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Tempers flare during year's first sitting of parliament

- PTI MNAs interrupt Question Hour, try to derail proceedings with protest over Nov 26 events
- Tarar claims party itself not in agreement over 'number of casualties' from alleged action
- Asif says attitude not conducive to talks, asks speaker to ensure smooth functioning of house

By Iftikhar A. Khan

ISLAMABAD: Even though talks between the PTI and government to bring down political temperatures are set to enter their third round, there was no let-up in the acrimony between opposition and government lawmakers in the lower house of parliament on Monday.

As the National Assembly met for the first time this calendar year, the session was marred by noisy protests by PTI lawmakers soon after Opposition Leader Omar Ayub finished speaking.

At the outset of proceedings, Mr Ayub demanded an independent inquiry commission on the alleged psychological and physical torture of civilians during their trials by military courts. It may be noted that last month, scores of PTI supporters were convicted by military courts for their involvement in the May 9 violence.

Mr Ayub also chided government functionaries for their comments on the possible outcome of the Al-Qadir Trust case and claimed that following a deal between the United Kingdom's National Crime Agency (NCA) and a private businessman, the money landed in the Supreme Court's account before being transferred to the national treasury. "What have Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi got to do with it?" he questioned.

The PTI also raised alarm over the alleged 'disappearance' of its activists on Nov 26 and sought their immediate recovery.

Soon after he wrapped up his speech, opposition lawmakers instigated bedlam. The decision to lodge such a protest had been taken at a joint parliamentary party meeting of PTI senators and MNAs, held earlier, and the environment remained tense throughout house

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Talks to resume on Thursday

By Syed Irfan Raza

ISLAMABAD: A third round of the talks between the government and the PTI will commence at Parliament House on Jan 16, when the opposition party is expected to share its demands with the government in written form.

The in-camera meeting, to be held at 11:30am, will be chaired by National Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, who is the head of the negotiations committee.

A committee member told

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PESHAWAR: Chief of Army Staff Gen Asim Munir addresses a meeting of political leaders, on Monday. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi are also present. — White Star

Politicos stress need for security talks with Kabul

- COAS meets party leaders and representatives in Peshawar, receives briefing on counter-terror ops
- No major operation in KP but IBOs will continue, military tells political leadership

By Umar Farooq

PESHAWAR: The country's political leadership has asked the military brass to engage with Afghanistan to address Pakistan's internal security problems.

In an almost four-hour-long meeting with Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir on Monday, representatives of several political parties expressed their concerns over the prevailing law and order situation in the province.

Sources privy to the meeting said the political leadership wanted full implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP), while also suggesting a review of the plan to make certain changes, if required.

Speaking to *Dawn*, sources privy to the meeting — which was attended by representatives of JUI-F, PPP, PML-N, JI, QWP as well – disclosed that everyone "suggested engagement with the interim Afghan government — formal or informal".

They explained that all participants were of the opinion that cooperation between the neighbouring countries could facilitate bringing peace to the region.

However, the army chief pointed out that the Afghan interim rulers had failed to adhere to repeated warnings in the past.

"They don't listen to us," sources quoted the army chief as telling those calling for formal or informal dialogue with the interim Afghan government. The political leaders then suggested the military leadership use "other ways for engagement" with Afghan interim government to resolve issues.

The military leadership made it clear that no new military operation was being carried out and they must take ownership of the situation in KP, though "intelligence-based operations will be intensified," sources said. They said the military also asked political parties for feedback.

Sources said several other matters, including the capacity building of the provincial police force, were taken up during the meeting.

In an official statement, ISPR confirmed that the COAS interacted with KP politicians belonging to different political parties, adding that the participants agreed on the need for one political voice and public support against the scourge of militancy.

The political representatives showed vivid clarity on

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27 terrorists killed in Kachhi area shoot-out, says ISPR

By Saleem Shahid

QUETTA: Security forces have killed 27 terrorists in an intelligence-based operation in the Kachhi area of Balochistan, military's media wing said on Monday.

In a statement, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that security forces carried out the operation on the intelligence reports about the presence of armed terrorists in the area. It said the security forces stealthily cordoned off the area, effectively engaged the terrorists' location and 27 terrorists were killed in an intense exchange of fire.

Man killed in Turbat bomb blast: Page 5

The ISPR further claimed that multiple hideouts, including caches of arms, ammunition and explosives, were also destroyed during the operation.

"The killed terrorists were involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces as well as innocent civilians and were highly wanted by the law enforcement agencies," the military's media wing said, adding that security forces of Pakistan with the support of the nation remain determined to thwart attempts at sabotaging peace, stability and progress of Balochistan.

The security forces conducted an operation in Kachhi district in the

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FO condemns 'Islamophobic' narratives targeting UK Pakistanis

By Baqir Sajjad Syed

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Foreign Office on Monday condemned "racist and Islamophobic" narratives in the United Kingdom that target the British-Pakistani community over a grooming scandal, warning against maligning an entire diaspora for the crimes of a few.

"To demonise such a large and diverse community on the basis of the actions of a few individuals needs to be condemned," the FO said in a statement, adding that such commentary contravenes decades of cooperation and goodwill between the two countries.

The remarks follow renewed political and media scrutiny of past grooming scandals in northern England, involving predominantly Pakistani men accused of exploiting vulnerable girls. The issue resurfaced after billionaire Elon Musk, who also owns microblogging site X, accused British Prime Minister Keir Starmer of inaction during his tenure as director of public prosecutions (2008-13).

The scandal first came

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ON OTHER PAGES

Islamabad, Riyadh ink Haj accord

Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Chaudhry Sadik Hussain and Saudi Minister of Haj and Umrah Dr Tawfiq bin Fawzan al-Rabiah sign the 2025 Haj agreement in Jeddah, formally recognising that 179,210 Pakistanis will perform the pilgrimage this year. A short Haj programme of 20 to 25 days has been introduced. Pilgrims can also choose accommodation in Madina for four to eight days. Page 3

No closure yet in £190 million case against Imran

- Decision postponed for third time due to absence of accused, lawyers
- PTI counsel blames 'lack of coordination' between judge & court staff
- Gohar dismisses speculation, says postponement has nothing to do with ongoing talks

By Malik Asad

ISLAMABAD: The verdict in the £190 million corruption case against former prime minister Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi was deferred for the third time after the accused failed to appear in the courtroom, purportedly due to the lack of coordination between the presiding judge and his staff.

The proceedings in the case, which revolves around the Al-Qadir Trust, being heard by Judge Nasir Javed Rana, closed on Dec 18 and the verdict was initially scheduled to be pronounced on Dec 23.

Minister accuses PTI of running away from £190m scam case: Page 4

However, it was postponed till Jan 6 and the judgement was again deferred till Jan 13 since the judge was not available on that date. As the court convened in Adiala Jail on Monday, the verdict could not be announced due to the absence of the accused and their legal team. It is expected to be announced on Jan 17.

On Thursday, Judge Rana said the verdict was completely ready and had its signature, but the accused and their lawyers did not appear in the court. The court had been in session since 8:30am, awaiting the attendance of the accused and their lawyers, but they were not present. The judge noted that prior reminders and messages had been sent to ensure their presence. He said that Bushra Bibi, who is on bail, did not appear even though she knew the date of the verdict. The judge acknowledged that on January 6, the verdict was deferred because he was unavailable due to official training.

The court stressed that ample opportunities had been provided to the accused throughout the trial to present their defence. Judge Rana, showing leniency, stated, "They should be given another opportunity", as he postponed the verdict.

However, Khalid Yousaf Chaudhry, a member of ex-PM Imran Khan's legal team, claimed that the judge arrived earlier than the time fixed for the verdict with mutual consent. He said that he spoke with a senior staff member of the court at 9pm on Sunday and informed him that Bushra Bibi was in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and could reach

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Five of family die as container loaded on trailer falls on car

BAHAWALPUR: Five persons, including women and children, of a family died and three others suffered serious injuries when a container loaded on a trailer fell on a parked car they were occupying at Musafirkhana Adda, about 30kms from here late on Sunday night.

According to Rescue 1122 officials, the trailer first hit the car (No BFM-3536) parked in front of a shop, after which a container loaded on the vehicle fell on it.

As a result, five persons, identified as Shahzia (40), Sumaiyan Qasim (28), Hafsa (14), Hamna (9) and Zain (8), died. In the incident, three others – Asif (34), Ayesha(30) and Huzaifa (12), were seriously injured.

Dawn has learnt that the deceased and injured persons were residents of nearby Faiz Colony, Musafirkhana. The bodies and the injured persons were retrieved after cutting the badly-damaged frame of the car by the rescuers and Musafirkhana police personnel, reaching the spot on being informed of the incident.

The injured persons were shifted to the Bahawal Victoria Hospital (BVH), where bodies of the deceased were also transported. Police official reached the scene to take the legal action against the trailer's driver.

The funeral prayers for the deceased, attended by a large number of people, were later offered in a cotton factory, after which they were buried in a local graveyard.
— **Correspondent**

Maula Jatt producer passes away

LAHORE: Noted film producer Muhammad Sarwar Bhatti passed away in Lahore due to heart attack on Monday.

Bhatti produced one of the most iconic films of Pakistan *Maula Jatt*, that made Sultan Rahi a mega star. Other famous films produced by Bhatti included Chan Waryam, *Bazaar-e-Husn* and *Meq Mehr*.

He established his production house by the name of Babu Productions. He did not produce any films for a long time.

Bhatti wanted to release his Maula Jatt movie once again for which he made the digital print of the movie but it could not be released. — **Staff Reporter**

Katcha gangsters kill four in Khanpur revenge attack

By Irfanul Haq

RAHIM YAR KHAN: A gang of Katcha area attacked the house of relatives of an alleged police informer and killed four of his relatives, including three brothers, at Basti Chandia/Lashari of village Jajja Abbasian in the Zahirpir town of tehsil Khanpur at night.

On the other hand, police claimed that two attackers were killed when they were trying to escape towards the Katcha area.

According to the rescue sources, the dacoits of Indhar Gang attacked the house of Irfan, an uncle of the late Usman Chandia, at around 10pm. Immediately after their arrival, the dacoits killed Irfan's three sons, Muhammad Arabi (15),Muhammad Makki (15), Muhammad Madni (10), and a relative Muhammad Zaman (38).

In a video message Irfan said he had informed police about the attack of the dacoits but police did not reach even after half an hour of the attack. He said the police had just used his nephew Usman Chandia who was killed in the confrontation with the dacoits in 2023. He further said that it was the duty of police to provide them with security because police were already providing security and meals to the family of Usman Chandia. He said his whole family was murdered and now even the inspector general police or DIG could not help him. Irfan said that the dacoits took revenge of the killings of Jano Indhar and his accomplices.

According to some locals, the area of Jajja Abbasian witnessed the sound of shots fired by the dacoits and there was panic among the villagers. The police did not respond to calls at 15 when the district police officer and Station House Officer Zahirpir were a few kilometers away from the scene. In a WhatsApp message, a police spokesperson claimed that after the killing of four innocent citizens, police failed the attempt of the attackers to escape. After the attack of dacoits, they were being chased and the heavy firing started in which two dacoits were killed. He claimed that they belonged to the Indhar, Shar and Kosh gangs; however, he did not disclose the name of the deceased suspects.

Jano Indhar, the ring leader of Indhar Gang, and his three accomplices, Munshi Indhar,Somer Shar and Kata Shar, were killed in an encounter in July 2023 while two dacoits were injured. The encounter happened in the Katcha area of Kashmore and Kandhkot. According to the sources, after the killing of Jano Indhar, Jamil Indhar and Tanvir Indhar were leading the gang and it is suspected that they were behind the attack on Irfan's house and killing of his three sons and a relative.

May 9 riots cases

High court sets aside objections to Imran's seven pleas

LAHORE: A Lahore High Court two-judge bench on Monday overruled the registrar office's objections to seven bail petitions of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) incarcerated founding chairman Imran Khan in as many cases of May 9 riots, including an attack on the Lahore corps commander's residence.

The bench comprising Chief Justice Aalia Neelum and Justice Anjad Javed Ghural took up eight separate bail petitions of Mr Khan filed through Barrister Salman Sabdar.

During the hearing, the counsel informed the bench that the registrar office raised a similar objection on seven bail pleas, saying they lacked the thumb impression of the petitioner.

He said the office raised an objection to the eighth plea about the absence of a certified copy of the Iddat case judgment against the petitioner.

Barrister Sabdar assured the court that he would submit a new affidavit at the next hearing to address the objections.

The bench set aside the objections raised by the office on seven bail applications and directed the office to allot diary numbers to the cases for hearing.

However, the bench sustained the objection on eighth petition regarding the missing certified copy of the Iddat case judgment, instructing the counsel to attach it with the application.

An anti-terrorism court had on Nov 27 denied bail to the former prime minister in these eight cases.

The petitions mainly argued that the prosecution failed to establish the petitioner's association with the unfortunate occurrences narrated in the FIRs.

They said the petitioner has been implicated in the May 9 cases as a result of a well-orchestrated plan, merely to harass and humiliate him for political reasons, even though admittedly he was in the custody of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

The arrest of the petitioner was never required in the cases, which was evident from the fact that police remained reluctant to secure his arrest during the period of five months and 12 days after the dismissal of his pre-arrest bail by the trial court.

The petitions alleged that the indifferent behaviour of police and lack of effort in securing the arrest of the petitioner at a time when he was detained at Adiala Jail, supplemented the argument that arrest of the petitioner was not required in the cases.

The sole allegation against the petitioner in the cases is of "abetment", which has been supplemented by the prosecution most vaguely, the pleas added.

They argued that the trial judge overlooked the fact that frivolous and baseless allegations related to the May 9 events have already been rejected due to inconsistencies in the story of the investigating agency.

The petitions asked the court to set aside the trial court's decision and grant bail to the former prime minister in the eight FIRs.

ANTI-RAPE LAW: Lahore High Court Chief Justice Aalia Neelum on Monday issued a notice to the attorney general for Pakistan to assist on a matter related to implementation of the Anti-Rape Act 2021.

The chief justice was heading a full bench seized with a bail petition of a rape suspect, Wajid Ali.

Justice Farooq Haider and Justice Ali Zia Bajwa were the other members of the bench.

The chief justice expressed concern that failure to enforce the anti-rape law could lead to the acquittal of accused persons in rape cases. She remarked that the number of rape cases had surpassed murder cases. She emphasised that the lack of enforcement of the Anti-Rape Act 2021 is resulting in the acquittal of accused individuals.

Prosecutor General of Punjab Syed Farhad Ali Shah informed the bench that the rules under the anti-rape law were being implemented. He said under Section 7 of the Act, special prosecutors had been appointed and a separate cell had been established to monitor rape cases on a daily basis.

The bench summoned the provincial secretary for prosecution to appear in person in the next hearing. It also gave relevant institutions a final chance to submit their reports. The bench sought reports on the trial proceedings involving minor victims in rape cases.

The bench directed the prosecutor general and the advocate general of Punjab to submit reports on meetings and progress regarding the implementation of the anti-rape act.

The bench adjourned the proceedings till submission of the reports by the authorities concerned. — **Staff Reporter**

Separate lanes project for bikers launched

LAHORE: The pilot project to allocate dedicated lanes for cyclists and motorcyclists on Ferozepur Road was formally launched to ensure smooth and uninterrupted traffic flow, reduce accidents and for safety of the commuters.

The pilot project will lead to similar interventions on other major roads in Punjab capital, according to the Lahore Development Authority (LDA) officials.

"Under the pilot project, Ferozepur Road will soon have dedicated lanes, covered with low-height concrete walls on both sides, for the cyclists and motorcyclists, as the work has been launched by the team of LDA's urban development wing," an official source in the authority told *Dawn* on Monday.

According to him, the pilot project consists of four-kilometer-long lanes on both sides of the road from Kalma Chowk to Lahore Bridge (Qainchi). And upon success of this pilot activity, a regular project is likely to be launched on other major roads in the city, including Jail Road, The Mall, Multan Road, Walton Road and Canal Road.

LDA Director General Tahir Farooq also paid a visit to the pilot project site and inspected the ongoing work there. On this occasion, LDA Chief Engineer Aatar Saeed and the Project Director Haroon Sadi briefed the DG on the development works.

