration

between academia and industry, and promote innovation. Economic relevance is another vital need. Higher education institutions must align their curricula with the needs of the economy, producing graduates equipped with the skills required by modern industries."

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Khadim emphasized the urgency of the National Education Development Framework 2024, describing it as a vital necessity. He stressed the need to accelerate its implementation as part of the educational emergency, warning that if the younger generation is not prepared, artificial intelligence could render a billion people irrelevant.

He referred to Pakistan's inclusion on the medium of instruction — whether in the mother tongue, national language or global languages. The minister called for prioritising education of the youth in artificial intelligence, engineering, mathematics and IT.

"Ignoring reality or avoiding the truth will not bring any meaningful progress," he remarked.

Dr Khadim lamented the lack of execution despite numerous policies, frameworks and resolutions since 1951. He said the Ministry of Education is focused on policy formulation but the 18th Amendment, while provinces are responsible for implementation.

He noted that China and India lifted 500 million and 150 million people, respectively, out of poverty over two decades. He said Pakistan's outmoded feudal system, sustained by poverty, remains a significant obstacle. Criticising past decisions, he claimed education was less defined rather than nationalised in 1973.

He also questioned why "ghost schools" proliferated while opening new schools remained a challenge.

Secretary Education Mubayyid Ahmad Wani said the framework was

developed in consultation with experts and provincial representatives.

"It identifies critical issues in Pakistan's education sector, addressing areas such as school education from early childhood to higher secondary, non-formal education, adult literacy, higher education and technical and vocational training."

The framework outlines problems in access, quality, and equity, emphasising market-aligned technical education and diversified career pathways. Highlighting Pakistan's poor ranking — both among 193 countries — he noted the literacy rate of only 62pc and 26 million out-of-school children. He underscored severe deficits in foundational skills, higher education access (limited to 12%), and alignment with market needs. The lack of resources and challenges from Pakistan's diversity impede policy implementation.

Director General Pakistan Institute of Education Dr Muhammad Shahid Saeed highlighted the framework.

Later, speaking to Dawn, he said "Today is a big day for country's education sector. This document was developed with the input of all stakeholders, including provinces. This document is a guiding principle and now provinces will develop their education policies. The federal capital, we will form our new education policy within three months," he said.

Education minister Babochaita Rabila Durrani (through video message) invited federal and provincial counterparts to collaborate in addressing Balochistan's educational challenges, including teacher shortages and facility deficiencies.

Parliamentary Secretary for Education Farah Naz, Special Secretary for Schools Pratik Muhammad Iqbal, Special Secretary Education Sheikh Syed Javed, Secretary Education KP Masood Ahmad, Secretary Education AJK Razaq Ahmed Khan and others also spoke on the occasion.

### Two restaurants sealed over issuing fake invoices

ISLAMABAD: The Regional Tax Office, Islamabad on Monday sealed two restaurants in federal capital after officers reported that the restaurants were issuing fake invoices.

This is in line with FBR's drive to bring Tier-1 retailers and restaurants in the tax net through POS invoicing system.

An official announcement of the FBR said that after determining that the reported receipts were counterfeit, a team of FTD Islamabad led by the deputy commissioner sealed two restaurants and their subsidiary branches in Islamabad and also imposed a total penalty of Rs1 million on these restaurants.

However, FBR did not mention the names of the sealed restaurants.

Last month, FTD Islamabad had sealed three restaurants in Islamabad on the same charges. FBR is committed to discouraging the fake invoices culture and ensure tax compliance through effective enforcement of tax regulations. Last month, FBR had launched a cash reward scheme for customers who will report fraudulent invoices.

The retailers connected to POS systems that issue fake invoices will face significant penalties, including a fine and the potential closure of their premises until the fines are settled. — Mubarak Zeb Khan

### PFUJ condemns trolling of journalists on social media

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ-Atal Dutt Group) has strongly condemned the "online targeting and trolling campaign" against senior journalists and TV anchors.

The campaign, being run through anonymous social media accounts and involves several followers of a political party, is specifically targeting senior journalists Syed Talat Hussain, Hassan Ayub, Muneeb Farooq and Muzamil Hussain Shah.

PFUJ President Atal Dutt and Secretary Arshad Anwar, in a joint statement here on Monday, urged the federal government to take immediate safety and security measures to safeguard the lives of the mediapersons.

They emphasised that the open seats of information against these journalists were alarming and demand swift action from the federal and provincial authorities.

The PFUJ leadership stated that identification of the culprits behind these campaign was crucial, urging the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to take prompt action in this regard.

Furthermore, they called upon the leadership of the political party to respect freedom of expression and dissent, which were essential for a healthy society and robust democratic norms. — Staff Reporter

## About 300 Pakistani students stranded in Syria will be airlifted from Lebanon: Shehbaz

By Jamal Shahid

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Monday that Pakistani students stranded in Syria would cross over into Lebanon by land and flown back to Pakistan after an arrangement was reached.

Speaking at a reception hosted by the embassy of Qatar celebrating the National Day with a message of progress and friendship, the prime minister said that about 300 Pakistani students stranded

to be evacuated and brought home and the prime minister of Lebanon had promised complete support on the matter.

Ambassador of Qatar Ali Bin Mubarak Al-Khatir welcomed dignitaries, including Prime Minister Shehbaz, friends of the embassy, and members of the diplomatic community to the grand celebration marking the founding of the State of Qatar by Sheikh Jassem bin Mohammed bin Thani.

PM Sharif appreciated cordial and friendly ties between Pakistan and

Qatar. He was optimistic about the \$8 billion investment in diverse sectors, adding the financing would have a significant impact on the national economy.

A delegation from Qatar would soon visit Pakistan to materialise the investment pledges, he stated.

The ambassador of Qatar highlighted the significance of the National Day as a reflection of his country's journey from its foundation to becoming a modern, independent state, recognised

globally for its development and commitment to shared prosperity.

"Under the wise leadership of His Highness, the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Qatar has made remarkable strides in humanitarian, economic, social, and environmental spheres, establishing itself as a model of sustainable growth," the ambassador said.

He emphasised Qatar's dedication to humanitarian efforts, its role as a mediator in conflict resolution, and its ongoing

partnerships with international organisations to support communities affected by crises.

The ambassador also shed light on the flourishing relations between Qatar and Pakistan.

"Our ties are rooted in mutual respect and have seen exceptional progress in trade, investment, education, and culture. Qatar is committed to expanding this cooperation for the mutual benefit of both nations," he said.

Highlighting recent initiatives, he mentioned

Qatar's support for education, disaster relief, and food rehabilitation projects in Pakistan. "These efforts underscore the deep friendship between our countries," the ambassador noted, adding that high-level talks had reinforced a shared vision of strengthening the strategic partnership between the two nations.

The ambassador reaffirmed Qatar's dedication to fostering closer ties with Pakistan and working collaboratively toward a future of shared progress and prosperity.



# Lahore High Court judge may take charge of IHC after Justice Farooq

Insiders claim three LHC judges are being considered for transfer to IHC

By Malik Asad

ISLAMABAD: An Islamabad High Court Chief Justice Anwar Farooq is expected to join the Supreme Court, the judicial bureaucracy is reportedly planning to bring a judge from the Lahore High Court to lead the IHC after the incumbent CJ's elevation.

Traditionally, the senior justice judge of a high court is appointed as the chief justice, but the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) earlier this year introduced new rules to bypass the seniority criterion in light of the 24th Amendment.

The JCP proposed that the chief justice of a high court could be appointed from among the panel of five senior-most judges.

For instance, Chief Justice of Pakistan Yousaf Afridi, who was number three on the seniority list, was appointed as the CJ by the special parliamentary committee, bypassing senior justice judge Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Mansoor Akhtar. Likewise, the incumbent Chief Justice of Lahore High Court Justice Ahsan Nadeem was at number three on the seniority list but senior justice judge Shujaat Ali Khan and Justice Ali Baqir Nazki were superseded by the JCP.

In the IHC, Justice Moheeb Akhtar Kayani is the senior justice judge who was appointed on Dec 23, 2015. Other judges in the seniority order are Justice Mirzaul Hassan Aurrangzeb, Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangir, Justice Babar Sattar, Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan, Justice Arbab Mohammad Talib, and Justice Saman Raza Bhatti.

Sources told Dawn that the names of IHC Justice Saqla Ali Khan, Justice Shabir Nawaz Chaudhry, and Justice Nisar Mohammad Karim Dogar are being considered for their transfer to the IHC and it is likely that one of them will be made the IHC CJ. The date of appointment of Justice Khan is May 27, 2012, Justice Chaudhry and Justice Dogar are June 8, 2015. Hence, all these judges are senior to the IHC judges.

Article 200 of the Constitution says: "The President may transfer a judge of a High Court from one High Court to another High Court, but no judge shall be so transferred except with his consent and after consultation by the President with the Chief Justice of Pakistan and the Chief Justice of both the High Courts."

It may be mentioned that earlier IHC Justice Sardar Mohammad Adam, Justice M Bilal Khan and Justice Iqbal Hameed Rafeem were transferred to the IHC under the said article and were appointed as the chief justice of the Islamabad High Court.

However, President of the Islamabad High Court Bar Association (IHCBA) Riazul Ali Anad said that the bar would not welcome any judge from another high court to take charge of the IHC. He said that the IHCBA would strongly resist any such move and hold a protest at Constitution Avenue. He demanded that the IHC CJ and the upcoming appointment of the additional judge would be made from among lawyers practicing in the federal capital.

# Over 50 green tractors delivered in Talagang

By Our Staff Reporter

RAWALPIND: More than 50 Tractors were delivered to the successful farmers of Talagang through the long running Green Tractors Program.

Punjab Parliamentary Secretary for Excise and Taxation and MPAs Malik Shehryar Awan and Malik Talib Sher Awan distributed the registration papers of the tractors among the farmers at ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion, Parliamentary Secretary Excise and Taxation Punjab and MPA Malik Shehryar Awan said that Green Tractors Programme is an important step for the development of agriculture by the Punjab Chief Minister.

A huge amount of Rs10 billion has been allocated for this programme and a subsidy of Rs1 million has been given per tractor. Earlier, farmers were not given such a huge subsidy on supply of tractors. He said bidding for tractors has been done transparently.

He said that the current government stood for the prosperity of farmers. It is taking practical steps and Kisan Card is a step in this direction. Small farmers have been benefited from Kisan Card.