"These lanes will be separated from the main road by using curve stones and eco-friendly blue paint. In the first phase, a four-kilometer-long lane is being built on both sides from Kalma Chowk to Lahore Bridge," said Mr Saeed while briefing the DG. He said the bikers' lane would be 12 feet wide and ease the commute for the people. — **Khalid Hussain**

CM pledges 100,000 houses

LAHORE: Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has promised provision of as many 100,000 houses to homeless people in Punjab within a year.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony of the three-marla Zahra Homes/Muskan Ravi, at Kala Shah Kaku here on Monday, she said: "Some 100 deserving families have got their own houses. I appreciate RUDA (Ravi Urban Development Authority) and the housing ministry for completing Zahra Homes/Muskan Ravi in a short span of two-and-a-half month." — **Staff Reporter**

INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT NOTICE

The Home Department, Balochistan, seeks a qualified **Individual Consultant** to strengthen forensic capability at the Balochistan Forensic Science Agency, Quetta, for a 6-month contract (extendable).

Name of Post	No. of Post	Qualification and Experience	Age Limit
Individual Consultant (Special Pay Package)	01	**Eligibility Criteria:** **Qualification:** Ph.D. in Analytical Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, or related disciplines. Advanced certifications in forensic methodologies/laboratory management are preferred. **Experience:** 10+ year's post-Ph.D. experience in forensic applications, 10+ years of laboratory work as a Bench Analyst in DNA profiling, toxicological, or trace evidence analysis. Expertise in managing ISO/IEC 17025-accredited forensic labs and quality assurance systems. **Research:** 5+ peer-reviewed publications, including 3 in international journals, in biochemistry or forensic sciences. **How to Apply:** Send detailed CVs **after publication of advertisement within 15 Days** to Deputy Secretary (Police Forensic), Home Department, Balochistan Civil Secretariat. **Email:** shah.200ahmed@gmail.com **Note:** Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for an interview.	40 to 45 years

General Terms and Conditions of Appointment: The position is based in the Balochistan Forensic Science Agency, Quetta. Government servants must apply through the proper channel. Shortlisted candidates will appear for an interview with the Search/Selection Committee and present their approach, methodology, and understanding of the task. The Competent Authority reserves the right to reject any application without assigning a reason.

PRO No.2831/13-01-2025

Section Officer (B&A)
Government of Balochistan Home & Tribal Affairs Department

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TENDER NOTICE

Sealed quotations are invited from interested Parties / Authorized Agents, as per following details:

Sr. #	Ref. No.	Description	Qty.	Submission Date
1	FP-88/ PR-23387-24	FLOURSPAR Offer on CFR basis	20 MT.	28.01.2025
2	FP-88/ PR-23038-24	COKE BREEZE Offer on F.O.R basis	100 MT	28.01.2025
3	FP-88/ PR-23650-24	INGOT MOULD (Various Size) Offer on F.O.R / CFR basis	18 Nos.	29.01.2025
4	FP-SAA PR-22946/24	BOTTOM PLATE Offer on F.O.R / CFR basis	02 Nos.	30.01.2025
5	CIVIL - PR-1547-24	DESIGN, FABRICATION AND SUPPLY OF PRE-ENGINEERED BUILDING (PEB) Offer on F.O.R / CFR basis	01 No.	30.01.2025
6	FP-88/ PR-23431-24	i) CERAMIC FIBER MODULE ii) VACUUM FRAME BOARD KVS iii) CERAMIC FIBER BLANKET (Various Size) iv) STEEL Y ANCHOR Offer on CFR basis	2,000 Nos. 100 Nos. 150 Rolls. 50 Nos.	30.01.2025
7	FP-SAA/ PR-23688-24	THERMOCOUPLE Offer on F.O.R / CFR basis	16 Nos.	03.02.2025
8	FP-SAA / PR-23489 -24	FERRO CHROME SILICON (L/C) Offer on F.O.R / CFR basis	50MT	03.02.2025
9	FP-SAA/ PR-23855-24	HIGH TEMPERATURE CUTTING DISC Offer on F.O.R / CFR basis	100 Nos.	04.02.2025
10	FP-SAA/ PR-23454-24	METAL CUTTING BAND SAW BLADE Offer on F.O.R / CFR basis	200 Nos.	04.02.2025
11	FP-SAA/ PR-23864-A/24	FERRO MANGANESE (H/C) Offer on F.O.R / CFR basis	120 MT	06.02.2025
12	FP-SAA/ PR-23864-B/24	SILICO MANGANESE Offer on F.O.R / CFR basis	25 MT	06.02.2025
13	FP-SAA/ PR-23864-C/24	FERRO CHROME (H/C) Offer on F.O.R / CFR basis	120 MT	07.02.2025
14	FP-SAA/ PR-1553 - 24	WELDING WIRE Offer on CFR basis	1,500Kg	11.02.2025
15	LP-33/ PR-23991	MEDIUM VOLTAGE SWITCHGEAR PANEL (Various Rating) Offer on F.O.R basis	01 LOT	11.02.2025

Tender(s) must be submitted on the submission date by 15:00hrs and the opening will be carried out at 15:30hrs on the respective submission date.

Interested bidders may obtain complete Tender documents, containing specifications and Terms & Conditions on payment of Tender Fee Rs.500/- (Non-refundable) against each tender, through Pay Order/Demand Draft in favour of **M/s. Peoples Steel Mills Ltd, Karachi,** against a written request on their Company's letterhead. Companies wishing to receive documents through courier must add extra Rs.100/- in the shape of Pay Order/Demand Draft.

CORRIGENDUM

Reference tender published in the "Daily Dawn" and the "Daily Jang" Karachi dated **16-12-2024**. Please note that opening date for the following tender has been re-scheduled as under, while all other Terms and Conditions of tender will remain the same.

Ref. No.	Description	Submission Date	Revised Submission Date
FP-88/ PR-1556-24	VACUUM HEAT TREATMENT FURNACE Offer on CFR basis.	14.01.2025	23.01.2025

NOTE: The Tender Notice is also available at www.ppra.org.pk and www.psmltd.com

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Application form must also be fully filled online at www.duhs.edu.pk.

Job applications received on and before 27-01-2025 will only be considered. Application should be sent only through courier on the following postal address given.

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SC asks if army law covers constitutional violation penalties

Judges question whether evidence presented before military courts fulfils Qanoon-i-Shahadat requirements

By Nasir Iqbal

ISLAMABAD: Justice Munawar Hilali, a member of the Constitutional Bench hearing the case of military trial of civilians, has wondered whether the Pakistan Army Act (PAA) 1952 outlined any punishment for officers who suspend the Constitution.

Justice Hilali was part of the seven-judge bench hearing intra-court appeals (ICAs) against the Supreme Court's October 2023 order of nullifying the military trial of civilians involved in the May 9 violence.

She also posed questions about Article 6 of the Constitution, which deals with high treason.

If the provision was applicable to every citizen, then how are certain fundamental rights, also enshrined in the Constitution, not applicable to the accused facing trials under the PAA, observed Justice Hilali.

In response to the queries, Khawaja Haris Ahmed, representing the Defence Ministry, contended that Article 6 prevails over all laws.

On this, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail wondered what punishment was outlined in Article 6 for ailing constitutional violations.

He remarked that even the judiciary has endorsed or validated the abrogation or suspension of the Constitution in the past.

Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar recalled how during the treason trial of Gen Pervez Musharraf, the names of certain judges were taken, but they were never tried.

Legality of military trials

When Mr Haris laid out the PAA provisions that outline the process to set up courts for trying civilians, Justice Mandokhail remarked that there was no dispute over these courts.

The only point of concern was the extent to which the act could include civilians in its domain, he observed.

The counsel highlighted past Supreme Court decisions that empower the higher judiciary to review military court verdicts if legal requirements were not met.

Another bench member, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, remarked that without examining the military court's judgments, how will the court know whether the requirements of Qanoon-i-Shahadat act have been adhered to or violated?

He also asked if the court could see the record of these cases.

"We want to see what was the standard of evidence recorded in the military trial, was the cross-examination of the witnesses was conducted, was the right to present defence witnesses were allowed, whether the right to be represented through a counsel of choice was given and whether the witness recorded was reflected in the judgment by the military court or not," asked Justice Rizvi.

The counsel agreed to put case records before the court and the procedure followed in the trial without revealing the convict's identity.

The apex court should not address the merits of the cases and the trials should not be affected by the proceedings of this case, the counsel said.

Justice Aminud Din Khan, who is heading the bench, asked the counsel to keep the record safe.

The court will ask for it if need be since there will be appeals against the trials.

Justice Mazhar said it was necessary to see the record to ascertain whether a fair trial was ensured and requirements of the Criminal Procedure Code were fulfilled.

He added that it was also necessary to determine whether a joint trial of all accused took place to ensure that the prohibition of double jeopardy in the trial was ensured.

The prohibition of double jeopardy is a legal principle that prevents an accused from being tried or charged again for the same crime if they have already been tried and found not guilty.

The counsel, Mr Haris, stated that the trials were conducted separately and argued that the Supreme Court "cannot see" the quality of evidence in military trials.

The counsel said before reviewing the quality of evidence, the Supreme Court has to consider the jurisdiction of the present appeals.

Justice Rizvi said the court will not discuss the cases but can examine the record.

When Justice Mandokhail observed that he was confused as to how an ordinary citizen was connected to the discipline of the armed forces, the counsel replied that if the citizen was accused of seducing an army officer, the provision of law dealing with maintaining discipline in the armed forces apply to them.

BAHAWALPUR: Workers stitch a quilt at their workplace, on Monday.—AFP

Demolition of bunkers kicks off in Kurram

Parachinar residents hold shutter-down strike over prolonged roadblocks

By Our Correspondent

KURRAM: Following a peace agreement between the warring sides in Kurram district, security forces and the district administration began demolishing bunkers in Lower Kurram using explosives, while the residents of Parachinar observed a shutter-down strike on Monday to protest the prolonged closure of roads.

Kurram Deputy Commissioner Ashfaq Khan said that efforts were underway to demolish all bunkers in the region, adding that according to the 14-point Kohat peace agreement, all bunkers in the district would be demolished by February 1.

In Lower Kurram, two bunkers have already been demolished — one each in Khar Kili and Bolish Khel. Gunship helicopters continued to fly over the area as security forces and the district administration arrived in Lower Kurram early Monday morning to carry out the demolition operation.

Tribal leader Jalal Bangash emphasised the importance of all parties implementing the peace agreement, urging the government to prioritise the first point of the agreement and take necessary measures to open and secure routes.

Haji Saleem Khan, another tribal leader, said that sustainable peace is in the best interest of all parties, and that the public should cooperate with the elders and government to achieve this goal.

The people of Parachinar, the headquarters of Kurram district, have been stranded for the last three months due to roadblocks and are demanding the immediate reopening and securing of the routes. The shortage of essential supplies led the residents to carry out the shutter-down strike.

Leaders of the Kurram District Drug Association said medicine shops had run out of stock due to the roadblock. At a joint press conference in Parachinar, Pakistan Drug Association Parachinar president Haji Syed Hanif, chairman Moosa Hussain and Syed Iftikhar Hussain expressed concerns that the prolonged road closure had emptied their medical stores.

They said children and other patients had died due to a lack of treatment, with the death toll surpassing 300. They highlighted the distressing situation, explaining that patients were repeatedly turned away without treatment, leading them to shut down their medical stores.

Speaking at a joint press conference at the DHQ hospital in Parachinar, Young Doctors Association leaders Dr Zulfiqar Ali, Dr Sajjad, Dr Rafiq and others said that the lack of medicines and inability to transfer patients to Peshawar had caused immense suffering. Patients were dying in agony due to the closure of the routes, they said, adding that the situation was becoming increasingly unbearable.

MPA Ali Hadi Irfani called for the immediate opening of the routes, noting that thousands of people had been trapped in the area for over 100 days due to the blockade.

Gillani issues production order for PTI lawmaker

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Senate Chairman Yousuf Raza Gillani on Monday issued production order for PTI Senator Ejaz Chaudhry, who has been incarcerated for 18 months.

This is not the first production order issued for the senator, who is imprisoned at Lahore's Kot Lakhpat Jail. In March last year, Mr Chaudhry was due to be produced in the Senate, but was unable to attend the session.

In November, he was among 21 other PTI figures formally indicted by a Lahore Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in cases related to countrywide riots on May 9, 2023, registered with the Race Course and Sarwar Road police stations.

Mr Chaudhry said that despite being a member of the Senate, he was not allowed to attend parliamentary sessions.

"No hardship has been able to break us and nor will it. The state oppression will end," he added. The request to produce Mr Chaudhry was made by Opposition Leader in the Senate Shibli Faraz.

"The Honourable Chairman Senate considers necessary the presence of Senator Ejaz Ahmad Chaudhry during the sittings of the 145th session of the Senate of Pakistan," the order read.

"The Honourable Chairman Senate has been pleased to summon Senator Ejaz Ahmad Chaudhary to attend the sittings of the said session at the Parliament House."

The order, addressed to the secretary of the interior minister among others, directed them to "produce Senator Ejaz Ahmad Chaudhary at the commencement of each sitting of the said session", stating that Chaudhary would be returned to their custody upon the end of the sitting.

PM Shehbaz orders expansion of faceless customs system to several cities

Calls for collaboration with private sector to boost investment in housing projects

By Syed Irfan Raza

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Monday that the faceless customs assessment system, which will be fully operational in Karachi next month, should be expanded and implemented in other cities without delay to ensure that imports across the country could benefit from this system.

The prime minister stated this while chairing a review meeting on the matters related to the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).

It was attended by Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Ali Pervez Malik and other senior officials, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister observed that significant progress had been achieved in digitisation and reforms within the FBR in previous months, adding that for the first time in history, a system with faceless digitisation system had been introduced in the customs process. He directed the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication and FBR to work together to further improve the faceless customs assessment system.

He desired that the system should be shifted to artificial intelligence by minimising the human intervention.

He ordered the development of a comprehensive strategy for the implementation of the track and trace system in various industrial sectors.

The meeting was briefed on the recent FBR reforms. The faceless customs system at all Karachi port terminals would be made fully operational by the end of February this year, it was told. Besides, efforts are underway to ensure its operation nationwide soon. A central control room is being established to monitor the system, it was informed.

The meeting was apprised that body cameras and tablets would be used to make the inspection recording system more transparent.

Mobile signal jammers and CCTV cameras are also being installed at all terminals to enhance the transparency of the inspection system.

A transparent recruitment process for the new customs system had been initiated while a track and trace system had been implemented in all industrial units of the tobacco, fertilisers, sugar, and cement industries, the meeting was briefed.

The implementation of the track and trace system led to a significant increase in revenue from the tobacco, sugar, cement, and fertiliser industries in the fiscal year 2023-24 compared to the previous corresponding year. The meeting was told that upgrade of the web-based One Customs began and its design was expected to be completed by the end of March.

Low-cost housing schemes

Chairing another meeting, PM Shehbaz ordered the completion of ongoing federal government's low-cost housing projects expeditiously, besides asking for collaboration with the private sector to boost investment in the housing projects. He also instructed ensuring a third-party validation of the projects.

The Ministry of Housing informed the prime minister about the progress on the ongoing reforms and policy measures in its various departments. It was informed that consultations with all the stakeholders for amendments to the National Housing Policy 2001 had been completed and the process for its final approval would be completed by March.

The meeting was also apprised of the ongoing and future projects under the Pakistan Housing Authority. It was told that work was progressing rapidly on 630 low-cost residential units in Kachlak, Quetta, and 4,112 units in Islamabad. Work on 5,728 low-cost residential units in Peshawar would begin soon while work on 5,600 residential units in Rawalpindi and Islamabad would kick-start in the near future.

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia sign Haj agreement 2025

Under the accord signed in Jeddah, 179,210 Pakistani pilgrims will perform Haj this year

By Kalbe Ali

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain and Saudi Minister of Haj and Umrah Dr Tawfiq bin Fawzan al-Rabiah signed the annual Haj agreement 2025.

The agreement was signed in Jeddah, formally recognising that 179,210 Pakistani pilgrims will perform Haj this year.

The agreement includes a commitment to provide the best possible facilities to Pakistani pilgrims, who will be offered special accommodation in Mina at reduced rates.

The Saudi Minister of Haj and Umra, Dr Tawfiq bin Fawzan al-Rabiah, assured Mr Hussain to provide all possible support for better facilities for Pakistani pilgrims.

Stay in Madina

To make the Haj journey more accessible, easier, and comfortable, a short Haj programme of 20 to 25 days has been introduced. Pilgrims will have the option to choose their accommodation in Madina for a duration of four to eight days.

Each pilgrim will receive a specially designed bag containing the Pakistani flag, a QR code for identification, and relevant information. A special mobile app will provide all information to the pilgrims on their mobile phones, enabling them to stay updated about their Haj group's information, training schedule, flight details, accommodations in Saudi Arabia, and live maps and locations of sites during Haj.

Mr Hussain will also participate in a four-day international Haj conference and expo in Jeddah organised by the Saudi Ministry of Haj, where additional agreements will be made with institutions and companies responsible for providing facilities to pilgrims.

The Haj quota is allocated by the Saudi Haj ministry based on the Muslim population in the relevant country.

'Jolted' by missing persons complaints, CJP wants to 'hear other side' too

Says cases of enforced disappearances are high courts' domain; announces financial aid plan for less privileged litigants

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Yahya Afridi has conceded that the widespread complaints of enforced disappearances "jolted" him but said he wants to "hear the other side" as well.

In an interaction with court reporters on Monday, the CJP said he received complaints about missing persons during his visits to different parts of the country.

"During my visits to Ghotki [Sindh], Gwadar [Balochistan] and Sadiqabad [Punjab] ... members of Bars highlighted the serious issue of missing persons," the CJP said while speaking to a delegation of the Press Association of the Supreme Court (PAS).

The CJP said the prevalence of these complaints "disturbed" him and was a "jolt" to him.

However, he told the bar members that he wouldn't respond to them immediately on the subject or give any decision unless he "heard the other side" too.

The CJP also said the issue of missing persons was the jurisdiction of high courts under Article 199 of the Constitution and that the Supreme Court would not interfere with the authority of subordinate judiciary.

Complaints against judges

Justice Afridi conceded that a number of complaints against different judges were pending before the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC).

On a suggestion that people should know against which judge the complaint has been disposed of by the council to help reclaim his respect, the CJP said he would respond to the proposal after sharing with the council.

When asked about perceived acrimony amongst SC judges, he said the court heard "tough cases" during the last three or four years where judges "took positions".

However, he expressed optimism that the situation would improve. "After all, we judges are brothers. It's a fraternity."

"Give us six months. Let judges breathe. It will end bickering," CJP observed.

Financial aid programme

While sharing his vision to improve the justice system, the CJP talked about empowering the judges of district judiciary, especially those in the remotest areas, by acknowledging and recognising them.

"Being the Supreme Court chief justice, it is my responsibility to provide the civil judges opportunities."

"In the future, no superior [court] judge will attend international seminars or conferences without taking along with them judges of the district judiciary too," the CJP said.

He vowed to send abroad the best judges from the farthest places.

The CJP also intended to provide monetary support to litigants in district courts who cannot pay for their cases.

He said the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan (LJCP) would soon finalise a project to provide litigants with a decent representation in district courts free of cost.

When asked whether the attempt will not coincide with the Law Ministry's programme of supporting different Bar Associations, CJP Afridi said the law division may provide financial assistance, but the present programme was independent of it and targeted towards the district judiciary.

High courts and district courts will suggest cases to LJCP that deserve free representation, he said.

"We will take small incremental steps to ensure the justice system delivers."

The CJP said the Supreme Court had engaged the Federal Board of Revenue and Chartered Accountant Massey Ferguson to help categorise taxation cases and expedite their disposal.

The court was also trying to develop a mechanism to deal with urgent applications by constituting dedicated benches to deal with election matters, criminal cases, etc.

CJP Afridi said every judge of the Supreme Court was independent and each disposes of case in their own way.

The judges "should not be bracketed" rather criticised in a constructive manner.

The chief justice compared the court to the Titanic ship, saying it cannot be [turned] suddenly.

The delivery of justice can be improved by changing the direction of the top court, he added.—Nasir Iqbal

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Minister accuses PTI of running away from £190m scam case

Tarar says verdict in case was supposed to be announced on Monday, but the accused failed to appear in court

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Monday said the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) leadership was running away from the 190 million pound corruption case because they knew that their hands were not clean and they were involved in the scam.

Addressing a press conference along with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Senator Talal Chaudhry, he said there was no example in the history that billions of rupees were waived like this, as the black money was whitened through creation of a fraudulent trust.

He said the 190 million pounds case was a classic example of "robbing Peter to pay Paul".

The minister said the verdict in the 190 million pound case was supposed to be announced on Monday, but the accused failed to appear in the court.

The minister said the PTI leadership had made a habit of not appearing in courts.

He said the PTI had also used delaying tactics for six years in the foreign funding case. Similarly, he said in the Toshakhana case, they also used delaying tactics and sought adjournments after adjournments.

"Sometimes the PTI leaders changed lawyers, sometimes they changed the letters of attorney," the minister remarked. He said innocent people never change attorneys and lawyers but it has been the practice of the PTI to use delaying tactics in court cases.

He asked why the PTI needed to take a sealed envelope to the cabinet meeting and get its approval without opening it when it was in power.

He alleged that the then cabinet approved the £190m deal without knowing the facts in the sealed envelope brought by Shahzad Akbar. He said it was a mega corruption case in the history of Pakistan.

"It was not just a coincidence, it was a well thought-out plan", he said.

The minister said the PTI chief also rebuilt his house in Lahore from the mega corruption. Billions of rupees were collected from the person whose billions of rupees were written off by the federal cabinet, he said.

Replying to a question, the minister said the founder of PTI was in jail but why his spouse Bushra Bibi did not turn up in the court.

He said it was the discretion of the concerned judge to decide whether to announce the verdict in the presence of the accused or otherwise.

He said the PTI leadership was divided now and they did not see eye to eye on many matters.

Mr Tarar remarked that the PTI had sown the seeds of mistrust and hatred among the nation but it was itself reaping its harvest.

He said the judge could issue warrants for mandatory presence of an accused during the trial only.

To another question, he said Farha Gogi was wanted in many cases but she was a co-accused in this case, whereas the PTI founder was the main accused.

Pakistan takes lead in tackling issues of girls' education, out-of-school children

Education minister terms international conference historic achievement to address cultural impediments to access to education for girls

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui said on Monday Pakistan is taking the lead in Islamic countries to tackle the issues of girls' education and out-of-school children.

The federal minister met a high-powered delegation led by former Prime Minister of Norway Kjell Magne Bondevik here. The meeting was also attended by Secretary Education Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani and former Member of the Oslo Parliament, Norway, Aamir Javed Sheikh.

Dr Siddiqui said Mr Bondevik is a friend of Pakistan who has always worked towards helping Pakistan in fighting its challenges.

The minister said the presence of former Norway prime minister internationalised the agenda of the international conference on girls' education which concluded in Islamabad on Sunday. The minister said Pakistan faced a myriad of challenges but his ministry had taken up the issue with utmost emergency. He said that we have mobilised all our resources to address this issue, adding that the government had also declared an educational emergency.

Dr Siddiqui said that currently the Ministry of Education was addressing issues of access to schools, limited infrastructure, teachers' training and nutritional problems of children in collaboration with other ministries.

He said that to address cultural impediments of access to education for girls, the international conference was a historic achievement. He said that Pakistan had taken the lead to eradicate the misconception surrounding girls' education in the Islamic countries.

The former prime minister of Norway Kjell Magne Bondevik said that he always worked towards helping Pakistan in resolving its numerous strategic and internal challenges. He said Pakistan had made history by conducting the international conference on girls' education. He said that Pakistan had huge potential and through proper management of resources all the issues can be addressed. The secretary education said Pakistan had adopted latest techniques and approaches to tackle all challenges of the education sector.

Separately, the education minister met another delegation led by Minister of Education and Science of Kyrgyzstan Dogdurkul Kendirbaeva. During the meeting, he said the international conference on girls' education had provided the Islamic countries with an opportunity to come closer. He said he wanted to enhance cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan in the field of education.

The minister discussed exchange of expertise and knowledge regarding vocational and technical training, adding that the two countries could benefit from the experience of each other. He said Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan should enhance their ties especially in exchange of technology, education and research. He said that digitalisation of the education sector can address numerous challenges of today and tomorrow.

Ms Kendirbaeva said people of Kyrgyzstan had deep affiliation with Pakistan. The Kyrgyzstan minister said the university-to-university cooperation was the way forward. She also briefed the minister about a digital learning platform being used in Kyrgyzstan that had reaped good results.

Meanwhile, the minister also met a delegation led by Deputy Minister for Education of Yemen Dr Ali Alabah. The meeting was also attended by Ambassador of Yemen to Pakistan Mohammed Motahar Alashabi and officials of the education ministry.

During the meeting, the education minister said both Yemen and Pakistan had suffered due to terrorism. He said education was the best way to progress for any country, adding collaboration in the fields of mutual benefit was essential.

Earlier on Sunday, Senate Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani hosted a reception in honour of the participants of the international conference at Parliament House, which was attended by leading figures from across the globe, including political leaders, policymakers, and experts in the field of education and development.

Muslim world's VCs conference from Feb 4

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is all set to host Muslim world's vice chancellors' forum next month in Islamabad as Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC) Dr Mukhtar Ahmed on Monday extended an invitation in this regard to officials of Somalia.

The event from Feb 4 to 7 will bring together over 150 vice-chancellors from universities across OIC member states, aiming to enhance collaboration in higher education within the Islamic world.

A Somalian delegation led by Minister of Education Farah Abdulkadir and Ambassador of Somalia in Pakistan Sheikhnur Mohamed Hassan visited HEC Secretariat on Monday and met HEC Chairman Dr Mukhtar Ahmed.

The officials of Somalia are in to Pakistan to attended international girls conference that concluded on Sunday.

During the meeting, both sides discussed opportunities for the mutual development of higher education sector of the two countries. The Somalian delegation also included Director General of the Ministry of Education Abdullahi Omar, Advisers to the Ministry of Education Ms Deka, and Ms Asma from the Embassy of Somalia.

HEC Adviser on Global Engagement Awais Ahmad and director administration Mr Tariq Iqbal attended the meeting.

According to a press release, the HEC Chairman emphasised the organization's ongoing efforts to increase scholarships for international students in Pakistan, particularly for youth from Muslim countries.

He highlighted the success of the Afghan Student Scholarship Programme, which has enabled numerous Afghan students to pursue higher education in Pakistan's top universities.

Dr Ahmed assured the Somali delegates of HEC's full support in advancing higher education in Somalia and providing opportunities for Somali students to benefit from academic programmes in Pakistan.

He particularly emphasised the collaboration for strengthening quality assurance systems as well as enhancing collaboration in the areas of agriculture and information technology.

Dr Mukhtar Ahmed also briefed the delegation on 'Ilm-Bank,' a virtual platform that aims to serve as a knowledge consortium for higher education institutions in OIC countries.

This platform will facilitate cross-border education, training, and research opportunities, allowing students and scholars to connect with resources from across member states.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF SINDH
LAST DATE TO APPLY 31st January, 2025

STS

SIBA Testing Services (STS), on behalf of the School Education & Literacy Department, Government of Sindh, invites applications for the position of Monitoring Assistant BPS-14 (district basis). Eligible applicants must have a domicile of the concerned districts and be permanently residing in Sindh province. This position is initially on temporary basis, but is likely to be confirmed based on performance in the future. The required qualifications, age, residence, and other criteria are as follows:

S.NO.	NAME OF POSTS	No. of Posts	BASIC ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION	DOMICILE	AGE LIMIT
01	Monitoring Assistant BPS-14	169	i) Graduate at least in 2nd division or equivalent from a HEC recognized University/Institute. ii) Holding valid Motorcycle driving license.	Relevant districts of Sindh as per list posted at SE&LD website	21-28 Years

GUIDELINES TO APPLY

1. Interested candidates should submit an online application at the SIBA Testing Services (STS) Portal against the position at apply.sts.net.pk (No manual form will be accepted).
2. Candidates are required to upload CNIC (front and back side), Domicile, PRC/Form-D, one recent photograph, and all academic documents with percentage / marks certificate, of the university concerned, or any certification and license if required, on the portal when applying online. Note: Completion of degrees is mandatory. Appearance certificate will not be accepted.
3. Candidates with disability are required to upload CNIC featuring a "Wheel Chair" logo issued by NADRA and a disability certificate issued by DEPD.
4. Candidates must hold a valid motorcycle driving license.
5. The applicants should apply for the post of Monitoring Assistant (BS-14) against the concerned District, subject to availability of vacancy. (Lists of district wise vacancy positions are also uploaded on official website of SE&LD).
6. Statutory quotas will be maintained as per applicable Rules and Policy (i.e. Minority, Disable etc.) of Government of Sindh.
7. After completing the online application, candidates can download a system-generated challan of Rs.1500/- (Rupees Fifteen Hundred Only). The challan can be paid at any ABL Bank Ltd branch or via the MyABL App. Alternatively, candidates may use the 1Bill reference number to pay through the internet banking portal of any 1Bill-linked bank. (This fee is non-refundable).
8. All relevant documents must be issued on or prior the closing date. Eligibility criteria regarding age, qualifications, and domicile will be determined as of the advertisement's last date.
9. The submitted domicile and PRC-D with the application shall be considered as final. No change will be entertained, thereafter, on any account whatsoever.
10. Incomplete applications and documents shall not be entertained/processed after the closing date.
11. Providing fictitious, exaggerated or misleading information shall result in rejection of application and termination of employment at any stage. 12. Passing the written/objective test alone, shall not guarantee the job. The applicant shall have to fulfil all other terms and conditions as per policy notified by the SE&LD.
13. The SE&LD reserves the right to add, delete, or re-allocate vacancy position of Monitoring Assistant (BS-14).
14. General age relaxation shall be applicable as per the Government of Sindh rules.
15. The candidates already in Government Service fulfilling the condition of eligibility criteria can also apply through the proper channel.
16. Candidates are advised to use only their original mobile number in the online application form and avoid mentioning numbers converted to any other network.
17. The date, time, and venue of the test shall be intimated through online call letters, SMS, and the website of SIBA Testing Services (STS). Further, all the updates and notifications about the test date, admit slips, result announcements or any other information shall be uploaded on the STS portal/website as well. In this regard, candidates must visit the portal/website from time to time.
18. No query shall be entertained one week before the schedule of the written test.
19. No TA/DA will be given for test/interview.
20. Candidates can lodge their queries or objections by calling 071-5644200 or emailing at sts@iba-suk.edu.pk. They may also access the designated query section on the STS portal.
21. The last date for online application & challan submission is January 31st, 2025.

PROJECT MANAGER
SIBA TESTING SERVICES

INF-KRY No.141/2025

STS SIBA Testing Services
Sukkur IBA University, Nisar Ahmed Siddiqui Road, Sukkur.
Call Center/Help Desk Ph# 071-5644200
UAN: 071 (111-785-422) Fax: 071-5804419
For updates and announcements http://www.iba-suk.edu.pk/sts/announcements

SHAHEED ZULFIQAR ALI BHUTTO UNIVERSITY OF LAW

'CORRIGENDUM'

With reference to "Career Opportunities" advertisement published in Daily Jang (Urdu), Dawn (English) and Awami Awaz (Sindhi) on 24th October 2024. The post of Controller of Examinations, BPS-19 will be read as "Regular Basis" instead of (3-Year Tenure).

S.No	DESIGNATION	QUALIFICATION	EXPERIENCE	MAX AGE
01.	Controller of Examinations BPS-19 (Regular Basis)	LL.M/LLB/M.A/M.Sc/MBA at least 2nd Class	10 years' experience of administration in a responsible position of which at least five years shall be in a post in BPS-18 or above. Preference will be given to candidates with experience in the conduct of the Examinations in a University/Degree College	[illegible]

Phone No. 0243-640160
Fax No. 0234-720066
E-mail: [illegible]

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
PIR ABDUL QADIR SHAH JEELANI
INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES GAMBAT

TENDER CANCELLATION

The NIT No. INF/KRY: 2882/2024 dated 13-09-2024 ***Serial No.04 "Construction of Additional 3rd floor on Girls hostel"*** and ***Serial 05 "Fixation of MS Grill shade and fabrication of bridge"*** was published in leading newspapers on dated. 13-09-2024, which was due on 01-10-2024 is hereby cancelled as per SPPRA Rule.