MPA Malik Talib Sher Awan said that agricultural mechanisation will be promoted in the province through this green tractor programme.

He said that according to the instructions of the Punjab government, all the steps from date to the supply of green tractors being carried out in a mechanised manner.

He said the Punjab government had made plans for the development of agriculture in a very short period of time, which are being implemented rapidly. Director Agriculture (extension) of Punjab Agriculture Department, Rawalpindi Division Syed Shahid Iftikhar Bhatti said that 57 green tractors were delivered in Talagang.



STUDENTS hang on a Suzuki Van on a road in Islamabad oblivious to the fact that it may prove fatal. — Online

# NA committee for vehicle fitness certification system in capital

Authorities asked to address seasonal smog by coordinating with motorway police

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: A parliamentary committee on Monday called for immediate steps to combat air pollution, including establishing a vehicle fitness certification system in the federal capital.

The National Assembly Standing Committee on Climate Change at a meeting stressed the need for the establishment of a fitness verification system by the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and the chief commissioner's office to regulate emissions from over one million vehicles in Islamabad.

The committee met with acting chairman MNA Shaukat Pervez in the chair to discuss the escalating air pollution and its broader implications for public health and environmental sustainability.

Besides, the committee called for expediting improvements in diesel desulfurization processes and enforcing higher fuel quality standards.

To address seasonal smog, the committee emphasized the importance of coordination with the motorway police to prevent stubble and waste burning along highways.

The Environment Protection Agency was directed to finalize hospital waste management rules, ensuring proper regulation of waste incineration facilities.

EPA outlined the major contributors to Islamabad's air pollution, including vehicular emissions, construction dust, industrial emissions, and solid waste

burning. Trans-boundary pollution from neighbouring provinces, particularly stubble burning in Punjab, was highlighted as a key seasonal factor exacerbating the smog problem in the capital.

A briefing showed that Islamabad's Air Quality Index (AQI) consistently exceeds safe levels with particulate matter (PM2.5) identified as the primary pollutant.

Discussing the issue of poor air quality in other cities particularly in Lahore, the committee expressed deep concern over the rising health risks associated with the poor air quality, including respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.

It was noted that AQI in Lahore recently crossed 1,000, alarming both national and global stakeholders. The committee emphasized the urgent need for a coordinated, multi-departmental approach to mitigate these issues.

The committee also reviewed steps

taken by the Punjab Environment Protection Department to mitigate air pollution in the province. It approved the department's initiatives, including stricter monitoring of industrial emissions, promoting cleaner brick kiln technologies and regulating vehicular emissions through enforcement measures. The committee stressed the need for sustained progress and enhanced coordination across regions to address trans-boundary pollution effectively.

Meanwhile, the committee deferred the "Pakistan Environmental Protection Amendment Bill 2024" (moved by MNA Noshad Sadqi) to the next meeting.

Besides others, the meeting was attended by MNAs Talib Aurrangzeb, Asad Malik, Musarat Rafique Mahesar, Dr Shaukat Sofie Aalam Soomro, Syeda Shabla Raza and Azeem Haider Jakkar.

# WHO calls for renewed support to Pakistan's health coverage

By Ibrahim Jureidi

ISLAMABAD: World Health Organization (WHO) representative in Pakistan Dr Dapeng Luo has urged stakeholders and donors to strengthen their support for the government of Pakistan in reinforcing universal health coverage (UHC), particularly for the most vulnerable populations.

This call to action ahead of the International Universal Health Coverage Day was one of the main conclusions of a dialogue hosted by WHO and attended by Co-ordinator to the Prime Minister on Health Dr Malik Mukhtar Ahmad Bhatti, representatives from the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Health Income Support Programme and the Sehat Sahulat Programme as well as national and international partners.

The participants commended the Universal Health Coverage Day under the theme "Health is on the government."

The WHO representative said advancing universal health coverage is crucial to advance the 2030 Agenda because to achieve sustainable development "we need healthy populations, healthy mothers and newborns, healthy workers, healthy families, and healthy communities."

The WHO representative also said Pakistan had achieved "notable milestones" such as improving its UHC index from 40 in 2015 to 52.7 in 2022, according to the country UHC Monitoring Report 2023. "However, half of the population still lacks access to basic health services. Achieving the target index of 65pc by 2030, while still short of the global benchmark of 80, will require sustained efforts and innovative strategies," said Dr Luo.

During the event, particular attention was paid to other significant milestones achieved by Pakistan such as the Sehat Sahulat Programme (SSHP), which now provides coverage to over 850 million Pakistanis who did not have such protection before 2016 in Aard

Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, Islamabad, Punjab, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and the Thar/Parakur district of Sindh.

The programme was initially launched for the below-poverty population in 2016 and gradually expanded to universal health coverage in 2020-2021 although the service provided still has its limitations, particularly for outpatient care. Currently, according to the last available data, at least 45pc of Pakistan's population faces out-of-pocket healthcare expenditures, leading to widespread financial hardship.

The Universal Health Coverage Day celebrated on December 12 as proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2017 aims to raise awareness of the need for strong and resilient health systems and universal health coverage with multi-stakeholder partners, underlining that for health systems to work they must work for everyone - no matter who they are, where they live, or how much money they have.

# Five gunmen booked for shooting, injuring head constable

By Marwar Azeem

ISLAMABAD: An attempted murder case was registered against five unidentified gunmen, who shot and injured a policeman during an attack at police team in capital's outskirts, police said on Monday.

The case was registered in response to a complaint lodged by the injured Head Constable Shafiq Ahmed at Sumbal police station under section 324, 35.1 and 186 of the PPC.

The head constable sustained two bullet injuries, one each in his chest and hand, when the gunmen opened fire on him as he along with other officials reached Chungi No 26 in response to a call from a robbery victim on police helpline.

Earlier, a gang of robbers intercepted Hassan Khan near a petrol pump near Chungi No 26 and looted Rs10,000 cash and a mobile phone along with silver chain and ring, the police said, adding that later the robbers intercepted Sar Gul at a weekly bazaar at Chungi No 26 and looted Rs13,000 cash from him and Rs25,000 from his cousin and equipped.

Shortly, the robbers intercepted Gul Khan near the same locality and looted Rs44,000 cash and a mobile phone, they added.

One of the victims called at the police helpline and in response a Dolphin Squad patrol immediately reached the spot at the weekly bazaar, they said, adding that the robbers riding on two motorcycles appeared at the spot and the robbery victim informed the police about them by saying that they robbed him.

The police team tried to intercept them, however, the robbers started indiscriminate firing at the police team, the police said, adding that as a result the head constable sustained two bullet injuries and fell on road and started bleeding.

Shortly the robbers escaped from the spot in a car, which appeared at the scene later, and leaving behind their two motorcycles at the spot, they said, adding that later the injured head constable was taken to hospital where he was given medical assistance and kept there under the observation of doctors.

Separate cases have been registered at the Sumbal police stations, they added.



A CDA worker dusts one of the horse statues installed at the town of Convention Centre in Islamabad. — INP

# Progressive scholar Ahmed Saleem remembered

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Distinguished progressive scholar and writer Ahmed Saleem was remembered on his first death anniversary.

An event was organised by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), which brought together a diverse group of intellectuals, human rights activists and former associates to reflect on the contributions Ahmed Saleem made to Pakistan's history, literature, and national cohesion.

SDPI Executive Director Dr Abid Qayyum Sabri highlighted the institute's commitment to honoring national heroes through its "Living Legend Awards" initiative. He said that while many individuals receive superficial tributes posthumously, SDPI strives to celebrate heroes like Ahmed Saleem repeatedly, recognizing their contributions to the nation while they were still alive.

"Ahmed Saleem's legacy is a shining example of how one person can impact the national discourse through courage, intellectual rigor, and generosity in sharing knowledge," Khan said.

A special documentary prepared by Ahd Haddad, Ali Aamer, and Shahid Razaal was presented at the ceremony.

Farooq Baloch, a close associate of Saleem, shared personal reflections, noting that Saleem had dedicated his life to upholding marginalised communities. His first book, written in the 1970s on Balochistan's autonomy, was a powerful example of his commitment to social justice and his efforts to create a different narrative with his Pakistanis.

Dr Shafiq Muneer, Deputy Executive Director of SDPI, shared a memory of Ahmed Saleem's tenacity and creativity. He recalled how despite his declining health Saleem was always eager to write and explore new ideas, even during his recovery from liver transplant surgery.

Zafarullah Khan, a human rights activist, recalled SDPI's recognition of Ahmed Saleem with the "Living Legend Award" in 2011. He underscored the importance of Saleem's literary donations and his unparalleled ability to preserve and share historical records.

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Bavuma hails team effort after SA seal series against SL

Pg.18 SPORT

LAHORE
Sunset 05:01 pm
Sunrise (Tomorrow) 06:49 am
NEXT 24 HRS
Minimum 2.0°C
Maximum 20.0°C
Outlook Mainly Sunny
AQI
Maximum (Yesterday) 263

METRO Central



A FAMILY selects decorative items at Garpat Road in connection with the upcoming Christmas. — White Star

CCPO suspends 12 wardens over traffic chaos around Adda Plot

Action taken after LHC judges, CCPO get stuck in traffic jam; wardens shift blame to lawyers' vehicles blocking road

By Asif Chaudhry

LAHORE: Lahore Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Bilal Siddique Kamran suspended 12 traffic wardens, including two inspectors, on Monday following severe traffic congestion near Rawat's Adda Plot. The suspension comes in the wake of growing criticism of traffic mismanagement in Lahore.

was taken after the CCPO himself, along with several senior judges of the Lahore High Court, was stuck in a massive traffic jam while attending a wedding ceremony. This marks the first instance of such direct intervention by the Lahore police chief, who issued suspension orders for multiple officers at once.

An official said the CCPO acted promptly upon witnessing the chaos, which caused significant inconvenience to senior judges and other motorists. The suspended wardens, however, shifted the blame onto lawyers attending the wedding in large numbers. They alleged that many lawyers parked their vehicles haphazardly, blocking the road, and used abusive language when asked to move their cars to the designated parking lot.

Earlier in this, senior politician of the PML-N Senator Pervaiz Hashmi had also

expressed dissatisfaction over the worsening traffic situation, calling for improvements, but the situation has continued to deteriorate.

The Rawat traffic fiasco further highlighted the city's ongoing traffic woes. Reports revealed that several wardens were allegedly absent from duty and instead at a nearby hotel, leaving motorists stranded. This discovery embarrassed the department, especially as senior judges were among those affected.

On Monday, the CCPO summoned the NP traffic and the wardens involved to his office for questioning. During the inquiry, the CCPO rejected their justifications as inadequate and admonished them for neglecting their duties. Following the inquiry, he suspended all 12 officers and referred the matter to the Internal Accountability Branch for further departmental action.

Arguments sought on election petitions of Elahi, spouse

Moonis' wife summoned in money laundering case

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: An election tribunal on Monday sought arguments on the maintainability of election petitions by former chief minister Pervaiz Elahi and his wife Qusreena Elahi challenging the results of Feb 8 polls in their respective constituencies in Gujrat.

The couple filed petitions challenging the results of NA-64 (National Assembly) and PP-32 (Punjab Assembly) constituencies.

election commission altered the results from Form 45 to Form 47, leading to discrepancies.

Ms Elahi claimed she secured 172,000 votes in NA-64 against her nephew Salik Hussain, who also contested election from PP-32 for the provincial assembly seat.

However, according to the ECP results, Mr Hussain of PML-Q bagged 105,205 votes and Ms Elahi obtained 80,946.

Similarly, Mr Elahi obtained 44,713 votes in PP-32 against 55,815 of Mr Hussain, who later relinquished the provincial assembly seat and took oath as member of the national assembly.

Both petitioners requested the tribunal to set aside the official notifications declaring their rivals

Continued on Page 14

Anti-Corruption Day moot 'NAB distanced itself from controversies in two years'

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: A seminar held to mark International Anti-Corruption Day here on Monday was told that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has "distanced itself from the controversies" over the past two years.

The NAB Lahore hosted the seminar in which its Director General Anwar Masood Aulakh, PMLT president Ahmed Bilal Mehbodh and the National School of Public Policy Dean Muhammad

Jamil Ahmed Afzqi spoke. "Some 45 percent of Pakistan's registered voters are youth, making their involvement crucial in the fight against corruption. Accountability efforts often face significant challenges, but NAB has distanced itself from controversies over the past two years, earning public confidence," Mr Mehbodh said.

He urged the NAB to expand its awareness initiatives to colleges and universities, leveraging social media to reach the youth effectively.

Reflecting on the influence of social media, he said that 80pc of the young population became aware of the youth parliament campaign through digital platforms.

Mehbodh asked the NAB to focus on addressing the youth's challenges, noting that corruption was a primary obstacle to resources availability for young Pakistanis.

Mr Aulakh detailed recent initiatives taken by the bureau's chief, such as monthly open forums, and

Continued on Page 14

Timely police action results in arrest of murder suspect

LAHORE: Timely action of uploading the name of a murder suspect on the Provisional National Identification List (PNIL) by the police led to his arrest from Sialkot airport on Monday, in less than 24 hours of the crime.

Mohsin Iqbal, an expat from Italy, and his accomplices from Tibbi Chand Village in Lalansua opened fire on co-villagers Ali Hassan, Kaleel Ahsan and Umar Iqbal following an altercation at a tent-pegging competition near Hajj Muhammad village.

The three were attacked by Mohsin, Qamar and their 10 accomplices when they were returning to Tibbi Chand.

Ali Hassan succumbed to bullet wounds while being shifted to the Lalansua Trauma Centre whereas Kaleel and Umar were shifted to the Aziz Elahi Shahzad Teaching Hospital with bullet wounds. Police registered a case against 10 nominated and two unidentified suspects under sections 302, 304, 148 and 149 of the Pakistan Penal Code on the report of Zafar Amin, a brother of deceased.

Lalansua Sader Station House Officer Mehr Atique said that on the direction of Capital DPO Dr Mushtaq Atta Bajwa, he got the name of main suspect Mohsin Iqbal uploaded on PNIL, within a few hours of the incident due to which the suspect was caught at the Sialkot airport on Monday morning.

He said the immigration authorities had handed over the suspect to the Lalansua police whereas raids were being conducted to arrest the remaining suspects.

— Correspondent

Three kidnapped by Katcha dacoits

RAHM YAR KHAN: Three men were allegedly kidnapped on Sunday night by Katcha area dacoits when they were going to Jamal Din Wali (JMW) Sugar Mills, some 45kms from here, for unloading sugarcane.

As per police and local sources, Abram Machi, Sarwar and Malik Javed Machi, were driving their sugarcane-laden tractor-trailers from Katcha Chohan to JMW Sugar Mills.

When they stopped at Chaudhry Shoukat Petrol Pump, a gang of dacoits arrived there, took the three men hostage, and fled to Katcha area, the sources said.

The dacoits left the tractor-trailers at the filling station.

When the relatives of the drivers tried to contact them, they came to know that the three men have been kidnapped.

The incident occurred in Abadpur police station limits. — Correspondent

PO repatriated from KSA

LAHORE: During the ongoing crackdown on dangerous fugitives hiding abroad, Punjab police arrested another proclaimed offender (PO), who had been at large for three years, from Saudi Arabia.

The fugitive, Sarwanah, was wanted by Rajapur police in a robbery case.

Punjab police got issued a Red Notice by Interpol for the arrest of the fugitive, who was arrested in close coordination with Saudi police and brought back. Sarwanah was handed over to Rajapur police.

A police spokesperson said that with the latest arrest, the total number of the POs nabbed abroad this year has reached 97.

Pace of construction work on Thokar point accelerated

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The pace of construction work on the Thokar Niaz Beg entry-point road remodeling scheme has been accelerated, paving the way to complete it by the end of this month.

Thokar — Lahore's busiest entry-point is being remodelled with widening of the road on both sides. Moreover, the empty places on both sides of the road are being fenced in a bid to avert accidents. Besides this, the signage and environmental related works are also underway.

"The completion of the project will help get rid of the traffic congestion and controlling vehicular carbon emissions," Lahore Development Authority Director General Tahir Farooq said during his visit to the project site on Monday.

"The project must be completed by all means in the ongoing month," he directed the officers present on the occasion.

He was briefed about the ongoing works with completion timelines. The asphalt and widening on both sides of the road has been completed.



According to a document made available to Dawn, the project involves construction of walkways, entry movement, entrance ramp, road surfacing, installation of solar lights, fixing fencing with construction of feature walls, provision of proper signage and safety devices. Moreover, the a new police check post is also being constructed after demolishing the old one. Besides these, a stormwater drain is also being constructed.



The road has also been widened to another 20-foot or so. The bushes grown on the road shoulders and other places are also being removed and the departments concerned have been engaged to beautify the area with tree plantation.

RECOVERY: Lahore Electric Supply Company (Lesco) teams recovered Rs3.76 billion from 126,718 dead defaulter in all the five districts — Lahore, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara during 466 days of its recovery campaign.

Lesco spokesperson told reporters on Monday that the company has recovered outstanding dues of Rs559 million from 17,308 defaulter in Northern Circle, Rs750 million from 16,024 defaulter in Eastern Circle, Rs690 million from 15,287 defaulter in Central Circle, Rs256 million from



# Drug money dispute leads to murder

By Our Correspondent

**RAHWAL:** A member of a drug-selling family shot and killed a man in the residential colony of Rahwal Teaching Hospital on Monday.

Faisal Town police arrested alleged shooter Rabia and her brother, Fida Raza, in a murder case.

Sub-Inspector Shahid told Dawn that witnesses reported that Rabia and her brother were regularly selling drugs in the hospital and surrounding areas.

Reports said Faisal Hussain (34), of village 5/114, was a friend of Fida. Faisal not only sold drugs but also used them at Fida's house in the colony. Rabia objected to her brother and Faisal using drugs on the premises. A heated argument ensued between Rabia, Fida and Faisal over unpaid drug money. During the quarrel, Rabia shot Faisal.

The police shifted the body to Rahwal Teaching Hospital for an autopsy. Questions remain over why the high-ups and local administration at the hospital have been silent about the abuse of hospital premises for such activities.

**IBRAHIM:** A cashier at a private microfinance commercial bank allegedly committed a Rs2.25

million fraud against a retired schoolteacher in Chichawatni city.

The city police registered a fraud case against cashier Sidra and her accomplice Faisal Dogar under sections 409 and 420 of PPC.

The complaint was filed by Bashir Ahmed, retired schoolteacher of village 41/12-L.

Reports said Bashir sold his five-month plot at Garden Town to Dogar who brought Bashir to the Habib Macrofinance and handed over a Rs2.25 million cheque to Sidra to deposit it into Bashir's account.

Sidra did not provide a receipt for the cheque, claiming she would issue it later due to a rush. The same day, Dogar got transferred the plot to his name, but the cheque was never processed. Despite repeated demands, Sidra and Dogar offered excuses, delaying the payment.

Bashir finally registered a fraud case against them.

The police have not yet made any arrests.

**ROHRI:** Gunmen stormed into Bismillah Kayanshah in Tulsain Wala and looted Rs40,000 on Monday.

This marks the third day of the same gunmen's spree.

Faisal Sheri Police have registered a case against



MULTAN: Students at a stall during the craft festival organised by the Punjab Small Industries Corporation. — AFP

# Boy kills suspect to 'avenge' cousin's murder

RPO orders probe into incident at dist courts complex

By Our Correspondent

**TOBA TEK SINGH:** A boy shot a murder suspect dead on the premises of Faisalabad district courts complex, where the victim was brought for appearance by police on Monday.

Police and court sources say that Ad Ibram of Chak 244 RB was arrested by Bahawalpur police as a suspect in the murder of one Sajjad.

On Monday, Ibram was brought to the district courts complex from jail by the police for appearance in the court of Additional District and Sessions Judge Muhammad Anwar.

As the handcuffed suspect was being taken to the courtroom, Sajjad Zafar, a cousin of the slain, Sajjad, opened indiscriminate fire, leaving Ibram

dead on the spot. The attacker later surrendered himself before the police.

Regional Police Officer Dr Muhammad Afzal Khan has directed CPO Kamran Adil to lead an inquiry into the matter to find out how the suspect succeeded in bringing a gun inside the complex despite strict checking.

**INFANT BURNT ALIVE:** A baby girl was burnt alive and her three siblings and their father suffered serious burns when a fire broke out in their one-room house at Pirmahal tehsil's Chak 670/11 GB.

Rescue 1122 officials say, Intiaz Ahmad (35) was employed as a helper at a farm and lived in a room at an outdoor, along with his wife and four children.