Director
Pir Abdul Qadir Shah Jeelani
Institute of Medical Sciences Gambat

INF-KRY No. 138/25

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SMI UNIVERSITY

NO. SMIU/PC/MC/Pack-3(RW)/Tend/2025/06 — Karachi, Dated: 7th January 2025

TENDER NOTICE

Sindh Madressatul Islam University, Karachi invites e-bids through E-Pak Acquisition & Disposal System (EPADS) on standard bidding documents from interested contractors / firms registered in the required PEC category and specialization as mentioned in column (7) below for the following works. The tender shall be based on the single stage — one envelope procedure under Rule No. 46 (1) of SPPRA Rules 2010 (amended up-to-date). Bidding documents can be viewed / downloaded from https://portalsindh.eprocure.gov.pk/#/ and also available and viewed from SMI University's website www.smiu.edu.pk

S. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (Rs. in Millions)	Bid Security	Tender Fee	Time of Completion	PEC Category & Specialization
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
01.	Development of Sindh Madressatul Islam University (SMIU) Campus at Education City Malir, Karachi (Water supply system including tube wells)	Rs. 24.318 (M)	2% of Bid Price	Rs. 10,000/-	09 Months	C-6 and above with specialization code CE09
02.	Development of Sindh Madressatul Islam University (SMIU) Campus at Education City Malir, Karachi (Road Network including Sewerage system and storm drain)	Rs. 102.468 (M)	2% of Bid Price	Rs. 10,000/-	09 Months	C-4 and above with specialization codes CE01 and CE09
03.	Development of Sindh Madressatul Islam University (SMIU) Campus at Education City Malir, Karachi (Gate office & boundary wall remaining work)	Rs. 74.192 (M)	2% of Bid Price	Rs. 10,000/-	09 Months	C-5 and above with specialization codes CE09, CE10 and EE04

Electronic Bids should be submitted through EPAD only. Interested bidders are required to get registered themselves on EPAD system in the link https://sindh.eprocure.gov.pk/#/supplier/registration for submission of electronic bids.

1- The bids prepared in accordance with the instruction given in the bidding document must be submitted on EPADS only by **Tuesday, 28th January 2025, by 02:30 PM.** The original instrument of tender fee and **bid security 2%** of the bid price in shape of **Call Deposit / Pay Order / Demand Draft / Bank Guarantee issued by any scheduled bank of Pakistan** in favour of Sindh Madressatul Islam University Karachi, must reach the Procurement agency in sealed envelope prior to the deadline for the opening of the e-bids. The bids will be opened on the same day at **03:00 PM** before Procurement Committee, representative of consultant and the bidders or their authorized representatives who wish to be present, in the conference room No. 3, SMIU Main City Campus Aiwan-e-Tijarat Road Behind Habib Bank Plaza, Karachi.

2- **Eligibility Criteria:**

a. Valid registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) in prescribed category and the relevant field of specialization of work.

b. Registration with income tax department (NTN certificates) with activated status in Federal Board of Revenue.

c. Registration certificate of Sindh Revenue Board Government of Sindh STN Certificate.

d. **Experience and past performance for each work:**
Experience in similar nature of work(s) executed during the last five years.
i. At least one similar nature of work having minimum cost 80% of the estimated cost of the work. OR
ii. At least two similar natures of works each having minimum cost 50% of the estimated cost.

e. **Financial:-**
Average Annual Financial Turn over not less than equivalent cost of the scheme / project during last five years.

f. List of machinery and equipment available.

g. An affidavit certificate that the firm at present is not black listed by Government / Semi Government / Autonomous / Private Bodies and that the firm has not been involved in any litigation and arbitration with Government / Semi Government / Autonomous / Private bodies.

h. In case of joint ventures, same conditions to be fulfilled by both the firms.

i. Affidavit with effect that all the documents / particulars information furnished are true correct.

j. All documents from Sr. No. "a" to "i" mentioned in the eligibility Criteria of this NIT will be examined at the time of opening of tender.

3- Bid Validity Period is 90 days.

4- Conditional bid and bid without earnest money shall not be considered.

5- Procuring Agency reserves the right to reject all or any bids subject to the relevant provisions of SPPRA Rules-2010 (amended up-to-date).

6- In case any unforeseen situation resulting in closure of office on the date of opening or if Government declares holiday, the tender shall be submitted / opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.

Project Coordinator
SMIU Malir Campus, Karachi.
Tel # 021-99217504 (Ext. # 260)
Email: [illegible]@smiu.edu.pk
Cell # 03332610001

INF-KRY No. 140/25

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Energy crisis in Gilgit-Baltistan dominates Senate body meeting

Tourism boom in region hampered by climate, infrastructure challenges

By Jamil Nagri

GILGIT: A parliamentary committee on Monday discussed power, development and tourism projects in Gilgit-Baltistan, focusing primarily on addressing the region's electricity crisis.

A meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, chaired by its chairman Senator Sajid Mir at the Parliament House in Islamabad, was informed that GB faced a significant power deficit, with summer demand reaching 254MW against a production capacity of just 122MW. This gap underscores the urgent need for new energy projects.

Senator Zeeshan Khanzada, a member of the committee, highlighted power as one of the region's biggest challenges. "We must explore solar projects as a solution, particularly for remote areas where hydroelectricity is not feasible," he suggested.

The meeting also discussed financial allocations for both the Annual Development Programme (ADP) and Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) for the fiscal year 2024-25 for GB.

The ADP has been allocated Rs20 billion, with Rs7.15bn already disbursed. However, the committee noted an outstanding throw-forward of Rs138bn for the ADP, underscoring the long-term nature of these investments.

The PSDP allocation for the same period stands at Rs13.5bn, including Rs4bn earmarked for prime minister's initiatives. The PSDP has an outstanding throw-forward of Rs99bn, reflecting the scale and ambition of the federal government's development commitments to the region.

Among the key energy projects under development are the 54MW hydropower plant in Attabad and 34.5MW hydropower plant in Skardu, which are expected to significantly address the region's energy needs and provide clean power to local communities.

The GB additional chief secretary briefed the committee on international collaboration in the region, highlighting China's active involvement in critical sectors such as energy, tourism, agriculture, trade and special economic zones.

However, he pointed out that Chinese investors have raised concerns over the lack of sovereign guarantees for power projects and the high tariffs in GB's energy sector, which have deterred investment.

Tourism

During the meeting, GB Chief Secretary Abrar Ahmed Mirza highlighted the rising number of tourists in the region, but said that despite this growth, the region faced challenges related to climate change, sustainability and inadequate infrastructure.

To address these issues, GB has developed 10 management plans focused on environmental conservation, with feasibility studies underway for ski resorts, air safaris, and a cable car service. However, the lack of coordination in the National Finance Commission formula has posed barriers to completing these projects.

The region's airports also face constraints. Skardu airport, though larger, accommodates only 10 flights during the summer, while Gilgit airport struggles with even fewer connections, the meeting was told.

Senator Mir emphasised the significant incentives available for tourism investment in GB, including its status as a tax-free zone, low royalties, affordable electricity, investor facilitation, and a visa-on-arrival policy for citizens of 65 countries.

The committee also recommended granting observer representation to GB and Azad Kashmir in national constitutional discussions to better address their unique needs.

MUZAFFARABAD: Members of the Pasban-i-Hurriyat on Monday stage a demonstration against Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to held Kashmir, where he inaugurated a tunnel connecting it with the disputed territory of Ladakh.—Tariq Naqash

Iran's envoy, CM discuss steps to boost trade, educational ties

Ambassador offers scholarships for Pakistani students, expresses desire to launch other programmes

By Saleem Shahid

QUETTA: Iran's ambassador to Pakistan, Dr Reza Amiri Moghaddam and Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti on Monday discussed steps to promote trade, educational and cultural relations between Pakistan and Iran.

The discussion took place when Iran's envoy, along with members of his delegation, called on Mr Bugti at the Chief Minister House here.

Mr Bugti welcomed Dr Moghaddam and members of his delegation and said that establishment of peace and order in the region would increase trade activities and curb smuggling and illegal trade of goods between Pakistan and Iran.

The chief minister said that it is the need of the hour to further strengthen trade, cultural and social relations between the two brotherly countries.

He said that trade relations between Balochistan and Iran would be promoted at different levels to boost up legal trade activities between the two countries and to curb smuggling.

Mr Bugti said that effective measures would be taken, in coordination with the federal government, for resolution of problems being faced by traders of the two countries in legal trade activities.

The chief minister said that the establishment of law and order would increase trade activities between the two countries and this would also end smuggling of goods.

In this regard, Mr Bugti said, a meeting will be held in Islamabad in which representatives of the chambers of commerce will be invited.

The chief minister assured members of Iran's delegation that no legal commercial container or truck of Iranian traders would face any problem in Balochistan.

For timely resolution of such problems, he said, the Iranian Consulate should appoint one of its representative who will be in touch with relevant authorities of the Balochistan government to help traders.

The Iranian ambassador offered cooperation in various fields of social development including increasing trade volume, educational scholarships, and technical education.

Dr Moghaddam offered scholarships for Pakistani students and expressed Iran's desire to launch various programmes for Pakistani students.

The CM appreciated the offer and said that the Iranian Consulate and officials of the Balochistan government would jointly prepare a plan for the scholarship programme.

Mr Bugti said that under this offer, a special educational scholarship programme would also be launched for the Hazara community living in Quetta.

During the meeting, the Iranian envoy invited the Balochistan chief minister to visit Iran.

Mr Bugti accepted the invitation of Dr Moghaddam and said he would soon visit Iran along with a delegation.

During the meeting, the Iranian envoy informed the chief minister about the appointment of a Baloch governor in Sistan-Baluchestan province of Iran.

The chief minister welcomed the Iran's move and termed it a good omen.

At the end of the meeting, the two leaders reiterated their resolve to further promote bilateral relations and exchanged souvenirs.

Highway blockades disrupt traffic in Balochistan

GWADAR: While traffic between Gwadar and Karachi was suspended for at least 24 hours due to a gas leak from a tanker carrying liquid petroleum gas, the Quetta-Karachi highway remained blocked due to protests against the recent arrests in Zehri area.

The coastal highway was closed by authorities as a precautionary measure to avoid any untoward incident, as there was a gas leak from the tanker heading from Iran to Karachi.

Meanwhile, the Quetta-Karachi highway was blocked at Anjira cross and Surab area by protesters demonstrating against arrests made in the Zehri area. The blockade, which lasted over 40 hours, caused significant disruptions to traffic, stranding hundreds of vehicles, including passenger coaches and trucks.

The local administration successfully negotiated with the protesters, and the highway was reopened late in the evening, restoring traffic flow.—Staff Correspondent

27 terrorists killed in Kachhi

Continued from Page 1

wake of last week incidents in Zehri and Kolpur. In Zehri tehsil, a large number of armed men had attacked government offices after taking the control of main bazaar and overpowering some security personnel. During their stay in the area, they burnt Levies Force station, offices of the municipal committee and Nadra, besides looting a bank.

The terrorists also blocked the Quetta-Sibi highway and attacked a Levies post in the Dasht area of Mastung and snatched weapons from Levies officials.

Disciplinary action ordered against striking doctors

By Our Staff Correspondent

QUETTA: The provincial health department on Monday swung into action against the ongoing strike by doctors at government-run hospitals, directing the authorities to take measures against the protesting medics under the Balochistan Employees' Efficiency and Discipline Act (Beeda).

On the other hand, doctors continued their boycott of OPDs in government hospitals across the province to protest the arrest of their leaders.

According to the Young Doctors Association, Grand Health Alliance Chairman Dr Bahar Shah and Dr Hafeez Mandokhail were arrested at Civil Hospital Quetta late on Saturday night. They were picked up on charges of attacking and assaulting Director General Health Balochistan Dr Ameen Mandokhail.

A health department notification on Monday directed the district health officers and hospital heads implement the Beeda and Discipline Act against the striking doctors.

The notification asked the officers and employees not to participate in strikes within the premises of government hospitals.

Any officer or employee found supporting or facilitating the strike will face disciplinary action.

The health department notification emphasised that any form of protest or strike on the premises of any government hospital would not be tolerated, and strict disciplinary measures would be enforced under Beeda.

It noted that strikes and protests disrupt essential health services and negatively impact public welfare.

Security personnel, including private security firms, were instructed to remain vigilant and perform their duties effectively. Any negligence in security will not be tolerated.

The doctors' boycott includes OPD services, elective operations, and other services at Quetta's Civil Hospital, causing difficulties for patients, especially those who came for treatment from remote areas.

No closure yet in £190m case against Imran

Continued from Page 1

the court by 11am. He further said that the court official agreed and asked them to appear at the said time. The senior official mentioned by the PTI leader was approached by *Dawn* to confirm this claim, but despite multiple attempts, he did not respond.

According to Mr Chaudhry, when the PTI legal team, comprising Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Salman Akram Raja, and himself, reached the prison, the judge had already left. Due to the absence of his legal team, PTI founder Imran Khan did not appear in court. Bushra Bibi also arrived after the judge had left.

Besides Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi, property tycoon Malik Riaz, his son Ali Riaz Malik, former accountability advisor Mirza Shahzad Akbar, Zulfi Bukhari, Farhat Shahzadi alias Farah Gogi, and lawyer Ziaul Mustafa Naseem are named in the reference. They have been declared absconders by the court because of their persistent absence.

'No deal'

Reacting to the development, PTI Chairman Gohar Ali Khan asserted that the postponement was "not the outcome of any deal". "Attempts are being made to give the impression that a deal is being done. There is no deal. The trial court's attitude towards us [PTI] has been unjust," the PTI interim chairman, flanked by Mr Raja, told reporters outside Adiala.

He said that before they entered the Adiala jail, the judge had already decided to postpone the hearing until January 17. Mr Raja, referring to the ongoing talks between the PTI and the government to defuse political tensions, clarified that it was incorrect if anyone wanted to imply that the decision was delayed because of those. "We will not enter into any deal," the PTI leader said.

Barrister Gohar added, "Imran has said that the Al-Qadir Trust case decision should be announced. We can see it written on the walls that we have been repeatedly wronged."

Meanwhile, Aleema Khan, sister of the PTI chief, claimed the verdict was to be announced at 10:30am, adding that she reached there on time. "Some were told that the decision would be announced at 11am," she said while speaking to reporters outside Adiala.

She added that Imran had been waiting for the verdict in the case for about a month as he wanted to appeal the case in a high court.

"I think the government is under a lot of pressure because the entire world is watching," she said.

Bushra's bail rejected

A local court rejected Bushra Bibi's interim bail in three cases related to the PTI's protest on November 26. The court extended her bail in another case.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Muhammad Afzal Majoka presided over the hearing of pre-arrest bail applications in three cases.In a separate hearing before Judge Chaudhry Aamir Zia, Bushra Bibi's lawyer argued for her pre-arrest bail in another case. After reserving its decision, the court extended Bushra Bibi's interim bail in the fourth case and accepted her exemption from attendance. The next hearing is scheduled for January 23.

Sanjdi mine owners booked; one body yet to be found

QUETTA: The body of the last victim of the coal mine tragedy in Sanjdi was not recovered till Monday, four days after the accident.

Police registered a case against the owners and the management on Monday on a complaint filed by Mines Inspector Abdul Rashid.

The FIR named Sheikh Abdul Aziz and Hayat Khan as the accused.

Twelve miners died after an explosion of methane gas in the mine on Jan 9.

"The miner whose body has not been recovered yet was working somewhere in the middle of the collapsed mine when it caved in," Ghani Baloch, the chief inspector of Mines, told *Dawn*. Rescue teams have been able to retrieve the bodies of 11 labourers from two different layers in the mine.

CM's promise

Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said on Monday that his government would take measures to protect workers in the mining sector.

He told Dr Ibadullah, the Leader of the Opposition in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, the provincial government would give financial assistance to families of workers who lose their lives in accidents. "We will also update safety measures in order to avert mining accidents."

The chief minister said since mine workers were the backbone of Balochistan's economy, it was the government's duty to address their grievances.—Staff Correspondent

Man killed in Turbat bomb blast

By Behram Baloch

GWADAR: A man was killed on Monday when the bomb he was trying to plant at the Gwadar-Quetta Highway in Turbat district exploded, police said.

Officials identified the deceased as Manzoor Ahmed, who worked as a watchman in the health department, Turbat.