On Sunday night, Intiaz made a fire inside the room to keep warm. As the family fell asleep, a drum containing diesel, kept in the room, caught fire that engulfed the whole place.

Panicked by the fire, Intiaz and his wife succeeded to run out of the room along with their three children — Abdul Hameed (7), Emaan Farisra (5) and Ahmad Ali (2) — but failed to pick their 10-month-old daughter, Hiba, who was burnt alive in the blaze.

Intiaz and his three children suffered burns and were shifted to Pirmahal THQ hospital.

**SUICIDE:** A man allegedly died by suicide after he shot at and injured his wife in Firdous Colony on Jhang Road, Faisalabad, on Monday evening.

According to Factory Area police, Tariq Majid (45) quarrelled with his wife Aasma Bita over some domestic issues and opened fire on her.

As a result Aasma was critically wounded. Tariq later went to the rooftop of his house and shot himself in the head. He died on the spot.

The injured woman had been shifted to the Allied Hospital, where she is said to be in critical condition.

**MAN RECOVERED:** Missoua police, Jhang, claimed to have recovered a kidnapped youth in a raid in Misraffgarh on Monday.

As per the police, Muhammad Usman (20) was allegedly kidnaped by three persons on Dec 7. The kidnappers, in a phone call to the victim's parents, demanded ransom for the release of their son.

However, the police traced the call and recovered the youth in a successful raid in Misraffgarh.

A police spokesperson claimed that the kidnappers managed to escape and raids were being conducted to arrest them.

**GCUP SEMINAR:** Speakers at a seminar held on Monday at the Government College University Faisalabad (GCUF) stressed the importance of creating social awareness about the protection of human rights and urged collective efforts for social reforms.

In his address, GCUP Vice-Chancellor Dr Rauf-Azam said that the protection of human rights could not be the responsibility of the government alone. He called for an active participation of civil society, academia, and other stakeholders to address the human rights issues effectively.

He also warned that unless freedoms could lead to deterioration, and called for adopting a balanced and moderate approach to reform society.

MPA Qudus Bano said that the fundamental rights of women are key to social development. She highlighted the reforms carried out by the Punjab government to promote human rights, particularly for women.

Dr Ghulam Mustafa stressed the need for promoting values such as tolerance, equality, brotherhood, and peace to foster a harmonious society.

Dr Rizwanullah Kokab, Dr Ibram Sahana, and Sonia Pariaz, also spoke.

# Power bills default Water supply to Isakhel suspended

By Our Correspondent

**M I A N W A L I:** Residents of Isakhel city are longing to find a drop of potable water due to closure of water supply from Bahawalpur following power bills default.

The Municipal Committee collects monthly water supply fee at the rate of Rs500 per connection but failed to pay the electricity bill of Rs15.30 million.

Since the rainfall water of Isakhel city is not viable, inhabitants depend on water supply scheme which is situated in Kalarwala.

# Doctor found dead at guest house

By Our Correspondent

**MUZAFFARGARH:** A district medical officer (DMO) was found dead in a private guest house in Jatoi on Monday morning.

Dr Farrukh Shahid who served as the district medical superintendent at the Jatoi Health Care Hospital, hailed from Bera town and belonged to the Zargar family.

The news emerged when hospital staff and fellow doctors noticed his absence and informed the Jatoi police.

Preliminary reports suggest that Dr Shahid may have suffered a cardiac arrest. According to his father, Riaz Hussain Zaigra, the family last spoke to him on Sunday night. On Monday morning, they were informed of his death after he failed to wake up. Police and hospital authorities have initiated legal formalities and investigations into the incident.

**PROBE:** Deputy Commissioner Ghazal Aiz has ordered legal action against district council officials and a contractor for unlawfully occupying ferry land, locally called Panan points, at the River Chanaid in Misraffgarh.

The incident came to limelight when Muhammad Ibram, the legitimate contractor who had won the auction for the ferry land, lodged a complaint with the DC office.

He alleged that district council officials, including Aslam Khaira, Naveed and Ajmal, along with an illegal contractor, Ghulam Mustafa, obstructed his operations and refused to hand over possession.

The deputy commissioner directed the registration of a case at Bahawalpur police station under sections 419, 420, 506, 586, and 34 of the Pakistan Penal Code.

Malik Shahid, a former social worker of Isakhel, told this article that there has been no chief officer of Isakhel municipality since long. Due to paucity of funds, the MC couldn't pay electricity bills and salaries to its staff who agitated against it several times.

He further said the MC was earlier charging Rs80 against each water connection and the same has been enhanced to Rs500 but their recovery system is very irregular which enhances the default amount.

Dawn tried to contact the Isakhel AC to get his comment on the situation but he did not respond.

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The deputy commissioner directed the registration of a case at Bahawalpur police station under sections 419, 420, 506, 586, and 34 of the Pakistan Penal Code.

The suspects include District Council clerk Naveed, Naib Qasid Ajmal and Ghulam Mustafa. Local journalists had previously raised concerns about mismanagement and embezzlement in ferry land allocations.

The deputy commissioner said that an inquiry was ongoing and pledged a strict action against those responsible for irregularities.

# Woman stabbed to death

By Our Correspondent

**MUZAFFARGARH:** Police arrested a man who stabbed a woman to death in Kot Aduh on Monday.

Deceased Bahira was shopping in the market in

# Constable injured in encounter with robbers

By Our Correspondent

**GUJRANWALA:** A police constable was seriously injured in an encounter with alleged robbers in the Baghbanpura locality on Monday.

According to reports, Baghbanpura police had set up a picket near Ghorey Shah.

When they attempted to stop motorcycle-riding robbers, the suspects opened fire on the officials. The police retaliated, leading to an exchange of gunfire. During the encounter,

Constable Naveed sustained severe injuries and was rushed to the hospital in critical condition.

In response, police have imposed blockades across the district to arrest the fleeing robbers. Police officials have assured that the suspects will be arrested soon.

**ROBBERY:** Helmet-wearing burglars stole gold jewellery worth Rs40 million and Rs3.5 million in cash from a house in DC Colony on Monday. Police registered a case.

The incident took place at the

residence of Ghulam Farisra, wife of Muhammad Anwar Sandhu, while the family was at a wedding.

The family left their home at 3 pm and returned around 10 pm to find their belongings scattered. The burglars, wearing helmets, broke the locks of the main gate and entered the house. They managed to steal 195 tolas of gold and Rs3.8 million in cash.

The Cantonment police have registered a case and initiated an investigation.

**ASSAULT:** A rickshaw driver

and his two accomplices attempted to rape two sisters and looted jewellery, mobile phones, and cash from them in Taley Aali on Monday.

The incident occurred on the outskirts of the village Maba Raggara, where a local resident had his two sisters-in-law visiting. Around 7 pm, arrangements were made for the women to return home. A rickshaw driver agreed on a fare and picked up the women. However,

during the journey, he allowed two accomplices to board the vehicle.

After travelling a few kilometres, the driver and his accomplices diverted the rickshaw to a deserted area. At gunpoint, they attempted to rape the women. Fortunately, the sight of an approaching vehicle's headlights forced the attackers to abandon their plans. Before fleeing, they robbed the victims of Rs50,000, a mobile phone, and a gold ring.

The traumatized women managed to return to their brother-in-law's house on foot. Police have launched an investigation into the incident.

# Station master, seminary teacher held in rape cases

By Our Correspondent

**BAHAWALPUR:** Police arrested a station master and a seminary teacher on charges of rape in separate cases in the city and Ludhiana. According to railway police, a woman 'T' was present at the passenger's lounge of the Bahawalpur railway station late night when the station master 'A' forced her to his living room on the third floor of the railway station building.

He allegedly raped her and kept her in illegal confinement for three days during which he continued to rape her.

The SM allegedly locked her in his

room and tied her with chains. After three days, her screams attracted a large number of passengers, workers and other people who informed the railway police.

The police conducted a raid, recovered the woman after breaking the door lock and arrested the SM.

Railway police station SHO Ibram Jatoi told Dawn the victim belonging to Khawwal was seen wandering in the vicinity of the railway station.

On the night of occurrence, she was staying at railway station's passenger lounge when the accused SM forced her to his room, where he criminally assaulted her.

The SM was lodged in the police station's lock-up and further investigations are in progress.

In Uch Sharif, a resident of Thanda Thera, in the limits of Ludhiana city police station, got registered a case against his 11-year-old grandson who was allegedly raped by a seminary teacher on Dec 6.

He alleged that the teacher threatened his grandson with dire consequences if he (victim) disclosed it to anybody.

Ludhiana city police claimed that the accused had been arrested and the victim medically examined.

The Multan women police station, on

the complaint of a woman 'P' registered a rape case against her neighbour.

In her complaint, the woman alleged that she was alone in the house when her neighbour trespassed on her house and allegedly raped her. On

her claim, the women police station registered an FIR under Section 376.

The accused was yet to be arrested. Querechivala police station in Ludhiana district claimed to have arrested a shopkeeper in a rape attempt case.

Five-year-old girl's father got registered an FIR under Section 376 PPC against the shopkeeper who he alleged attempted to rape his daughter in his shop.

# Bahawalpur PHA awaits funds restoration

By Majeed Gill

**BAHAWALPUR:** As the Punjab government has not restored the Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) funds to the tune of over Rs60 million, it has adversely affected uplift projects pertaining to beautification of city's parks and greenbelts.

Dawn learnt that the Punjab government in the early months of the current calendar year had sanctioned and released a sum of Rs60 million for PHA's two uplift projects. These projects were aimed at improving, maintaining and renovating the local parks with a view to provide maximum facilities to the citizens.

After the induction of the PME-N government headed by Maryam Nawaz in the province, these funds were withdrawn on an assurance that the same would be restored as soon as possible. But these funds have not been restored so far as a result PHA's two main projects have been lying pending at the

cost of local citizens.

Dawn also learnt that due to an indefinite delay in the restoration of funds, the PHA is facing a financial crisis due to which its staff, including field workers working in parks, are the hard hit and sometimes they have to wait for their salaries for days.

In this situation, the PHA has to make alternative arrangements to generate funds to pay salaries to the staff. Even the parks and greenbelts cannot be maintained properly.

PHA Bahawalpur Director General Rabina Iqbal Abbasi told Dawn that she was in touch with the concerned government departments and officials for the restoration of the same. She hoped that the Punjab government would soon restore these funds.

She said after the restoration of funds, the PHA would go ahead to implement its pending projects making the city green and clean.