Police claimed that the man was planting the explosive device in the Josak area. However, the device exploded during planting.

No other details were immediately available.

Tempers flare during year's first NA sitting

Continued from Page 1

proceedings.

At the very start of Question Hour, a PTI lawmaker, instead of asking a question, raised the issue of the Nov 26 protest. Throughout the session, PTI lawmakers kept raising slogans about the alleged shooting at D-Chowk that supposedly claimed the lives of several protesters. PTI members also staged a walkout during Question Hour.

'Smokescreen'

The federal ministers for defence and information responded to the party's outbursts during Question Hour. Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said the PTI was using dialogue as a smokescreen, and questioned whether talks were possible in such an environment.

"They [PTI leaders] say that I am against negotiations. They do not want to talk, as behaviour demonstrated by them in the National Assembly will not help in making the talks successful," the defence minister said.

He said the NA speaker himself and a former prime minister, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, were involved in talks, and the most important thing was to ensure the smooth functioning of the house.

He said the PTI used to say the government had no authority and there was no use in talking to the ruling coalition.

Mr Asif advised the PTI to directly negotiate with those who they thought wielded actual power. He observed that the chair extended courtesy to the opposition leader out of the way by giving the floor to him during the question hour, but he misused the opportunity.

Information Minister Attaullah Tarar also lambasted the PTI, alleging that the former ruling party through their 'agents' inside and outside the country built a fake narrative on social media about the Nov 26 crackdown. He pointed out that the PTI leaders themselves had differences over the number of deaths in Islamabad on November 26.

Mr Tarar said that the PTI leadership should remember the killing of innocent people of a family in Sahiwal during their tenure.

The minister also brought up the crackdown on the TLP in Lahore and the stampede in Multan's Qasim Bagh during the PTI government.

A PTI member, Iqbal Afridi, tried to scuttle the information minister's speech by pointing out a lack of quorum, but the house was found to be in order.

Agha Rafiullah of the PPP also criticised the attitude of the PTI members, saying that no one should expect that they would speak about issues faced by the public.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)

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ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANT (01 Position)

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For full details, how to apply, job description and specifications, visit the following website:

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TENDER NOTICE

Bids are invited for the following:

Tender No.	Description	Closing Date/ Time
PD/P&C/PT/29909/25	Supply of flanges	03 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/P&C/PT/29912/25	Supply of blind flanges	03 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/P&C/PT/29913/25	Supply of elbows	03 Feb. 2025 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	Tender Published On	Revised Closing Date/ Time
PD/P&C/PT/29797/24	Supply of low temperature carbon steel pipes	26 Dec. 2024	06 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/P&C/PT/29798/24	Supply of stainless-steel pipes	26 Dec. 2024	06 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/P&C/PT/29799/24	Supply of stainless-steel valves	26 Dec. 2024	06 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/P&C/PT/29796/24	Supply of carbon steel pipes	26 Dec. 2024	06 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/P&C/PT/29815/24	Supply of analyzers	31 Dec. 2024	06 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/P&C/PT/29816/24	Supply of level switch & level transmitter	31 Dec. 2024	06 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/P&C/PT/29817/24	Supply of pressure indicator	31 Dec. 2024	06 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/P&C/PT/29810/24	Supply of duplex stainless-steel pipes	31 Dec. 2024	06 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/P&C/PT/29811/24	Supply of duplex stainless-steel pipes (NACE compliant)	31 Dec. 2024	06 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/P&C/PT/29812/24	Supply of carbon steel & low temperature carbon steel valves	31 Dec. 2024	06 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/P&C/PT/29813/24	Supply of duplex SS valves	31 Dec. 2024	06 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/P&C/PT/29814/24	Supply of duplex SS valves (NACE compliant)	31 Dec. 2024	06 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/E&C/PT/29327/24	2D Dynamite & vibroseis seismic data acquisition and in-field processing services in Kalat West Block, Balochistan	05 Nov. 2024	11 Feb. 2025 1500 hrs.
PD/GEN/PT/29823/24	Supply of PCB for EPABX system etc	31 Dec. 2024	24 Jan. 2025 1500 hrs.

Bidders who have already submitted/sent 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.

Corrigendum & Extension in Bid Closing & Opening Date

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

PPRAS Ref. No.	Tender No.	Description	Tender Published On	Revised Closing Date/ Time	Revised Opening Date/ Time
TS 552419 E	PD/P&C/PT/29597/24	Supply and installation of produced water transfer (feed) pumps	05 Dec. 2024	30 Jan. 2025 1500 hrs.	30 Jan. 2025 1530 hrs.

Corrigendum due to change in payment terms in the RFQ and ITB document.

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

Tender notice / detailed instructions are available on PPRA website at **www.ppra.org.pk** Tender documents are available online and bids are also required to be submitted online through PPL's e-procurement portal at **https://eprocurement.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.

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DAWN

Left behind

FOR a country that produced the world's youngest Nobel laureate for championing girls' education, Pakistan's statistics make for tragic reading. Some 22.8m children are out of school — roughly equal to the entire population of Sri Lanka — and the female literacy rate languishes at 49pc. Last week's International Conference on Girls' Education in Muslim Communities in Islamabad laid bare these truths, though solutions remained elusive. The gathering had a notable absentee. The Taliban regime in Afghanistan, where girls are banned from secondary education, declined to attend. This was not surprising: its interpretation of religion appears mediaeval; even Muslim societies of yore valued learning more highly than today's Taliban do.

Pakistan's own educational woes, while not so extreme, are scarcely less worrying. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's declaration of an "education emergency" joins a long list of similar pronouncements that have produced more hot air than actual learning. We spend a paltry 2.5pc of GDP on education, well below the Unesco-recommended 4pc. In contrast, Malaysia and Turkey, fellow Muslim-majority nations, boast female literacy rates of above 90pc. Bangladesh has surged ahead with over 70pc of its women able to read and write. The economics of ignorance are stark. In an era where AI and quantum computing dominate conversations about the future, Pakistan's tech sector remains stunted thanks to its educational shortcomings. The World Economic Forum ranks the country near the bottom in educational attainment and economic participation — a double whammy that threatens to leave us behind in the global knowledge economy.

Some bright spots exist. The Danish schools initiative in Punjab, which provides quality education in underdeveloped rural areas, shows what targeted intervention can achieve. The newly established Pakistan Education Endowment Fund aims to support children from low-income families in higher education. But such initiatives are few. The conference concluded with the signing of the Islamabad Declaration, a 17-point document that recognises girls' education as both a "religious obligation" and a social necessity. The declaration will be presented to the UN Security Council, though cynics might wonder whether it will join the growing pile of well-intentioned but ineffective international commitments. Malala Yousafzai, who attended the conference, put it bluntly: 12.5m Pakistani girls remain out of school. Ms Yousafzai, who survived a TTP assassination attempt in 2012 for advocating girls' education, is a powerful symbol of both Pakistan's educational challenges and its potential. But symbols alone cannot teach children to read. The path forward is clear: substantially increase education spending, dismantle cultural barriers to girls' education, and transform declarations into concrete action. Until then, Pakistan risks condemning another generation to ignorance — and itself to economic irrelevance in an increasingly knowledge-based world.

Mining tragedies

TWO recent deadly mining tragedies in Balochistan have once again exposed the hazardous nature of work in this sector, and the lack of safety protocols for miners. Two workers have been confirmed dead after a coalmine collapsed in Harnai on Sunday, while 11 bodies have been recovered from a mine in Sanjdi near Quetta. The labourers were trapped thousands of feet underground in the latter incident when a methane gas explosion occurred on Jan 9. While the mining sector can bring significant riches to owners, the lives of those who toil underground doing back-breaking work appear to come cheap. Last year, too, we saw a number of fatal incidents, mostly in Balochistan; 12 miners perished in a gas explosion in Harnai in the deadliest accident. Each time such tragic incidents occur, the state promises to look into the matter. Even after the latest incidents, the provincial mines and minerals department has promised an inquiry. If past precedent is any guide, these unfortunate episodes will soon be forgotten, and the colliers, who live a hand-to-mouth existence, will continue to risk their lives in the mines.

It does not have to be this way. In fact, Pakistan's mining sector could benefit if workers were protected by adequate safety protocols and compensated well for their work, and received adequate compensation in case of injury or accident. The Pakistan Central Mines Labour Federation has demanded all of these. It has called for ratification of ILO-C 176 — the Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 — as well as awareness programmes focusing on workers' safety. Activists add that the state has failed to enforce the relevant regulations. Moreover, the IndustriALL Global Union says Pakistan's workers lack health facilities and medical care in the vicinity of mines. If these facilities were made available at the mining sites, many lives could possibly be saved if affected workers were administered immediate medical care. But sadly, greedy owners and a callous state care little for these toilers. This attitude must change; those mine owners found to be cutting corners in implementing safety standards must be penalised while the state should ratify ILO-C 176 to signal that it values the health and safety of miners. There is no doubt that mining is a dangerous profession, but attempts could be made to minimise the hazards.

Winter sports

FOR a country with huge winter sports potential, events in Pakistan are few and far between. Therefore, the start of the seventh season of the Karakoram Winterfade is welcome. It shows that the organisers have done well to keep interest afloat and promote new talent. Ice hockey on the frozen Altit pool in Hunza draws a huge crowd and it was heartening to see corporates getting involved in the opening match as Allied Bank and HBL clashed. At a time when many corporates have downsized or closed down their sports wings, this is a positive sign. However, that is where it all ends. For a country blessed with three of the world's most famous mountain ranges and areas where there is snow almost the whole year, Pakistan has produced precious few Winter Olympians. Only three skiers, namely Mohammad Abbas, Mohammad Karim and Syed Human, have represented Pakistan at the top winter sports event. Ice hockey's popularity is growing, but not much is being done to promote the sport. Similar is the case with snowboarding, which is popular among residents in the north. For now, only local talent participates in sports festivals to prove their mettle.

Last week, the Pakistan Winter Sports Federation announced its annual calendar, which features just one snowboarding championship. There is nothing for ice hockey while ski events dominate. Once again, skiers will lead Pakistan's participation at the Asian Winter Games in China next month, with Karim taking part in the alpine skiing event and Mohammad Shabbir in cross-country skiing. Other winter sports are lagging behind. There is plenty of talent but very little has been done to hone it to allow superior athletes to emerge and compete against the very best in the world. Winter sports athletes need not only specialised training but also the best equipment. If the government can provide a framework to ensure their availability, Pakistan can realise its winter sports potential.

OPINION

BY ARIFA NOOR

Credibility crisis

For one side, social media is full of lies; for the other, mainstream media is biased.

IS the age of old or legacy media over? At times, it feels so, be it in Pakistan or in the United States, in light of recent political events. *Saat samandar paar* (abroad) Donald Trump and his wingman Elon Musk are no fans of the fuddy-duddies in traditional newsrooms and seem to prefer podcasts and X. At home in Pakistan, there are similar trends but views are sharply divided between two camps.

Indeed, as with politics, the polarisation in Pakistan has also affected views and analyses of what ails the media. For one side, social media is full of lies, misguiding its viewers and listeners. For the other, mainstream media is far too biased and social media provides a voice to the vulnerable who are ignored by the former. And those in power adhere firmly to the first view that social media is simply a menace to be controlled. No wonder then that we are constantly being lectured about the pitfalls of and the evil that is social media. We are also being deprived of it, more and more frequently, through administrative measures.

In addition, the donor culture that prevails in Islamabad has offered a shinier First World solution to our Third World woes with social media — fact-check! From mainstream media houses to donor-funded initiatives, we now have set-ups that are 'checking facts' by authenticating videos, images and statements. However, from the point of view of the people, there is merit to the second argument — social media is flourishing because of the state-imposed censorship on mainstream media, due to which it has lost credibility.

Indeed, social media has filled the gap in information.

First, this gap was created by mainstream media sacrificing facts for the sake of views. With celebrity anchors and a proliferation of talk shows, the focus shifted to prime time shows rather than news. And the show formats (guests from parties plus the host) meant there was very little space for reporting. Instead, the air was filled with the opinion of guests as well as analysts and even the host. This created the perception of mainstream media being dominated by opinion. At the same time, news organisations spent less and less on reporting. As a result, news bulletins have been reduced to simply providing a rundown of the various statements of various government and party officials as well as 'stories' provided by the subjects themselves (for instance, political parties themselves tend to provide accounts of what happened in an internal meeting, which will then be 'run' as an exclusive). This has also allowed media owners to avoid the wrath of any player that has a say in the advertisements the channels are so dependent on.

Second, the pressures of a multilayered censorship have further cemented the perception that mainstream media doesn't tell the 'truth'. Blanket coverage of parties, organisations and people, as well as the pressure to put out distorted views and news, has caused this, compelling more and more people to turn to social media.

For instance, the blanket bans on or very limited coverage of the various protests in the country means that those who want to find out about the issue have no choice but to turn to social media where unverified news will also reach those interested. This is as true of, say, a rally by the PTM or PTI as judicial politics.

In addition, there is also a significant chunk of viewers/ listeners who want more variety than the one kind of talk show offered by television — they are moving to social media for serious, lengthy conversations available in podcasts.

If this diagnosis is accepted, the prescription will also be different from what Islamabad is offering as a solution. In other words, if the state wants to discourage people from listening to social media or the lies in it, mainstream media has to report independently, gain credibility and then provide the fact-check.

For this, the state and political parties will have to step back. This has happened in the past; the Pakistani state and its relationship with the media is not a linear story. As the pendulum swings between the establishment and civilian power, the space for the media also shrinks and expands. And chances are that this time around, it will prove to be no different. As political space opens up, so will the press gain room to breathe. Only then will it also be able to act as a counterweight to social media.

This is not to say that the state will only cede space under compulsion. One would do well to remember that it is also in the interest of the state. Because only a credible mainstream and legacy media, which is able to report fearlessly on the state and the government, will be able to fact-check. A hampered and cowed media, as it exists at the moment, cannot.

Second, a credible mainstream media is essential for the state itself to have credibility. One is not possible without the other; be it for domestic legitimacy or international. After all, it was not without reason that the Kargil conflict and its coverage by India's burgeoning private media led to the decision in Pakistan to allow private news channels. Pakistan realised then that a state-owned PTV could not match the noise created by an entire private industry, or the goodwill it created domestically as well. And more recently, the operation in Swat would not have enjoyed the support it did across the length and breadth of Pakistan had it not been for the journalists who covered militancy in the valley or the operation against it.

Eventually, those in power will have to accept this. Without a stronger mainstream media, efforts to counter social media and fake news will be no different than propping up a government that enjoys no democratic mandate. ■

The writer is a journalist.

BY JAWED NAQVI

As stags dazzled by headlights

LOS Angeles is burning, singeing the rich and the homeless in its wake. Gaza is in cinders, leaving an unconscionable toll of a perpetually violated people, but not without wounding and unnerving the tormentors. The fire and the slaughter are both manmade tragedies and are linked, though difficult to accept as such.

As the stag is caught in the headlights of the approaching milk van, which crushes the animal in the end to leave it crippled or dead while keeping the delivery deadline before daybreak, the world is standing frozen on the crossroads of a hurtling catastrophe. It doesn't see nature's wrath it has invoked with at least a century-old abuse of the planet.

Worse, it remains sanguine about the supremacy of nuclear fission and gunpowder as protection against the oncoming calamity. Israel is emblematic of the tragedy. Created as a home for survivors from Nazi ghettos, it is today a replica of Nazi Germany. As the Nazis rationalised their thirst for blood and land with European race theories, the Jewish elite embraced Zionism and took a leaf from their torturers to covet Palestinian land with claims of divine exclusivism.

Imperialism, which transformed Israel into its unsinkable ship, doesn't always see the need for divine excuses. It has set its eyes, for example, on its own allies in Greenland and Canada. Its entrenched interest lies crucially in denial of climate change although the hunt for critical resources is on in case someone read it wrong.

On a different scale, in India, corporates close to the government are being facilitated by the state to stake a claim on the nation's natural resources. They are cornering forests and water resources and displacing the indigenous inhabitants. They care little that the Himalayan ice is melting, rivers are running dry and a water-sharing treaty between India and Pakistan is being weaponised. There seems no room to sidestep the milk van, which is speeding like China's bullet train to Tibet but with no guardrails to deter the stag's botched fate. The global stage has ingredients of Greek tragedies that lay low the protagonists with speeding inevitability. Occasionally, it's luck that runs out on the hero. Among the least concerned by the mayhem is Donald Trump.