**COTTON VALLEY:** A plan is underway to transform Bahawalpur into a "cotton valley". Punjab Agriculture

Secretary Iftikhar Ali Sahoo said in Multan on Sunday.

Presiding over a conference on 'Challenges Confronting Cotton Crop and Measures to Tackle Them' at Muhammad Nawaz Sharif Agriculture University (MNSU), Multan, the Punjab agriculture secretary said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, revolutionary measures are being implemented for agricultural progress in the province.

To achieve this purpose, he said, agricultural produce is being promoted on the basis of modern scientific lines and research. He listed challenges such as weather conditions, the unavailability of modern technology, and cultivators' problems, adding that the government is striving hard to overcome such challenges.

He said that to safeguard the interests of cotton growers, their insurance programme is also being examined. University VC Prof Dr Iftikhar Raza said that the university would extend all possible cooperation to the

agriculture department to restore cotton production.

**KILLED:** Three people, including a woman, were killed in separate incidents in Bahawalpur on Monday.

In one incident, Bilal, the son of his wife Ibtisam Jabeen, a mother of six, in the village Pali Bahochi 25/1C in the limits of Bahawal Jaldi police.

The suspect and the deceased wife had an altercation over the purchase of clothes for a wedding when Bilal attacked her with a sharp-edged weapon.

After striking her neck, he fled. Police shifted the body to the hospital for a post-mortem examination, and registered a murder case against the fleeing man.

In another incident, Usra was electrocuted when the fodder-cutting machine on which he was working ran an electric current.

Separately, Allah Nawaz (37) was killed when his clothes accidentally got entangled in a sugarcane crushing machine in the fields at village 17/DNR.

# METRO

North



**Bavuma hails team effort after SA seal series against SL**

Page 18 SPORT

**PESHAWAR**  
Sunset 05:07pm  
Sunrise (Tomorrow) 07:05am  
**NEXT 24 HRS**  
Minimum 04°C  
Maximum 18°C  
Outlook Mostly Sunny



A TRAFFIC police official issues ticket to an overloaded vehicle in Khyber Bazaar, Peshawar, on Monday. — AFP

## MPAs resent delayed royalty payments to province

**PTI criticises federal govt over crackdown on 'peaceful' protesters in Islamabad**

By Umar Farooq

PESHAWAR: Members in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly on Monday complained about long delays in royalty payments by the centre to the province and insisted that the withheld money had hindered the province's ability to fund development projects. During a sitting of the provincial assembly, which met with Deputy Speaker Mariya Bibi in the chair, the lawmakers said the province had the right to net hydro power profits under Article 161 of the Constitution, as the centre should ensure its smooth payments. Kohat MP from the treasury benches Daud Shah said his constituency produced oil but it

didn't have any oil refinery or clean drinking water. He added that residents often complained about royalty payment delays. Agriculture minister Sajjad Khan agreed and said the chief minister had enhanced gas royalty payment from 10 per cent to 15 per cent despite the government's financial problems. "The federal government has to pay Rs100 billion annually for the development of our merged tribal districts but we got not even 20 per cent of the agreed amount in the last four years," he insisted. Mr Khan also complained about the denial of gas royalty, net hydro profit and tobacco cess. He also blamed the federal government's crackdown on the PTI march last month. He said PTI workers from Punjab couldn't attend the march as "every house" in the province was cordoned off by the police. The minister said the PTI held a peaceful protest in Islamabad but were treated brutally as if they're convicted

criminals. He wondered why those calling in the shots in Islamabad stole people's electoral mandate for the PTI, changed the criteria for the Supreme Court judges' appointment, enacted the 25th Constitutional Amendment, and closed all routes to Islamabad during the PTI's peaceful march. Mr Khan requested the arrest of Pakistanis by law-enforcement agencies in Islamabad and said not every Pakistan was a PTI worker. He said the federal government would have never fired at PTI workers from Punjab. The minister also complained that whenever some mishap happened in Pakistan, Khat and Afghan nationals were blamed. He said Pakistanis were faithful to the state. Mr Khan said MPAs of the opposition PPP Ahmad Karim Karol always spoke about the supremacy of the Constitution but never highlighted its provisions on freedom of expression.

He said the ruling PTI was opposed to political manoeuvring by any state institution, including the security establishment. On the occasion, Mr Karol rejected the criticism and said the centre paid oil royalty to the province in 2010, 2013 and 2018. He also said the province received net hydro profit from the Tarbela Dam, which produced 20 billion power units annually. Minister Sajjad said that the formation of a house committee comprising members of all political parties had been proposed to take up the dues issue with the federal government and seek a payment schedule. He said the proposal should be discussed with Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur. Special assistant to the chief minister for communication and works Sohail Afridi said the PTI "knocked at all constitutional doors for justice," but to no avail. He said for the first time in history, the PTI had carried out a movement for over two years

demanding the release of their leader, Imran Khan, illegally imprisoned for over 15 months. Treasury member Laili Khan alleged that Rs3 billion development funds were embezzled in his former district constituency in the last six months. He said he was willing to share details with the anti-corruption establishment for a probe. The lawmaker also accused the district health officer of misappropriating Rs50 million funds and complained that no action was taken against the DHO despite his formal request. The lawmakers criticised adviser to the chief minister against corruption Musabbih Abbas over 'reaction' against corrupt officials in the province. The issue later passed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Resolution of Commercial Dispute Amendment Bill, 2024, which was tabled by local government minister Arshad Ayub. The chair adjourned the session until 3pm today (Tuesday) over a lack of quorum.



## Students, teachers protest closure of Angoor Adda border

**SOUTH WAZIRISTAN:** Students and teachers staged a demonstration in the Angoor Adda Bazaar here on Monday against the closure of the Pak-Afghan border point. A large number of students and teachers from various government and private schools and madrasahs attended the protest. Maulana Tashhullah Wazir, who led the protesters, demanded that the local people should be exempted from visa and passport condition, and should be allowed to move freely across the border using their national identity cards and the e-pass. He also emphasised the need for restoration of mobile and internet services in Angoor Adda, highlighting their importance for the local community. The students participating in the protest complained that the closure of the border route had affected their studies as many of them were stranded on both sides of the Angoor Adda border. The students emphasised that education was their fundamental right. The protesters demanded that the federal government recognise the sacrifices offered by the Wazir tribe of Angoor Adda in the war against terrorism. They also called for provision of economic opportunities to be provided to the local residents. The protest concluded with students and teachers appealing to the authorities to address their concerns without delay. — Correspondent

## Bacha Khan Peace Festival kicks off in Peshawar

PESHAWAR: A three-day Bacha Khan Peace Festival kicked off at the University of Agriculture here on Monday with Awami National Party provincial president Mian Iftikhar Hussain inaugurating the event. The festival, organised by Pakhtun Students Federation, features bookstalls, traditional food, and cultural exhibits. Addressing the inaugural gathering, Iftikhar Hussain condemned the recent treatment of Pakistanis in Punjab and Islamabad, calling it unacceptable. He asked whether Pakistanis were being treated as the equal citizens of the country. Hussain criticised the federal and Punjab governments for their handling of the situation, urging them to 'treat Pakistanis with dignity and respect'. The ANP leader also accused the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf of exploiting Pakistanis for its 'vested interests'. He lamented that PTI workers were left to face the consequences alone, while the party leadership fled from the Islamabad protest. Hussain expressed concerns over the rising incidents of terrorism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, blaming the international forces and their facilitators for perpetuating violence in the region. He emphasised that terrorism was a lucrative business for these elements, "who were profiting from the blood of Pakistanis". The festival aims to promote peace, tolerance and cultural harmony, with a focus on the philosophy of non-violence espoused by Bacha Khan. The event will continue until December 11. — Bureau Report

## Self-accountability must for eradicating corruption: CM

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur on Monday emphasised the need for self-accountability as a prerequisite for eradicating corruption from society. Speaking as the chief guest at a seminar organised by the information and public relations department and anti-corruption establishment at Nishtar Hall here, Mr Gandapur said corruption could be eliminated only when the society collectively began to view it as a serious moral evil. He said corruption was a social menace.

"The day we start seeing corruption as a grave issue, its eradication will begin," he said, stressing the need for the implementation of anti-corruption measures beyond mere rhetoric, according to an official statement. Mr Gandapur underlined the importance of seeking blessings and peace in life over the pursuit of wealth, noting that wealth is meaningless without inner peace and divine blessings. He called for decisions in all aspects of life to align with Islamic teachings, asserting that following these principles is essential for success in life. The chief minister lamented a lack of moral standards required to overcome corruption and said that despite having resources and wealth, many people were

without peace of mind and contentment. He complained the institutions responsible for eliminating corruption had failed to deliver the goods and, in some cases, they became promoters of corruption. Mr Gandapur said unfortunately, anti-corruption bodies at the national level were often "missed" for political victimisation, making the fight against corruption even more challenging. "It is unfortunate that as a society, we remain morally enslaved and lack intellectual independence. If we aspire for progress, we must free ourselves from this mindset," he said. The chief minister urged people to prioritise the upbringing and education of their children over amassing wealth

through illicit means. He insisted that children raised on ill-gotten wealth often failed to respect their parents or uphold family honour. Cabinet members Registrar Muhammad Ali Saif and retired Brigadier Musabbih Abbas, and chief secretary Nadeem Adam Chaudhry also addressed the event and highlighted the negative impact of corruption on society, measures for its prevention, and related issues. The event was attended by ministers Arshad Ayub Khan, Meena Khan Afridi and Syed Qasim Ali Shah, the provincial police chief, administrative secretaries, government officials, and students. Later, the chief minister led an awareness walk against corruption.

## LB members to protest 'funding discrimination' outside Adiala Jail, parliament next week

**Announce high court will also be approached for relief**

By Mohammad Ashiq

PESHAWAR: Elected members of the two-tier local government system in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Monday complained about "discrimination" in development funding by the the PTI-led government in the province and announced that they would protest outside Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail on Dec 17.

They said the Adiala Jail protest was meant to inform incarcerated PTI leader Imran Khan about the "injustice" meted out by his party's government to the elected local body members from the opposition parties. Representatives of the local bodies also decided to hold a protest outside the parliament the same day and said they would stage a peaceful sit-in outside the Chief Minister's House in Peshawar on Dec 18. The decision to stage a protest was taken by the Local Councils Association (LCA), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in a meeting here. LCA president and Mardan mayor Hameezullah Mayar chaired

the meeting, which was attended by Upper Dir tribal council chairman Rafiqullah, Bannu tribal council chairman Muzaf Karim, Jinnah tribal council chairman Armat Afridi, Nowsar tribal council chairman Saif Ahmad Badshah and LCA coordinator Imran Ali Khalil. The participants also included the members of the village and neighbourhood councils, including chairmen. Hameezullah Mayar later told reporters that a couple of days ago, the PFI government in the province released Rs2.5 billion development funds to 51 tribal local governments, run by PTI members, but the rest of the 134 LCs didn't get any funding.

"Not a single penny has been released to the chairmen of tribal councils belonging to the opposition parties," he claimed, declaring the act an injustice with the people of those tribals. He said that 29,960 people had made it to local bodies through elections held three years ago, including general, youth, pension and minority councillors, 4,212 village and neighbourhood council chairmen, who all would protest outside the Adiala Jail. "Elected members of local bodies are troubled by the denial of development funds, which is a violation of the Constitution and Local Government Act, 2013," he said.

Mr Mayar also announced that the LC members would move the Peshawar High Court against the funding discrimination and get a stay order against the release of development funds. He said the provincial government had not only withheld development funds but also clipped powers of local bodies rendering them ineffective. The LCA president said the provincial government's indifferent attitude towards local government issues was a let-down. He said repeated protests and negotiations on these problems, especially funding denial, took place but the provincial govern-

ment had failed to fulfil its promises. LCA coordinator Imran Khalil said the elected local body members, after lengthy consultation, decided that a peaceful protest would be held outside Adiala Jail at 11am on Dec 17 to highlight the provincial government's injustice. He also said a peaceful protest would take place in front of the Parliament House at 3pm the same day. "On December 18, a peaceful sit-in will be staged outside the Chief Minister's House that will continue until the government fulfils our demands, including release of funds," he said.

**PRAYER**

Fajr 05:40  
Zuhr 12:09  
Asr 03:30  
Maghreb 05:07  
Isha 06:36

Starting time in Peshawar

**REFLECTIONS**

**CC COMARDECK IS A DEFECT, 53**

— HARRAT ALI (A.S.)  
73441427

# 'E-study' card launched to enhance students' performance

By Our Correspondent

**SWAT:** A training session was held here on Monday on the 'e-study' initiative, launched by World Education Services, a non-profit organisation, to enhance academic performance in schools.

Speaking on the occasion, SWAT deputy commissioner Shahzad Mehboub praised the launch of the e-study card, calling it a significant step toward improving the education system in Swat.

"The initiative is expected to

benefit students and teachers at high and higher secondary schools, providing them with a cutting-edge digital tool to achieve better educational outcomes," he said, adding that under the public agenda programme of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, measures were being implemented to modernise the education system. He emphasised that no negligence would be tolerated in executing the agenda's objectives.

The event, organised by World Education Services, saw participation of district education officers, both male and female, sub-divisional education officers, principals, teachers, and students from across the district.

World Education Services chairman Muhammad Arsal Khan and its managing director for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Saqib Kabir Khan provided an in-depth training on the e-study portal, explaining its features, objectives and achievements.

Mr Mehboub expressed gratitude to the education officials, principals, and teachers for their interest in the training. He assured that the district administration would remain in close coordination with World Education Services to ensure the availability of e-study cards to students in all government schools.

"Swat district will be made a model in education across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," he remarked. "This initiative will further strengthen government educational institutions and serve as a key step in our modernisation efforts."

At the conclusion of the session, the deputy commissioner distributed e-study cards among students.

to play its role in eliminating the menace.

Termining corruption a major obstacle to development, democracy and good governance, he said the fight against the evil in Pakistan had seen challenges as well as achievements.

He referred to the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index and said Pakistan's ranking had improved from 140th in 2022 to 133rd in 2023.

He said that various laws had been enacted in Pakistan to take effective measures against corruption. He asked the anti-corruption bodies to implement relevant laws with true spirit to curb the menace.

Meanwhile, civil society organisations stressed the need for effective governance mechanisms, access to information laws and strong local governments to eradicate corruption from the country.

Community Development Organisation's programme manager Inayatullah Khan told journalists after a meeting here on Monday that discouraging corruption and promoting a culture of accountability was the need of the hour.

He said the country needed an accountability system where public officials could be questioned and the media was free

to mark International Anti-Corruption Day.

The speakers included deputy district education officer Shaukat Ali Khan, district Khuzdud Maulana Abdul Wahid, Mulla Hussain Kalam, educationists, Muhammad Haroon, Muhammad Yusuf and Jamil Ahmad Khan.

They said that evils were flourishing in the society due to distance from Islamic injunctions.

"Corruption is also an evil and awareness to the religion is the only way to eliminate it," they maintained. They said when Pakistan came into existence there was no corruption in the country.

"We should think about why

# JI criticises govt for 'paralysing' LG system

Bureau Report

**PESHAWAR:** Jamaat-e-Islami Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has criticised Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf-led provincial government allegedly for paralysing the local government system in the province.

Inayatullah Khan, former senior provincial minister and ameer of JI KP (North), while addressing a press conference at Peshawar Press Club on Monday, accused the government of violating the constitutional rights of the elected local government representatives from opposition parties by withholding their funds.

He claimed that the government had released funds to only PTI-affiliated chairmen in 56 tehsils, while over 4,000 representatives from other parties were deprived of their rightful share.

"The PTI government has crossed all limits to victimise opposition parties," Mr Khan said, adding, "we will not tolerate this injustice and will take all possible measures to protect the rights of our representatives."

The JI leader announced that his party would stage a protest demonstration on December 18 against the government's discriminatory policies. He also revealed that a petition had been filed in Peshawar High Court against the government's decision to withhold funds for the opposition representatives.

The PTI government has been accused of amending the local government act to favour its own representatives, thereby crippling the local government system in the province. Mr Khan termed this move as a "gross injustice and a violation of the Constitution".

# Adherence to teachings of Islam stressed to curb corruption

Seminar in Lakki marks International Anti-Corruption Day

By Our Correspondent

**LAKKI MARKWAT:** Speakers at a seminar here on Monday called for adherence to the teachings of Islam to purge society of malpractices and promote transparency.

The district administration and the education department with the support of boy scouts association arranged the seminar at a school in the Lakki city

to mark International Anti-Corruption Day.

The speakers included deputy district education officer Shaukat Ali Khan, district Khuzdud Maulana Abdul Wahid, Mulla Hussain Kalam, educationists, Muhammad Haroon, Muhammad Yusuf and Jamil Ahmad Khan.

They said that evils were flourishing in the society due to distance from Islamic injunctions.

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"We should think about why

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# Delegation of young parliamentarians visits PA

Bureau Report

**PESHAWAR:** A delegation of the Young Parliamentarians Forum (YPF) of the National Assembly visited the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly here on Monday.

A statement issued here said that KP Assembly Speaker Baluch Baloch Swati welcomed the delegation led by Syeda Noorun Nisreen, president of YPF.

Mr Noorun expressed her gratitude to Mr Swati for his cordial reception.

During the meeting, Mr Noorun and Mr Swati discussed the role of young parliamentarians in addressing the challenges facing the country. She emphasised that young parliamentarians played a pivotal role in addressing youth welfare and resolving the issues they faced.

The discussion also touched upon establishing a YPF within the KP Assembly.

Mr Noorun stated that the forum aimed to empower young parliamentarians, enabling them to address social and legislative issues effectively.

She reiterated that the YPF provided a vital platform for addressing youth issues across the country. Furthermore, she announced plans to establish YPF in all provinces by February, followed by a national-level seminar after their establishment.

Baluch Swati highlighted that the provincial assembly was the first provincial assembly in the country to pass the Employees Act. He credited this achievement to the assistance provided by National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and special secretary Syed Shamsun Nahara.

The YPF members also visited the KP Assembly Hall, where they were briefed about its history and background.

On this occasion, the provincial assembly staff informed the members of YPF delegation about the Information Technology project, which has made the legislature the first paperless assembly of the country. — Bureau Report

**PESHAWAR:** The Peshawar district administration has decided to ban the entry of tractors and trucks on the University Road from 7am to 11pm to ease traffic congestion on this main artery.

A statement issued here said that the decision was made during a meeting chaired by Peshawar division commissioner Riaz Khan Mehsud.

It said that the meeting also decided to remove encroachments from both sides of the road in order to ensure smooth flow of traffic on this route. Besides, it was also decided to deploy additional traffic police personnel and ban illegal transport on the road.

In addition to this, the meeting also decided to use all available means to ease traffic congestion on this thoroughfare.

The commissioner Peshawar division directed the officials concerned to make serious efforts to make travel on the University Road hassle-free for motorists. He also directed the officials to remove all the impediments checking traffic on University Road.

# Entry of tractors, trucks on University Road banned

Bureau Report

# Firms failing to deliver medicines to hospitals face action

Bureau Report

**PESHAWAR:** The health department has decided to take strict action against pharmaceutical firms failing to ensure timely delivery of medicines to the public sector hospitals in the province.

The department has asked the district health officers and medical superintendents to enforce the directives strictly, a press release issued here on Monday said.

It said that during a recent DHOs' conference, advisory to CMO on health Insitutum Ali had complained that firms failing to comply with delivery schedules must face penalties, including blacklisting.

Following this directive, Director General Health Services Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dr Muhammad Saleem Khan has reiterated the importance of strict action to uphold the supply chain's integrity.

In line with these instructions, additional director general for monitoring and evaluation Dr Ahdid has issued a letter directing all the DHOs and MHOs to initiate disciplinary proceedings against firms responsible for delays in delivering medicines, disposable items, and other medical equipment under the allocated emergency budget for the fiscal year 2024-24.

The letter further underscored the need to blacklist non-compliant pharmaceutical companies to ensure accountability. Moreover, it advised the authorities to promptly place new orders for the approved medicines listed in the Medicine Coordination Cells's 2024-25 list to avoid future disruptions in healthcare services.

**OFFICE OF THE DEAN/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
BANNU MEDICAL COLLEGE, MTI, KPK, PAKISTAN**

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Applications are invited from the candidates for the following positions in Bannu Medical College, Medical Teaching Institution, Bannu. Bannu under Medical Teaching Institution Act 2015 (extended time to time).