It would, of course, have been better for the world if its joys and sorrows were not determined by America's four-yearly mood swings and its pursuit of perennially shifting 'core interests'. But that's not the way the world is structured. Trump's second coming starting next week brings with it a more extreme variant of the worry. The core interests have suddenly shifted to terrifying claims on allies, making them palpably nervous. Or to be clearer, Trump brings worry for some and hope for others. The variation is evident.

While the Chinese president expectedly turned down the invitation to Trump's Jan 20 swearing in, the Indian prime minister is reportedly disconsolate at not being invited, that too after exerting efforts including his foreign minister's alleged stakeout in Washington, D.C. Trump has raised close to $200 million from the coming inaugural, says the *Fortune* magazine.

> Donald Trump brings worry for some and hope for others. The variation is evident.

According to Indian reports, the foreign minister and not Narendra Modi has been invited to represent India. The grovelling is made worse by an absurd fact of history whereby Prime Minister Modi had publicly canvassed — to the world's astonishment and to many an Indians' embarrassment — for Trump's re-election, which he lost. During Modi's recent visit to the US, however, reports said Trump was expecting to see him, presumably to raise handy electoral support from the mostly Democratic Indian diaspora. Modi apparently miscalculated the election outcome and didn't meet Trump.

There are greater worries stemming from and hopes hinging on Trump's second presidency including in South Asia. Trump's overriding interest in the Global South is, of course, his fear of BRICS. It's difficult to see any South Asian country ditching the most promising alternative that BRICS has become to gun-toting US imperialism. At an individual level, there have been write-ups about Trump's soft corner for Imran Khan who, reports say, he could help get back his job. The story is more complex given the *quid pro quo* Trump would demand from those he favours: betraying BRICS.

There are accusations, and there are reasons to believe them, that the Biden administration waylaid Imran after he met Vladimir Putin in Moscow. Richard Grenell, a close associate of Trump, did, however, publicly demand the release of Imran Khan.

Bangladesh would be on edge too, given the fact that the current dispensation in Dhaka is seen as being close to Hillary Clinton. Her India connection is remembered for the *bhangra* she danced at an Ambani wedding in 2018. That the tycoon shores up Modi is no secret. For the other regional countries, their ties with the US for the next four years would be measured through the prism of Sino-US relations, Trump's top priority.

The larger world, meanwhile, remains sandwiched between two bad choices. The outgoing Democratic administration has been neck-deep complicit in the horrific genocide in Gaza. It's equally responsible for setting off the slaughter underway in Ukraine by insulting and provoking Russia.

Many American opponents, including a friend who has applied to give up her US nationality, see Trump as an insolent real estate shark who became America's most divisive politician since the Civil War. They say he wants to make his country great again in its most dire sense. Therefore, he must first negotiate the charged-up opposition from the vast swathe of Americans suspicious of his toxic worldview. Trump's US is expected to be vertically divided over gender rights, climate change and race relations besides a host of tricky hairpin bends on domestic and global policies. Should the milk van keel over on a sharp bend, it would be the best reprieve the stranded stag could possibly hope for. ■

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OPINION

BY KHADIJA BAKHTIAR & WENDY KOPP

Systemic change

LIKE in many other places, education reforms have been frequently initiated in Pakistan with great vigour and sincerity, only to fizzle out as a disjointed set of inputs, further adding to the systemic inertia. A piecemeal approach to reforming components of the education system without aligning all stakeholders into a collective that works with student learning as the singular priority of systemic transformation has consistently failed the children.

Collective leadership must be the guiding principle for ensuring quality education for all. For the reforms to be sustainable, the entire ecosystem around education needs to be understood and transformed holistically.

Systems do not change by themselves; people change them. The theory of change practised worldwide is premised on arming people, especially the youth, inside the inequitable system to change it from within. We must develop cadres of people with ambition, capacity, and resilience to change the entire ecosystem around children. Collective leadership acts as a force multiplier for all stakeholders to affect the requisite change and ensure that every child gets the education and future they deserve regardless of their socioeconomic background.

One may ask, what is this ecosystem, and who are the actors or leaders who can affect these changes in their spheres of influence, sparking a chain reaction throughout the system, propelling the change forward, and creating a buzz around the education crisis similar to the one the global community has finally succeeded in creating around climate change?

A child's home, community, school, policy framework, and civil society are all part of their education ecosystem. Students do not walk into a classroom alone; they bring their family's socioeconomic circumstances, neighbourhood challenges, and the cultural makeup of their community with them. In other words, the heavy schoolbag everyone talks about may appear light compared to the social and emotional baggage that weighs children down and prevents learning.

Agency and leadership development at every level of this ecosystem is imperative to developing a pipeline of human resources capable of envisioning and implementing transformative change in education and all associated sectors. Neither the number of schools and the quality of their infrastructure, nor the textbooks and curriculum alone can ensure that all children realise their potential. Research worldwide bears witness that communities with voice and governance structures geared towards responsiveness and accountability drive need-appropriate allocation of resources, a simple way of ensuring the system is equitable.

Globally, seven out of 10 children in mid- to low-income countries cannot comprehend a written text by age 10. Pakistan is no different; most children are four to five years behind their grade levels in learning. Over the past 15 years, the Teach For All network has learned from more than 60 partner organisations across continents that it is not technical inputs that generate learning outcomes but a critical mass of committed stakeholders throughout the education ecosystem who work together to bring about the change required for learning gains.

This critical mass or collective leadership, as we call it, exercises agency from every level of the ecosystem. It is committed to social justice and believes in learning and leadership development among all students. It is locally rooted and diverse, inclusive of people who have experienced inequity and those who wield influence, and it has networks to collaborate and learn together.

The current system is not working for most children due to misplaced priorities, inefficiencies, and inequities.

> Collective leadership must be the guiding principle to ensure quality education for all.

Learning outcomes, critical thinking, problem-solving, life skills, empathy, social-emotional wellbeing, and whole child development have taken a back seat to brick-and-mortar models and exam scores.

Youth worldwide face multiple challenges, including climate change, AI-based automation, forced displacements, wars, internal conflicts, rising pushback against immigration, gender-based violence, and economic downturns leading to unemployment. To improve their chances of surmounting these hurdles, we must develop them as leaders of a better future for themselves, their communities, and our planet.

More than reforms that address a few existing challenges through technical interventions and without questioning the premise and logic of the system, a transformation is needed to make learning outcomes the centerpiece of the education system and shift the purpose, principles, and practices guiding it according to the present context and future challenges. ■

Khadija Bakhtiar is founder and CEO, Teach For Pakistan.
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BY JAMIL AHMAD

AI & environment

ARTIFICIAL intelligence (AI) is one of the most consequential technologies today. It is dramatically changing the world, altering business models and ushering in transformational development in education, healthcare, communication, and agriculture, to name a few. It has introduced efficiencies to our workplaces, improved industrial productivity, optimised resource use and reduced waste. AI's rapid rise is attributed to availability of data and a phenomenal growth in computational power.

AI has also furnished new tools to address environmental issues and climate change. From spotting smog in the sky and detecting deforestation on the land to sniffing microplastics in the ocean, AI's potential is tremendous. AI-based early warning systems predict cyclones, or rains and minimise the extent of damage. Forecasts about droughts and heatwaves provide timely information to vulnerable communities. AI-generated techniques in smart agriculture help farmers cope with water stress, prevent waste, optimise crop yield and ensure food security.

But AI can also harm our fragile planet.

AI is power hungry. Data collection, storage and application require an elaborate system of energy-intense data centres. A rise in AI deployment means a rise in the number of data centres with a consumerate demand for power. A recent International Energy Agency meeting noted that the "electricity demand for data centres and digital services would likely rise substantially in the next few years, despite continued improvements in the efficiency of hardware and software". To operate under controlled temperatures, data centres need air conditioning consuming more energy. The United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) recent 'Issues Note' on AI points out that the number of data centres worldwide has grown from 500,000 in 2012 to over eight million, with energy consumption doubling every four years.

With the current global energy mix will dominated by dirty fuels, this trend can translate into a spike in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In the process, our planet will be the unintended victim. Until a just energy transition is expedited, AI's carbon footprint is set to increase.

AI's appetite for power is matched by its thirst for water. To cool the heat generated by energy-intensive servers, large quantities of water are needed. Global demand for water for AI needs is estimated to reach four to six billion cubic metres by 2027.

AI's potential negative impact on environment goes further. Critical minerals are an essential part of hardware for digital technologies. Found mostly in high water-stress areas of developing countries, such mining, without efficient mitigation measures, puts more pressure on natural resources, damaging biodiversity, polluting air and spewing GHG. Waste and e-waste produced during the life cycle of digital technologies is another emerging problem.

Fortunately, these problems can be solved through a strategy that incorporates AI's pros and cons. The Summit of the Future last September acknowledged AI's promise to accelerate progress across the SDGs and address its possible negative impacts on the environment and other areas. But how can this promise be realised urgently? The missing link between AI's potential and a strategy to extract its full advantage is a regulatory regime.

International discourse on the issue has generally revolved around matters of privacy, and disinformation, etc, but environmental costs are now part of it. Governments and tech companies — leaders in deploying AI at scale — concede that environmental impacts will need to be included in any discussion and tackled urgently. An international governance system is needed for the gamut of subjects in the AI realm.

> A global dialogue on AI governance has been initiated.

The first steps were taken in this direction at the UN last year. A global dialogue on AI governance has been initiated and an independent international scientific panel established to produce evidence-based impact, risk and opportunity assessments. To aid these efforts, UNEP's 'Issues Note' contains several recommendations, including establishing standardised methods and metrics for measuring AI's environmental impact, and developing a mechanism for mandatory reporting and disclosure of AI's direct environmental impacts by tech companies, focusing on consumption of energy, water, mineral resources, carbon emissions and e-waste.

The environment became a victim of the consequential technology of the previous age — the Industrial Revolution, that is wreaking havoc to this day. If it becomes a victim of the runaway impacts of the consequential technology of this age, it can knock down the planet. For harnessing AI's full potential, it is imperative to assess and manage its associated risks and mould it into a shield for the planet. ■

The writer is director of intergovernmental affairs, United Nations Environment Programme.

FROM THE PAST PAGES OF DAWN

1975 | Fifty years ago

Middle East war

NEW YORK: US President Gerald Ford warned ... that prospects for war in the Middle East are very, very serious. An interview published in "Time" magazine quoted the President as adding that the seriousness "increases every day that we don't get some action for further progress in the settlement of some of those disputes". In the interview, he also declined to give Israel a guarantee ... and said: "We have to judge what is in our national interest above any and all other considerations." He also said that he backed the view expressed by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger who ... refused to rule out the use of force in the Middle East if the "free" or industrialised world faced strangulation. — News agencies

[Meanwhile, as reported by news agencies from Lahore,] Mir Afzal Khan, Federal Minister for Commerce, has categorically stated that no drastic revision of import policy was under Government consideration and people in trade and industry should not pay attention to any rumour, whatsoever, in this connection. ... The Minister observed that since there [were] no abnormal imports, the Government had no intention to tighten up the present liberal character of the import policy.

1950 | Seventy-five years ago

Coal crisis averted

KARACHI: A coal crisis in Pakistan, which was apprehended owing to India stopping its supplies, has been successfully averted. The Government of Pakistan have finalised deals for immediate shipments of 195,000 tons of coal from Europe, while allocations of another 900,000 tons are expected during the next few months. Steps have also been taken to step up appreciably the indigenous production of coal in Pakistan.

A Press note issued by the Ministry of Industries on Friday [Jan 13] announced that the Government "have purchased" 85,000 tons of coal from Poland, 60,000 tons from the UK and 50,000 tons from France. Shipments would start immediately.

France has offered another 300,000 tons of coal to Pakistan and the Government were negotiating for 400,000 tons from Poland [and] 200,000 tons from the UK, allocations of which are likely within the next few months, the Press note added. Coal from Europe will cost Rs 10 per ton more than the Indian coal, but the price factor, according to experts, would be offset by the superior quality of the slow-burning European coal. — Staff correspondent

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@dawn.com

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

May 9 and West's double standards

THE United States and its transatlantic partner European Union have raised objections on military trials of civilians in Pakistan. This led me to explore the 'fascinating' history of military courts, and the trials of civilians in military courts in the US and Europe. The US legal system typically maintains a clear distinction between military and civilian jurisdictions. However, in specific situations, military courts have jurisdiction over civilians, especially when national security is at risk, or when civilian crimes occur within a military context.

One of the notable examples of a civilian being tried by a US military court occurred after World War II. Iva Ikuko Toguri, an American citizen, had been in Japan during the war as a broadcaster, and was accused of spreading Japanese propaganda over the radio. After the war, she was arrested and tried by a US military tribunal in 1949.

Despite her claims that she had been coerced into participating, and did not support the views she relayed on air, she was convicted of treason and sentenced to 10 years in prison. A more contemporary example of civilians being tried in US military courts is that of a number of Al Qaeda members and Taliban fighters.

They were tried often in military tribunals rather than civilian courts. In the United Kingdom, a notable example is the trial of William Joyce, infamous for his broadcasts as a Nazi propagandist. Although the UK had civilian courts capable of handling such cases, his trial took place in a military court. Joyce was convicted and executed in 1946.

It is also important to recognise that violence, violent protests and attacks on military installations are considered forms of terrorism in many countries, including those in the West. Both in the US and Europe, there have been instances where civilian-led protests escalated into violence, resulting in attacks on military installations.

While not a direct attack on a military installation, the 1971 Attica Prison riots in New York serve as a significant example of violent protests involving civilian participants, which led to military involvement and were regarded as acts of domestic terrorism. The attacks by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) were also widely viewed as terrorism by the UK government.

In Pakistan, the May 9 violence severely impacted national security, political stability, and the integrity of the country's democratic institutions. The reaction from the US and the West has been marked by double standards.

While they employed military courts to deal with civilians in their own countries, they have raised objections to the episode in Pakistan. Ironically, the West had previously expressed no concerns about Pakistan's military courts when the current opposition was in power. This selective outrage speaks for itself. The issue of dealing with terrorism is entirely Pakistan's internal matter, and the world, including the US, should refrain from interfering in our domestic affairs.

Abdul Basit Alvi
Muzaffarabad

Enough is enough

PAKISTAN is at a critical juncture, facing an onslaught of negative and biased propaganda by its known enemies. The role of a few of our own expatriates has been very disappointing. This requires the involvement of the best of our seasoned and qualified diplomats familiar with such matters. Over a period of time, irrespective of who is at the helm in Islamabad, diplomatic postings have been reduced to rehabilitate retired civil or uniformed officials, or cronies of political parties, as a reward for the services rendered to their godfathers.

Pakistan was not created to be a fiefdom of a few so that they may promote mediocrity from among their own. It is the taxpayers' money that funds diplomatic missions with the aim of serving the collective interest of the nation. They are not there to provide protocol to the ruling elite of the time, or to promote their own business and family interests.

They are there to counter any negative propaganda against the state. They are there not to firefight tough situations, but to prevent such adversities. Foreign postings must be based strictly on merit. Pakistan has suffered enough, and enough is enough.

Malik Tariq Ali
Lahore

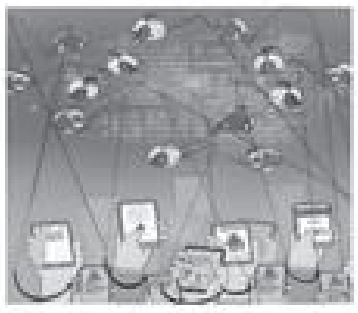
Digital initiative

THE Digital Nation Pakistan Bill, 2024, is an important initiative aimed at not only improving the people's lives, but also raising the status of the country in the digital world. The new bill is aimed at working enhancing the country's internet infrastructure.

This includes the use of technology in every sphere of governance with the view to make such governance efficient, effective and accessible. The most important point of the bill is to lower the barriers to digital infrastructure development, which will promote the use of information technology for creating businesses in the digital age. But it is impossible without a stable internet speed and access. The government must realise that we cannot improve the economy without the internet in this world and age.

Building up national cyberspace security, safeguarding data, and raising the capacity against all types of cyberthreats are key targets, but that should not be done at the cost of one's privacy. The government should also be concerned that state control will ultimately affect access to social media. The government bill has its fair share of merits, but the demerits must also be discussed with equal importance.

Atif Thebo
Karachi



Losing credibility

PAKISTAN has experienced devastating internet restrictions in the last more than two months. With fundamental functionality restricted, social media platforms are hardly accessible. There are worries that Pakistan might be moving towards digital isolation similar to that of North Korea because virtual private networks (VPNs) have been targeted and a firewall regime has been implemented.

Every hour of downtime costs more than $1 million, according to the Pakistan Software House Association (PSHA), which estimates that recent internet interruptions have cost $300 million. The information technology (IT) industry, which formerly grew at a rate of 30 per cent per year, is currently facing difficulties. As tech companies consider moving out, freelancers deal with shaky connections, and foreign clients reconsider alliances. These obstacles must be eliminated if Pakistan is to compete for a $1 trillion economy and reach its $40 billion IT export goal.

A slow and interrupted internet has become the new standard, impeding business, education and overall economic growth. While the government talks of a digital economy, its policies contradict progress. In order to advance, it must encourage candid communication, ensure that social media companies are held fully responsible through appropriate regulation, and enable people to differentiate between false information and the truth. It is also crucial to rebuild confidence in independent media.

A firewall system is actually an obstacle in the way of Pakistan's progress and prosperity. These limitations are stifling innovation and economic potential in a society rushing towards 5G.

The government must move quickly to restore dependable internet connectivity.

Moin Ahmed Anwar
Kandhkot

Moral crisis

THE recent high-profile wedding of a TikToker in Pakistan has sparked widespread debate, not just for its extravagance, but for what it symbolises as the direction Pakistani society seems to be moving in. The event, attended by 'influencers' and politicians, some even accompanied by official security personnel, underlined the growing obsession with social media fame as a shortcut to success.

Social media platforms, while offering creative opportunities, are increasingly becoming a trap for our young minds. Instead of seeking knowledge, science or meaningful careers, many new idolise the so-called influencers, who often promote superficial lifestyles over substance. This shift in priorities raises critical concerns about the future of society, as hard work and education are sidelined for quick fame and viral trends.

The involvement of politicians and misuse of state resources at such events only deepen the moral crisis. It sends the wrong message to a nation already struggling with economic challenges and declining educational standards. Our youth, the future of the country, deserves better role models. We must question what kind of values we are promoting when fame and extravagance overshadow integrity, intellect and societal contribution.

If we fail to realign our priorities and guide the younger generation towards constructive goals, we risk losing a generation to the illusion of overnight success. It is time for educators, policymakers and parents to step up, emphasise the importance of knowledge, and celebrate achievements that truly benefit society.

Muhammad Waqas
Tübingen, Germany

▶ **A FUTILE EXERCISE:** The 448kW solar energy system installed at Civil Hospital Naushahro Feroze has failed to serve the purpose of keeping the health facility functional round the clock. The energy produced during the day is sold to the grid, and the hospital has no power post sunset during periods of loadshedding. It has to use expensive diesel and petrol generators for up to 10 hours in such times. A battery backup system would have served the purpose, but the administration seems to be more interested in selling the 'excess' power than in preserving it for night-time usage. The authorities should pay urgent attention to the matter.
Dr Abdul Qadeer Memon
Naushahro Feroze

▶ **LIES AND STATISTICS:** During my studies, I noted a quote on my teacher's wall behind his desk: 'There are three kinds of lies; Lies, Damn Lies and Statistics'. The quote is generally true, but in Pakistan, it is true across the board. The incumbent government's claim about decrease in inflation is a case in point. For instance, in September 2023, petrol was Rs313 per litre, dollar was over Rs300 and the price of boneless beef was Rs1,400 per kg. At present, dollar hovers around Rs280, and petrol is pegged around Rs260, which is good. Well done! However, boneless beef is still sold for Rs1,400 per kg. What about that? Has inflation decreased? Really?
Anjum Amin Siddiqui
Karachi

▶ **SEEKING JUSTICE:** On Aug 23, 2023, I had applied against an advertisement for the position of lecturer (BPS-18) at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences in Sakrand, and submitted a processing fee of Rs3,000. On Dec 26, 2024, the Pakistan Testing Service (PTS) informed via a text message that the test would be conducted on Dec 29. I visited the PTS website multiple times to download the slip, but no relevant data was found on the website. The authorities concerned should take notice of this deliberate negligence by both the university and the PTS.
Shahnawaz Khoso
Hyderabad

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: dawnombudsman@gmail.com

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Waziristan forest fire controlled after two days

By Our Correspondent

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: The raging forest fire in Wana Kot Korr mountain of Lower South Waziristan, which gutted precious trees and plants, was finally brought under control on Monday.

Rescue 1122 officials said a firefighters' team and fire tenders worked tirelessly for two days to contain the blaze.

They said teams from rescue and forest departments participated in the operation.

The cause of the fire remains unknown, but its impact was devastating.

Precious trees of chestnut and Goor Gorey (blackcurrant) were destroyed in the blaze, which left a trail of destruction in its wake.

Rescue officials said despite challenges, the teams completed the operation in extremely difficult conditions, battling darkness, cold and rugged terrain. Their efforts finally paid off as the fire was brought under control on Monday.

The forest fire had broken out on Saturday, engulfing hundreds of valuable chestnut and blackcurrant trees.

Swabi man ends life after killing wife for 'honour'

By Our Correspondent

SWABI: A man allegedly killed his wife for honour and later died by suicide in Chota Lahor tehsil here on Monday.

Police and Rescue 1122 officials said that the incident took place in Jalsai Dhok area.

Chota Lahor city SHO Gohar Khan said that the accused shot dead his wife from a close range inside a room of his house, and later also shot himself dead.

Sajjad Khan, a brother-in-law of the deceased woman, reported to the police that he was with his family at his house when at 3am his nephew knocked at the door to their room, saying his father opened fire on his mother, and later got himself injured with a pistol.

Sajjad said when they went there, his 26-year-old sister-in-law was lying in a pool of blood and his brother was injured, while a pistol was also lying with him.

He said his injured brother was taken to Bacha Khan Teaching Hospital, Shahmansoor, where he later succumbed to his injuries.

Sajjad said his brother was angry that his wife had gone to her parents' house without his permission, which created a gulf between the couple.

The police have registered an FIR and started investigation.

Six injured in Kohat gas leak blast

PESHAWAR: Six members of a family, including five children, were injured, two of them critically, when a blast occurred inside a house in Kohat due to gas leak on Monday.

The police said the incident occurred in Garhi Risaldar area.

Rescue workers shifted the injured to the District Headquarters Hospital, Kohat, from where two of the critically injured children were referred to a Peshawar hospital.

The injured were identified as the wife of Arshad, Haleema, 10, Bakhtawar, 7, Fatima, 8, Waira, 12 and Hasiba, 4. — APP

WORKERS fix cement tiles on a pavement at new bus terminal in Sardar Garhi, Peshawar, on Monday. — White Star

KP proposes solutions to Rs1.5tr hydel profit dues issue

Seeks NHP payments in line with CCI decisions, control of Wapda power stations

By Manzoor Ali

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has come up with three proposals to settle its long-standing issue with the centre over the nonpayment of Rs1.5 trillion net hydel profit dues from 2016 to 2022.

During the Jan 10 meeting of a special committee, the KP government proposed payment of outstanding NHP amounts in accordance with the Council of Common Interest's decisions, granting control of Wapda's power stations to province, and implementing an interim NHP payment agreement by enhancing consumer tariff by Rs1/Kwh to generate requisite funds.

The committee was formed by the CCI on Dec 23, 2019, to propose an "out-of-box solution" for the payment of NHP to the provinces. It has so far held five meetings.

The issue of Rs1.5 trillion NHP dues in line with the Kazi Committee Methodology (KCM) for the period of 2016-22 has been subject of prolonged negotiations since 2018.

In its latest submission, KP has said the federal government should pay NHP in line with Article 161(2) of the Constitution, Presidential Order No 3, decisions of the CCI from 1991, 1993, 1997, 1998, 2016, 2018 and 2022, and the calculation made by the Jehanzeb Khan committee in the report approved by the CCI on Dec 23, 2019.

It added that the federal government should fund the power house component of Wapda development projects through PSDP instead of revenues generated through Wapda generation tariff to make funds available for the payment of the NHP to the entitled province.

The second proposal stated that the transfer of the Wapda hydropower station to provinces as proposed by the Punjab government and agreed by KP and decided in the third meeting of the out-of-box committee on Jan 11, 2022.

Besides, the proposal said that transfer of HPPs to provincial government on analogy of generation policy 1995 and 2015 and outstanding payment of NHP as per KCM to be made by the federal government till date of transfer of HPP to the province while the operation and maintenance can be retained by Wapda.

The third proposal stated till the finalisation of these two options, the federal government should announce the second interim agreement of NHP payment by enchanting the consumer end tariff by Rs1/Kwh to generate the requisite funds.

"Options may be finalised within a month," the proposal read, adding that payment of NHP should be made directly by the CPPA-G through escrow account instead of Wapda.

It said that Pakhtunkhwa Energy Development Organisation projects should be facilitated to sell up to 1500 MWs of power through electricity wheeling while water use charges to be enhanced to Rs3/Kwh.

When contacted, Himayatullah Khan, the KP government's representative tasked with negotiating NHP with the federal government, said that the province presented its proposal in the fifth meeting of the "out-of-box" committee, which was formed on December 23, 2019.

He said Article 161(2) of the Constitution declared that the net profits earned by the federal government, or any undertaking established or administered by the federal government from the bulk generation of power at hydro-electric stations shall be paid to the province in which the hydro-electric station is situated.

Mr Khan said that CCI was the relevant forum to determine net profits.

He said that after the numerous CCI decisions on the matter and recommendations of a committee led by deputy chairman of the Planning Commission Dr Jehanzeb for the payment of NHP in line with the KCM, the federal government came up with the excuse of having no money.

He, however, said that the power component of new hydro-electric stations was funded from Wapda revenues and the water component from the Public Sector Development Programme.

"The power component of Diamer-Basha, Mohmand and Dasu dams amounts to Rs2.24 trillion, while the water component totals Rs1.4 trillion. When the federal government says it has no money, KP's contention is that the Rs2.24 trillion funded Wapda into this project is our money," he said.

The KP's representative also said that the federal government's stand that payment of NHP to the province would raise electricity prices was incorrect.

He said that the price of a unit of electricity had gone up from Rs18 to Rs60, while the circular debt had touched Rs2.2 trillion and that had nothing to do with the payment of NHP.

In April 2018, the KP government had taken the implementation of KCM, adopted by the CCI in 1991 and the forum constituted a committee to deliberate upon the issue of determination of rates/net profits in light of the decision of CCI.

The committee presented its report to the CCI on December 23, 2019, which stated that practicality of the implementation of the KCM couldn't override the constitutional dictates and the rise in the price of electricity was a matter of public policy and couldn't be given preference over Article 161(2).

It added that the federal government should ensure payment of NHP on the basis of calculations made by the committee for 2016-17.

The KP government has calculated NHP dues at Rs1.5 trillion as per KCM for the period from 2016-17 to 2022-23.

PA forms committee to discuss bill returned by governor over objections

By Umar Farooq

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly on Monday constituted a special committee for a detailed discussion on the KP Laws Amendment Bill, 2024, which was returned by Governor Faisal Karim Kundi over objections about the move to equate the chief minister's advisers and special assistance with the ministers.

The development came during a session chaired by Speaker Babar Saleem Swati.

The speaker said the governor had returned the bill and wanted it to be reconsidered by the house.

He read out the governor's message about the bill, which read, "After careful examination of the proposed bill, titled KP Laws Amendment Act 2024, he is constrained to withhold ascent and return the bill to the KP Assembly for reconsideration."

The governor noted that the bill proposed inclusion of advisers and special assistants, where the word minister appeared in the existing law, rules and regulations, notification or all other legal instruments. "This blanket amendment appears to lack any clear justification or identified need."

The governor insisted that as per the Constitutional framework, advisers and special assistance were not members of the cabinet and couldn't exercise executive authority, which was the prerogative of elected representatives serving as ministers, and that they're not accountable to the provincial assembly, a fundamental principle ensuring democratic oversight of the executives.

He added that ministers, as elected representatives, enjoyed constitutionally-defined status and direct accountability to the legislature and the public. "Equating advisors and special assistance who lack electoral legitimacy with ministers, raises serious constitutional concerns," he noted.

According to him, the KP Government Rules of Business, 1985, which derives legitimacy from the Constitution, govern the formation and functioning of various committees, he said adding that extending powers and privileges to the unelected individuals under these provisions risks disrupting cabinet functions eroding the constitutional role and responsibilities of ministers, and would be clearly unconstitutional.

"Given the broad and undefined scope of the amendment, the assembly must reconsider its necessity scope and constitutional validity. A more focused approach, based on demonstrable need, would be preferable to the current generic proposal," he said.

The governor pointed out that in order to ensure compliance with Constitutional provisions, the KP Amendment Bill, 2024, was being returned to the provincial assembly for reconsideration.

During the session, opposition PPP member Ahmad Karim Kundi said that special advisers had never been elected.

"During PTI government, Hafiz Shaikh was nominated for NFC meetings as an adviser, so people filed a writ petition in the court objecting that Shaikh was not a federal minister to chair the NFC meeting," he said.

The lawmaker said the provincial government didn't have a finance minister and if an unelected person was sent to a committee's meeting, the federal government would stop him from attending it.

He added that people would go to the court as the ministers were replaced with advisers and special assistance in the Act.

"It will be much more effective and appropriate to reconsider the apprehensions and concerns of the governor KP," he said.

Member of the opposition JUI-F Adnan Khan said that he had proposed amendments but they were not considered.

"Advisers and special assistance are not part of the cabinet," he said, wondering how an unelected person could be held accountable.

MPA Hussain Laghmani said that the committees were part of the house and unelected persons attending the meeting, was contrary to the definition of democracy and supported the opposition benches that unelected people should not be part of the cabinet or proceedings of the house calling it against the Constitution.

JUI-F member Maulana Lutfur Rehman said that the 26 Constitutional Amendment was passed after consultation with the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf.

In response, law minister Aftab Alam Afridi told the house that the main objective of the amendment bill was to provide legal cover to the advisers and special assistance as they held several departments and chaired meetings.

He said that there were 34 departments and the advisers and special assistance helped the chief minister adding that the advisers were covered under the Constitution, while the special assistants were covered under Rule 33(A) of Rules of Business.

"I suggest the formation of a special select committee for discussing the bill before the next session and the seeking of the advocate general's opinion to satisfy us. The entire house could be taken on board," he said.

Mr Afridi said according to Article 16 of the Constitution, any matter for reconsideration could be returned with or without amendment by the provincial assembly.

"As far as the 26th Constitutional Amendment is concerned, an advocate general could speak on the floor of the house that covered advisers and special assistance," he said.

The minister said under Article 131 (11), five advisers could become part of the cabinet and there was no mention of elected or unelected persons.

Former speaker of the assembly Mushtaq Ahmad Ghani also supported the opposition's objections to the bill and asked the law minister if he would sit in a meeting chaired by unelected persons.

He said the bill should be sent to the select committee for a detailed discussion.

The house also unanimously passed a resolution, which demanded of the provincial government to recommend to the federal government to fulfil the promises made regarding the development of merged tribal districts. It also called for the provision of funds promised by the federal government and other provinces.

No terrorism case reported in Chitral last year

CHITRAL: The Lower Chitral police registered nine cases of murder and 13 cases of attempted murder, seven cases of rape and 10 cases of abduction in 2024, but no case of robbery was reported during the period.

The police also registered 34 cases of hurt, 53 cases of lethal attack, while zero cases of attack on police, child abduction, missing persons and kidnap for ransom were reported in 2024.

As per data gathered from the office of the district police officer, no incidents of robberies, including bank heist, vehicle and bike snatching were reported, while the number of theft cases decreased to 13 compared to 28 in 2023.

No case of terrorism was reported, while the number of fatal traffic accidents rose to 11 compared to only six in 2023.

As many as 255 cases were registered during 2024 under different sections of Control of Narcotics Act, while 16 cases of Arms Ordinance, 12 of Foreigners Act, four of arson, six of cheating were registered. No case of forgery, fake CNIC, hate speech and gambling was reported.