Sl. No.	Position	Qualification & Experience
1.	1. Pathology	As per latest PMDC criteria
	2. Anatomy	
	3. Forensic Medicine	
	4. Cardiology	
	5. Orthopaedic Surgery	
	6. ENT	
	7. Pulmonology	
	8. Medical Education Department	
	9. Community Medicine	
	10. Anatomy	
2.	1. Pathology	As per latest PMDC criteria
	2. Pathology	
	3. Cardiology	
	4. Cardiac Surgery	
	5. ENT	
	6. Paediatric Medicine	
	7. Urology	
	8. Gastroenterology	
	9. Pulmonology	
	10. Orthopaedics	
3.	1. Community Medicine	As per latest PMDC criteria
	2. Anatomy	
	3. Pathology	
	4. Biochemistry	
	5. Forensic Medicine	
	6. Pharmacology	
	7. Radiology	
	8. Intervention radiology	
	9. ICU	
	10. Paediatric Medicine	
4.	1. Community Medicine	MBS or equivalent qualification recognised by PMDC
	2. Anatomy	
	3. Pathology	
	4. Psychology	
	5. Biochemistry	
	6. Forensic Medicine	
	7. Pharmacology	
	8. Medical Education Department	
	9. Community Medicine	
	10. Anatomy	

**Terms & conditions:**

- Applications on prescribed proforma duly filled-in all aspects along with bio-data and attested photographs of academic and experience certificate must reach to the office of the Dean, BMC, Bannu within 15 days after this advertisement in newspapers, along with fee 1000/- for S, No 1 to D3 & fee 500/- for S, No. 04, as application processing fee through Bank Counter/Challan in BOK/FC No. 300396/912, Bank Code 0250055 title name Dean, BMC, Bannu. Cheque/ Pay order will not be accepted.
- Prescribed application form can be downloaded from the college website [www.bmc.edu.pk](http://www.bmc.edu.pk).
- The services of incumbent will be governed under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Medical Teaching Institution Reforms Act, 2015 (amended time to time).
- Civil Servants/In Service candidate shall apply through proper channel, if selected then will resign from old services and no fee will be provided.
- Only short listed candidates will be called for interviews.
- Applications must reach to this office on or before the last date during office hours.
- If closing date fixed for the receipt of application form falls on official holiday, the next working day shall be considered as the closing date.
- Any application received after the closing time & date shall stand rejected.
- The Scrutiny Committee, BMC, Bannu is competent to reject incomplete applications. However, the aggrieved candidates can appeal to the competent authority of MTI Bannu for review. The decision of the competent authority thereof shall be final.
- Any candidate may be disqualified and/or excluded from interview if he/she was:
  - Convicted by the Court of law.
  - Previous history of dismissal from public service.
  - Knowingly furnishes any false information.
  - Supplies any information which may lead to his/her disqualification.
  - Attempts to obtain support for his/her candidature by improper means.
  - Submits forged certificates.
  - Tamper with the entries in his/her age, academic certificates and publications.
  - Misbehavior during the interview.
- Original documents shall be produced at the time of interview.
- The competent authority reserved the right to increase or decrease the number of posts.
- Candidates above 60 years will be appointed on fixed pay for a period of one year, extendable upto the age of 65 years on performance basis.
- No TA/DA is admissible for test/interview, except other than Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

**Dean/Chief Executive Officer  
Bannu Medical College, MTI Bannu**

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**COURT NOTICE**

**ISLAMABAD**

In the Lahore High Court, Lahore. Notice Under Order 1 Rule 23, CPC. Civil Revision No. 937 of 2015. Mr. Muhammad (Shaukat) vs. Province of Punjab etc. Notice to Respondent No. 07. Muhammad (Shaukat) son of Shahaj Ahmad, Resident of Wala Number 79, Street No. 20/40 Hattaba, Dubai. Whereas the above named petitioner has filed Civil Revision against the order dated 14-09-2015 of the learned Additional District Judge, Mandi Bahraich District and the case file has been fixed for hearing on 11-01-2024 (date) before the Hon'ble Court. As your service could not be effected through ordinary mode, the Hon'ble Court has directed for your substituted service through publication of notice in the press. I, therefore, position that if the said defendants will / shall not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in the Court at 9 am dated 11-01-2024 the proceeding will be taken ex parte. Given under my hand and seal of the Court. (2024/2779542)

**SWAT**

In the Court of Muhammad Saqib Jan, District Judge, District Swat, Case No. 1791/2024 of Subsection 04-09-2024. Date of hearing 12-10-2024. Case Title: Tahsin Ali S/o Pt. Muhammad Khan vs. Rameez Ali. Notice to respondent - (1) Rameez Ali son of Pt. Muhammad (2) Mr. Hamid (3) Mr. Farid (4) Mr. Saad (5) Mr. Saad (6) Mr. Saad (7) Mr. Saad (8) Mr. Saad (9) Mr. Saad (10) Mr. Saad. Whereas the above named petitioner has filed Civil Revision against the order dated 14-09-2015 of the learned Additional District Judge, Mandi Bahraich District and the case file has been fixed for hearing on 11-01-2024 (date) before the Hon'ble Court. As your service could not be effected through ordinary mode, the Hon'ble Court has directed for your substituted service through publication of notice in the press. I, therefore, position that if the said defendants will / shall not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in the Court at 9 am dated 12-10-2024 ex parte proceeding will be held against the mentioned respondent under my hand and seal of the Court. (2024/77955)

**BUNAIR**

In the Court of Abdul Salam Khan, District Judge, District Bunair, Case No. 1494/2024. Date of hearing 12-10-2024. Case Title: Mst. Yasmin Vs. Mst. Yasmin (Defendant) Khadija S/o Muhammad Azam S/o Pt. Tahir Khan District Swat. Whereas the above named petitioner has filed Civil Revision against the order dated 14-09-2015 of the learned Additional District Judge, Mandi Bahraich District and the case file has been fixed for hearing on 11-01-2024 (date) before the Hon'ble Court. As your service could not be effected through ordinary mode, the Hon'ble Court has directed for your substituted service through publication of notice in the press. I, therefore, position that if the said defendants will / shall not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in the Court at 9 am dated 14-09-2015 the proceeding will be taken ex parte. Given under my hand and seal of the Court. (2024/77956)

**GUJAN KHAN**

In the Court of Mohan Raza District Judge Gujran Khan, Mr. Rameez Farid Khan vs. Province of Punjab etc. Notice to Respondent No. 07. Muhammad (Shaukat) son of Shahaj Ahmad, Resident of Wala Number 79, Street No. 20/40 Hattaba, Dubai. Whereas the above named petitioner has filed Civil Revision against the order dated 14-09-2015 of the learned Additional District Judge, Mandi Bahraich District and the case file has been fixed for hearing on 11-01-2024 (date) before the Hon'ble Court. As your service could not be effected through ordinary mode, the Hon'ble Court has directed for your substituted service through publication of notice in the press. I, therefore, position that if the said defendants will / shall not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in the Court at 9 am dated 11-01-2024 the proceeding will be taken ex parte. Given under my hand and seal of the Court. (2024/77957)

**RAWALPINDI**

In the Court of Imran Asghar District Judge Rawalpindi, Suit for Declaration etc. Hussain Afd Ahmed vs. Province of Punjab etc. Notice to Respondent No. 07. Muhammad (Shaukat) son of Shahaj Ahmad, Resident of Wala Number 79, Street No. 20/40 Hattaba, Dubai. Whereas the above named petitioner has filed Civil Revision against the order dated 14-09-2015 of the learned Additional District Judge, Mandi Bahraich District and the case file has been fixed for hearing on 11-01-2024 (date) before the Hon'ble Court. As your service could not be effected through ordinary mode, the Hon'ble Court has directed for your substituted service through publication of notice in the press. I, therefore, position that if the said defendants will / shall not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in the Court at 9 am dated 11-01-2024 the proceeding will be taken ex parte. Given under my hand and seal of the Court. (2024/77958)

**MARDAN**

In the Court of Amir Iqbal District Judge Mardan, Suit No. 1921/2024. Date of hearing 12-10-2024. Case Title: Yasmin vs. Mst. Yasmin (Defendant) Khadija S/o Muhammad Azam S/o Pt. Tahir Khan District Swat. Whereas the above named petitioner has filed Civil Revision against the order dated 14-09-2015 of the learned Additional District Judge, Mandi Bahraich District and the case file has been fixed for hearing on 11-01-2024 (date) before the Hon'ble Court. As your service could not be effected through ordinary mode, the Hon'ble Court has directed for your substituted service through publication of notice in the press. I, therefore, position that if the said defendants will / shall not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in the Court at 9 am dated 12-10-2024 ex parte proceeding will be held against the mentioned respondent under my hand and seal of the Court. (2024/77959)

# Stranded students, teachers rescued from Shogran

### Area records season's heaviest snowfall

By Nisar Ahmad Khan

MANSEHRA: Over 400 students and teachers, stranded in the mountainous Siri Page meadow of Shogran area here, were rescued in the early hours of Monday as the area recorded the heaviest snowfall of the season.

"The bumpy four-wheel track connecting Shogran tourist resort to Siri Page was blocked to traffic due to the heavy snowfall leaving over 400 students and their guardians stranded. We managed to safely rescue all of them," Rescue 1122 district emergency officer Amir Ali told reporters.

He said Siri Page, situated over 10,000 feet above sea level, and its surrounding area received the heaviest snowfall of the season on Sunday night, which continued sporadically until 9 am the next morning.

Mr Ali said that students from Khyber Medical University Peshawar and the COMSATS University Wah Cantt campus were caught in the snowstorm and remained stranded in the highest mountainous parts of the region.

"We initiated the rescue operation around 9pm on Sunday night, which continued until morning, successfully rescuing all 400 male and female students and their teachers," he said.

Mr Ali said two female students had suffered from suffocation due to the low oxygen levels at such a high altitude, but none of the other students experienced serious health issues or complications.

"Officials from the sub-township administration and the Kaghan Development Authority also participated in the operation. Our ambulances transported the stranded students to safer locations from where they continued to leave for their respective destinations," he said.

The official said all rescued students were given first aid as most of them had walked from the mountainous area and then been picked up by their vehicles and ambulances.

Meanwhile, Kaghan Valley and other high-altitude parts in Hazara Division also received snowfall, plunging the region to a severe cold wave.

In Miranshah, Rescue 1122 recovered two tourists from Pungah who were missing from Mirajani on Sunday. Visitors from Sahawal and Bahawalpur districts who were on a hiking trip to the famous peak were missing on the night of Saturday and on receiving the information, the rescue team started the search operation.

The rescue personnel along with Galiyat police put in heroic efforts throughout the night and safely recovered the two youths identified as Abdullah, 21, resident of Sahawal, and Sikandar, 22, resident of Bahawalpur and were also given first aid on the spot.

Meanwhile, former PML-N district president from Torghar's only constituency, Taimurullah Khan and district general secretary Zahid Shah on Monday joined the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf during a special ceremony in Jadhah area.

MPA from Torghar Lata Muhammad Khan, who is the younger brother of jailed PTI leader Anam Khan Swati, also addressed the gathering and welcomed the two PML-N leaders to his party.

# Shangla residents oppose transmission line on their farmland

SHANGLA: The residents of Shang union council of Bisham here have threatened that they would not allow the planned laying of the transmission line of the under-construction Dams hydropower project through their farmlands.

They made the warning during a jirga held with Bisham assistant commissioner Ahsan Khan here on Monday. Elders, including former union council member Muhammad Riaz Khan, former candidate for PK-28 Abbas Khan, Ishaq Khan, Faisal Mahmood, Amirzad, Gul Farooq and others, spoke on the occasion.

They said despite their opposition the National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC) had also laid a transmission line through their lands back in 2010 to evacuate power from the 22MW Khan Khaser power station.

Riaz Khan said high tension cables of Khan Khaser hydropower station passed over their houses, posing threats to their lives.

"It was our fourth jirga with the Bisham assistant commissioner. We ask NTDC not to lay another transmission line through their farmland," he said.

Ishaq Khan said they would not allow NTDC to erect towers on their agricultural lands. He said Shang was the only place in the entire Bisham tehsil where some kinds of farmlands were left, where people grow citrus, guava, wheat, corn and vegetables.

Faisal Mahmood said the people would raise if the authorities were ahead with their plan. Assistant commissioner Ahsan Khan assured the jirga participants that he would take up their demands with the deputy commissioner and NTDC officials.

LAI'D TO REST: A coal miner, Sadfar Ali, who died in an incident in Ghos Sadaia Shah area of Chakwal district the other day, was laid to rest in his ancestral graveyard in Laidai area here on Monday.

It was the sixth body of a coal miner brought to Shangla in the last 10 days from different parts of the country. — Correspondent

# Annual sports day held



SPECIAL: Children play football at Mardan school for the handicapped on Monday. — Dawn

MARDAN: Frontier Association for Mentally Handicapped Mardan School organised different games on the occasion of annual sports day for its students in Sheikh Maltoon town here on Monday.

Head of the monthly handicapped school Shakoor Khan told the media persons that the sports event was organised to motivate the students to participate in healthy activities.

The students enthusiastically took part in the games including cricket, running, football and yoga events.

The school head, Shakoor Khan, said that they had a total strength of 29 students in the institute. He added that they were trying their best to provide them maximum facilities and opportunities like other students. — Correspondent



STAFFERS of civic agencies spread salt on the road connecting Shogran with Mansehra-Naran-Jalkhad Road during snowfall on Monday for better traction of vehicles. — Dawn

# Rejection of applications for key MTI slots under criticism from senior medics

### Most shortlisted candidates are likely to be from private sector

By Anshiq Yousufzai

PESHAWAR: Senior doctors with vast administrative experience and qualifications have resented the rejection of their applications for hospital director positions at medical teaching institutions in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

As the Hayatabad Medical Complex (HMC) and Peshawar Institute of Cardiology (PIC) are in the process of recruiting hospital directors, many senior doctors, who are also civil servants, are unlikely to be shortlisted,

official sources told Dawn. They said that in the last few years, civil servants had earned problems by not applying their jobs after selection for key MTI positions.

Chairman of the MTI Policy Board Prof Nasirwan Barki told Dawn that as per the Medical Teaching Institutions Reforms Act, 2015, civil servants could only work in MTIs on deputation and that, too, at the formal request of board of governors when suitable non-civil service candidates weren't available.

"Anyone can apply for an MTI post but they must realise that if they are selected, they will have to permanently relinquish all other positions, including civil service ones. It is up to MTIs to decide whether they require an upfront commitment or post-hoc commitment," he said.

Sources said that the applications of all civil servants for HD positions, including BPS 19 and BPS 20 officers, had been declined.

They added that some people having managerial experience were in the running as their applications had been accepted. The sources also said senior retired officers of the health department, including a retired director-general health services, had also been ignored.

They said the reason for application rejection given for civil servants by the respective MTIs was that they hadn't submitted their no objection certificates from their parent departments. The sources quoted civil servants as claiming that they submitted applications for NoCs to the department but didn't get a timely response.

They said NoC was a permission certificate from the parent department to apply for another job in or outside the department.

The sources said given the current situation, most candidates likely to be shortlisted for the posts would be from the private sector. They added that some candidates, not shortlisted earlier, were added to the list afterwards.

"The entire process has become opaque as the yardstick provided in the Act has been ignored. We fear that none of the serving civil servants will be shortlisted," an official source said Dawn.

However, officials at the Hayatabad Medical Complex insisted that everything would be clear once the final list of candidates was out.

They said that some candidates had the required experi-

ence with overseas qualifications but MTIs had shortlisted managers, who were non-doctors and had never managed even a small hospital.

The civil servants argued that they would abide by MTIRA after selection, so their application should be accepted as they had the experience as well as the desired qualification for the jobs advertised by HMC and PIC.

Sources said that MTIs were going to select people for the private sector to those key positions as in the past, many civil servants worked as medical directors, deans and HOs, but never resigned from their original positions as civil servants in the health department.

# WHO calls for renewed support to Pakistan's health coverage

By Brian Jurek

ISLAMABAD: World Health Organisation (WHO) representative in Pakistan Dr. Dipang Lu has urged stakeholders and donors to strengthen their support for the government of Pakistan in reinforcing universal health coverage (UHC), particularly for the most vulnerable populations.

This call to action ahead of the International Universal Health Coverage Day was one of the main conclusions of a dialogue hosted by WHO and attended by Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Health Dr. Malik Mokhtar Ahmad Bhanrath, representative from the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Revenue Income Support Programme and the Sehat Sahulat Programme as well as national and international partners.

The participants commended the Universal Health Coverage Day under the theme "Health: it's on the government."

The WHO representative said advancing universal health coverage is crucial to advance the 2030 Agenda because to achieve sustainable development "we need healthy populations, healthy mothers and newborns, healthy workers, healthy families, and healthy communities."

The WHO representative also said Pakistan had achieved "notable milestones" such as improving its UHC index from 40 in 2015 to 52.7 in 2022, according to the country UHC

Monitoring Report 2023. "However, half of the population still lacks access to basic health services. Achieving the target index of 65pc by 2030, while still above of the global benchmark of 80, will require sustained efforts and innovative strategies," said Dr. Lu.

During the event, particular attention was paid to other significant milestones achieved by Pakistan such as the Sehat Sahulat Programme (SSP), which now provides coverage to over 190 million Pakistanis who did not have such protection before 2016 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, Islamabad, Punjab, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and the Tharpartar district of Sindh.

The programme was initially launched for the below-poverty population in 2016 and gradually expanded to universal health coverage in 2020-2021 although the service provided still has its limitations, particularly for out-patient care. Currently, according to the last available data, at least 47pc of Pakistan's population faces out-of-pocket healthcare expenditures, leading to widespread financial hardship.

The Universal Health Coverage Day celebrated on December 12 as proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2017 aims to raise awareness of the need for strong and resilient health systems and universal health coverage with multi-stakeholder partners, underlining that for health systems to work they must work for everyone - no matter who they are, where they live, or how much money they have.

# People's support sought for Bajaur peace

By Our Correspondent

BAJAUR: Senior officials of the district administration, security forces and the police on Monday sought the people's support for establishing durable peace and ensuring socioeconomic development of the Bajaur district.

Commandant Bajaur Scouts Brig Saad Mahmood, deputy commissioner Shahid Ali Khan and district police officer Waqar Rafique made these remarks while addressing a jirga of the elders of Tharkani and Utman Khail tribes, according to a statement issued from the deputy commissioner's office.

The officials said that establishment of a peaceful environment and provision of basic facilities to residents was their utmost priority.

The jirga was also briefed on the ongoing peace efforts and the actions against terrorists, drug dealers and suppliers.

The officials described the support of people crucial to make the peace efforts successful.

Elders, including Malik Shahzad Khan, Malik Bahadar Shah, Masudra Gul Dal Khan and Malik Gul Karwan Khan, addressed the jirga and expressed their satisfaction over the efforts to improve law and order and wellbeing of residents.



A worker gives final touches to the wheel of a bullock cart at his workplace on Hazarkhwar Road, Peshawar. — White Star

# Workshop on disaster risk reduction challenges held in Swat

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: UNDP Pakistan organised a workshop in Swat to advance dialogue between stakeholders to tackle communication and coordination challenges in addressing the impacts of climate change and disaster risk reduction challenges in the country's northern areas.

The divisional level stakeholders' communication and coordination workshop by UNDP Pakistan's scaling up of glacial lake outburst flood risk

reduction in northern Pakistan project (GLOF-II) brought together community members and key representatives from government departments, according to a statement issued here on Monday.

The participants included officials from planning and development department, Provincial Disaster Management Authority, on-farm water management, climate change, forestry environment & wildlife department, environmental protection agency, Pakistan Meteorological Department,

and water conservation department and community members from Upper and Lower Chitral, Upper Dir and Swat districts.

The workshop aimed to advance dialogue between stakeholders involved in the project's implementation across its targeted valleys. It provided a platform for community members to share insights, voice concerns and exchange experiences.

The discussions led to identifying key communication and coordination challenges and developing actionable strate-

gies to address them. The event also strengthened relationships among stakeholders, promoting trust and collaboration.

"This workshop gave us a platform to exchange ideas, concerns, and learn lessons. Seeing government officials keenly listening to our concerns and commit to addressing them was truly encouraging," said Rashida Khatoon, a resident of Roodan Valley of Upper Chitral.

UNDP's GLOF-II project works in 15 valleys of Gilgit-Baltistan and eight valleys of

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It empowers communities to identify and manage risks associated with GLOFs and related impacts of climate change, strengthens public services to lower the risk of disasters related to GLOFs, and improves community preparedness and disaster response.

The project also supports the development of sustainable livelihood options in project areas, with a particular focus on the participation of women in ensuring food security and livelihoods.