The Lower Chitral police recovered 145 kilogrammes of charas, 645 litres of liquor, 6.5kg of opium, 0.5kg of heroin and 1.5kg of ice drug, while the arms and ammunition seized during the period included a shot machine gun, two rifles, 13 shotguns, 10 pistols, 218 rounds, three-meter detonator, five daggers and four kg explosive powder.

A total of 125 proclaimed offenders were arrested in 2023, which dropped to 115 in 2024. — Correspondent

Virtual University of Pakistan

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Sr. No.	Description	Tender Fee (Rs.)	Tender Opening Date	Tender Receiving / Opening Time
1.	Tender No. VU/24-25/01/840 Hiring of Outdoor Marketing Services - Turnkey Basis (MKT)	1,000/-	January 28, 2025	Receiving: 11:00am Opening: 11:30am

RFP documents of above-mentioned tender are also available on VU website https://www.vu.edu.pk/Opportunities/Tenders however submission only be accepted through EPADS.

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Panda bond likely this year: Aurangzeb

Says Pakistan to achieve 13.5pc tax ratio in FY25

Dawn Report

KARACHI: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has said that the country is preparing to launch yuan-denominated Panda bonds this year to shore up its finances, Dawn.com reported on Monday.

The country is planning to raise $200 million to $250m from Chinese investors over the next six to nine months, the finance minister told *Bloomberg* in an interview.

Panda bonds are a type of debt security issued by foreign entities in the Chinese capital markets, and they are denominated in Chinese yuan (RMB).

In March last year, the finance minister announced that Pakistan was keen to tap Chinese investors by selling as much as $300m in Panda bonds.

These bonds allow foreign issuers, including multinational corporations, international financial institutions, and sovereign governments, to access capital from Chinese investors.

"The country is very keen to tap the panda bonds and the Chinese capital markets," Mr Aurangzeb said according to the report. "We have been remiss as a country not to tap it previously."

Speaking on the sidelines of the Asian Financial Forum in Hong Kong, the minister also confirmed that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission is scheduled to visit Pakistan next month, adding that it wanted the country to broaden its tax base and reach a tax-to-GDP ratio of 13.5 per cent, from 10pc in December.

"We are well on our way to achieving that target, not only because the IMF is saying that but because, from my perspective, the country needs to get into that benchmark to make our fiscal situation sustainable," he said.

The IMF's executive board approved a 37-month $7bn Extended Fund Facility in September to enable the country to "cement macroeconomic stability and create conditions for stronger, more inclusive and resilient growth".

In July, global rating agency Fitch also upgraded Pakistan's long-term foreign-currency issuer default rating (IDR) to CCC+ from CCC on the back of the country's deal, while Standard and Poor's (S&P) maintained its rating of CCC+.

According to the report, Pakistan has undergone 25 loan programmes over half a century, with the IMF insisting the country institute "durable reforms in key areas of the energy sector, tax collection and state-owned enterprises to end a cycle of indebtedness".

Aurangzeb also told Bloomberg that the country's gross domestic product (GDP) "will probably expand 3.5pc in the fiscal year ending June".

"We are into that phase of stabilisation," Aurangzeb stated. "Now, where do we go from here? We have to focus on sustainable growth. We are now very focused on fundamentally changing the DNA of the economy to make it export-led."

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), which lowered its key interest rate to 13pc in December, cited that growth prospects had somewhat improved, and it had managed to keep inflationary and external account pressures in check.

HONG KONG: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb speaks at the Asian Financial Forum on Monday. He emphasised the transformative role of innovation in driving economic growth.—APP

64pc of adults now have bank accounts

SBP financial inclusion report reveals women account holders increased from 13m in 2018 to 31m in 2023

By Shahid Iqbal

KARACHI: Financial inclusion, i.e the share of the adult population operating a bank account, has jumped from 16 per cent in 2015 to 64pc in 2023, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

Since 2015, SBP has implemented two National Financial Inclusion strategies (NFIS), 2015-18 and 2019-23, with the goal to improve access and usage of formal financial services by the masses.

In the NFIS report, issued on Monday with a number of targets set for 2024-28, the central bank said: "As a result, financial inclusion level, broadly defined as the share of adult population having a bank account, has jumped from 16 per cent in 2015 to 64 per cent in 2023," said the report.

Moreover, in order to catalyse inclusive economic growth and development in the country, specific actions have been outlined to revolutionise priority sector financing in the areas of SME, housing, agriculture, microfinance and sustainable finance, with the ultimate aim to enhance the wellbeing of low income and under-privileged population segments.

"The headline targets for NFIS 2024-28 have been set to improve the level of financial inclusion in Pakistan to 75pc and reduce the gender gap to 25pc by 2028," said the report.

"Due to these initiatives the number of depositors has increased from 54 million in 2018 to 88 million in 2023, registering a growth of 63pc during the period," said the report.

The number of women depositors grew from 13.1 million in 2018 to 31.2 million in 2023, improving women's financial inclusion from 23pc to 47pc, the report added.

Similarly, the share of Islamic banking in the overall banking sector increased significantly, with share in deposits at 23pc, share in assets at 19pc and share in branch network at 29pc.

According to the report, the implementation of the two new NFIS-leveraged technologies, supportive regulatory frameworks and enhanced public private partnerships have promoted financial inclusion. In particular, schemes such as the Asaan Digital Account, Asaan Mobile Account, Raast, have provided ease of access to and usage of formal financial services.

Expanding the scope of digital financial services specifically to cater to the needs of the under banked segments of the society remains a challenge due to general preference for cash embedded in the culture, the report said.

In addition to digitalisation of financial services, SBP's Banking on Equality Policy (BOE) has also helped in improving women's financial inclusion in the country.

"As of December 2023, 31 million adult women had at least one bank account as compared to 13 million in 2018, due to which, the gender gap has reduced from 47pc in 2018 to 34pc in 2023," said the report.

In order to further advance the financial inclusion agenda, SBP is launching the 3rd edition of NFIS 2024-28, which aims to leverage progress made under the past two strategies, tackle persistent bottlenecks in financial inclusion, and capitalise on further digitalisation efforts to foster new innovations.

Pakistan, BD joint business council formed

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) on Monday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to form Pakistan-Bangladesh Joint Business Council (PBJBC) to strengthen, facilitate and enable trade between the two countries.

The delegation headed by FPCCI President Atif Ikram Sheikh also participated in the Bangladesh Pakistan Business Forum in Dhaka.

The visit to Bangladesh is taking place after a gap of 12 years. Pakistani businessmen look forward to meeting Dr Muhammad Yunus, Chief Advisor to the interim Bangladesh government in a couple of days.

FBCCI Administrator Muhammad Hafizur Rahman emphasised utilising the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to strengthen bilateral trade relations.

He said there is ample scope for the two countries to work closely in energy, education, technology, human resources development, research and innovation to meet the challenges of the fourth industrial revolution.

Mr Atif said that diverse industries, sectors and verticals like electronics, cars, industrial machinery, carpets, toys, ceramics, sanitary products, handicrafts, fabrics, ready-made garments, leather, home appliances, processed foods, furniture, plastic goods, jute products, cosmetics, sports goods and jewellery, were represented in the business forum.

He said the delegation had a productive meeting with Bangladesh Commerce Minister Sheikh Bashiruddin a day earlier, during which he expressed his government's intent to facilitate Pakistani exporters and products.

He added that the Bangladesh government has already relaxed visa requirements for Pakistani nationals, and Pakistan has reciprocated.

Mr Bashiruddin said that both countries would jointly search for options like investments, trade and industrial relations. He also assured the delegation of supporting Pakistani companies.

The FPCCI president highlighted that the trade delegation also had high-profile meetings with the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA), where they discussed collective trade promotion activities, the exchange of delegations, and single-country exhibitions.

PETROL and diesel are the major revenue spinners for the government.—AFP/file

Petrol, diesel to cost Rs6 more in next fortnight

By Khaleeq Kiani

ISLAMABAD: The prices of high-speed diesel (HSD), petrol and kerosene are estimated to increase by up to Rs6 per litre on Wednesday for the next fortnight due to higher international prices.

Informed sources said the ex-depot petrol price was estimated to go up by Rs5-6 per litre depending on the final calculation on Jan 15. Kerosene and diesel prices are expected to rise by about Rs4 and 2 per litre, respectively.

The estimates for higher prices of petroleum products stemmed after bulls returned to the international market last week following US President-elect Donald Trump's threats of strict sanctions on Russian oil and energy exports. The Brent prices have risen by up to $1-2 per barrel since then.

These sources said the average prices of HSD and petrol slightly increased in the international market last fortnight, while the ex-refinery cost of kerosene also inched up. Import premiums on petrol and diesel remained unchanged while the exchange rate generally remained stable.

The latest calculation showed a rise of around Rs5.50-6.50 per litre in petrol, Rs2-2.50 in HSD and Rs4 in kerosene for the next fortnight.

An Ogra official said the diesel price increase could be adjusted within the inland freight equalisation margin (IFEM) — a mechanism meant for nationwide uniform prices.

The ex-depot petrol and diesel prices are Rs252.66 and Rs258.34 per litre. Kerosene's official rate is Rs162.95. On Dec 31, the government increased petrol and diesel prices by 56 paisa and Rs2.96 per litre, respectively.

Petrol is mainly used in private transport, small vehicles, rickshaws, and two-wheelers, and it directly affects the budget of the middle and lower middle classes. Most of the transport sector runs on HSD. Its price is considered inflationary as it is mostly used in heavy transport vehicles, trains and agricultural engines like trucks, buses, tractors, tube wells and threshers, which adds to the prices of vegetables and other eatables.

The government is charging about Rs76 per litre tax on petrol and HSD. Although the general sales tax (GST) is zero on all petroleum products, the government charges Rs60 per litre petroleum development levy on both products that normally impact the masses.

The government also charges about Rs16 per litre customs duty on petrol and HSD, irrespective of their local production or imports. In addition, about Rs17 per litre distribution and sale margins are charged by oil companies and their dealers on both products.

On the other hand, it charges Rs50 per litre on light diesel and high octane blending components and 95RON petrol used by the wealthy in luxury imported vehicles.

Oil prices climb $2, hits 4-month high

NEW YORK: Oil prices climbed about 2 per cent to a four-month high on Monday on expectations that wider US sanctions on Russian oil would force buyers in India and China to seek other suppliers.

Brent futures rose $1.40, or 1.8pc, to $81.16 a barrel by 11:18 a.m. EST (1618 GMT), while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude rose $2.15, or 2.8pc, to $78.72.

That put Brent on track for its highest close since Aug. 26 and WTI on track for its highest close since Aug. 12, and kept both benchmarks in technically overbought territory for a second day in a row.

Moreover, with Brent and WTI front-month prices rising around 7pc over the past three trading sessions, the premium of front-month contracts over later-dated futures, known in the energy industry as time spreads, soared to their highest in several months.

The US Treasury imposed wider sanctions on Russian oil producers late last week.—Reuters

Textile parks to boost exports

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar has emphasised the need to establish state-of-the-art textile parks through partnerships with international and domestic investors to boost exports and create jobs.

Chairing a meeting of the Working Group for the Establishment of Textile Parks in Pakistan on Monday, Mr Dar observed that these parks would help drive export-led industrialisation in the country.

Mr Dar, who also holds the foreign minister's portfolio, underscored the need to capitalise on available land in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) by upgrading them into 'plug-and-play' facilities to attract immediate industrial investments.

He asked all stakeholders to expedite actionable plans, remove procedural bottlenecks, and align efforts with the government's vision of sustainable economic growth and export enhancement.

The working group, constituted by the prime minister in September last, includes representatives from the Board of Investment (BoI), Ministry of Industries and Production, Ministry of Commerce, Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), Economic Affairs Division, and Power Division.

Provincial Coordination Committees of Punjab and Sindh and the Embassy of Pakistan, Beijing, also participated to ensure seamless collaboration.

In September last, the BUYI Group of China signed a memorandum of understanding with the BoI to establish a facility to manufacture textile parts of international standard in Pakistan.—Amin Ahmed

Azerbaijan to set up trade centre in Lahore

LAHORE: Azerbaijan is set to establish a trade centre in Lahore to strengthen ties between the business communities of both countries and create new opportunities for mutual cooperation.

This was announced by Azerbaijan's Ambassador Khazar Farhadov during his speech at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry on Monday.

"We are going to establish Azerbaijan Trade Centre in Lahore and Pakistan-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce to bring the business communities of both countries closer and open new avenues for mutual cooperation," he said.

The ambassador highlighted the duty-free access granted to Pakistani rice by Azerbaijan until 2027, encouraging traders to capitalise on this opportunity, especially considering Punjab's reputation for producing high-quality Basmati rice. He assured that Azerbaijani authorities would provide maximum facilitation to Pakistani traders exploring opportunities in Azerbaijan. Referring to the positive impact of direct flights between the two countries, the ambassador revealed that bilateral trade volume has tripled since 2022, growing from $10 million to significantly higher levels. He said that over 80,000 Pakistanis visited Azerbaijan last year which reflected the growing interest and people-to-people connections.

The ambassador also invited Pakistani investors to explore opportunities in Azerbaijan's infrastructure and energy sectors and highlighted the country's strategic position as a key international transport corridor between Asia and Europe.—Staff Reporter

US DOLLAR	BUYING Rs278.76	SELLING Rs280.48
EURO	BUYING Rs284.26	SELLING Rs287.23
GBP	BUYING Rs338.76	SELLING Rs342.63
UAE DIRHAM	BUYING Rs75.87	SELLING Rs76.36
KSA RIYAL	BUYING Rs74.16	SELLING Rs74.62
GOLD	TOLA Rs279,300	10 GMS Rs239,455

Bulls stage 983-point rally on value-hunting

By Muhammad Kashif

KARACHI: Amid a relative political calm and improved economic outlook, the stock market witnessed an across the board buying spree at attractive valuations, helping the benchmark KSE 100 index staged an impressive rally on Monday.

Ali Najib, Head of Sales at Insight Securities, said it was a clear sky day at PSX as the index floated easily during the trading hours and settled at 114,230, an increase of 983 points or up 0.87 per cent day-on-day.

At first, the benchmark index received some profit-taking but after that selling there was no bumps in the road. Investors did some value-hunting post last week massive selling as blue-chip stocks were available on attractive price levels offering handsome dividend yields.

"Anticipation of 100bps cut in interest rates in the upcoming State Bank of Pakistan's Monetary Policy Committee, scheduled for Jan 27, expectation of January inflation may land at 3-3.5pc and prospects of better corporate announcements in the forthcoming result season kept the bears at the bay during the trading," he added.

Topline Securities Ltd said the bulls firmly took control of today's trading session, propelling the market to impressive gains.

The rally was fuelled by strong buying across sectors, underpinned by optimism over economic indicators and expectations of improved December quarter earnings. Notably, blue-chip stocks and high-volume sectors witnessed heightened investor activity following last week's market pullback.

Ghandhara Automobiles Ltd from the auto sector continued its upward trajectory, closing at its upper circuit, driven by the successful launch of the new pickup truck, "JAC T9 Hunter," which garnered significant attention from investors.

Engro Holdings contributed negatively by up to 275 points to the KSE-100 as shares were transferred to investors today following the merger.

Ahsan Mehanti of Arif Habib Corporation said stocks closed higher led by second and third tier scrips amid speculations in the earning season and progressing government talks with PTI.

He added that surging global crude oil prices and expected cut in the SBP key policy rate announcement this month played a catalyst role in bullish close at PSX.

Key contributors to the upward trajectory included Mari Petroleum, Millat Tractors, United Bank, Service Industries, and Fauji Fertiliser, collectively adding 620 points.

Despite the market's strong performance, trading activity remained subdued compared to last week. The trading volume rose 4.27pc to 521.20 million shares while the traded value jumped 13.94pc to Rs28.28bn day-on-day.

PAKISTAN STOCK EXCHANGE

THE TOP FIVERS

GAINERS		LOSERS		LEADERS*	
Unilever Foods	499.99	JDW Sugar Mills	55.00	WorldCall Telecom	70.13
Service Industries	126.00	Sapphire Textile	44.08	Cnergyico PK	39.59
Philip Morris	55.48	Rafhan Maize	30.80	Sui Southern Gas	31.99
Ghandhara Ind	38.41	Engro Holdings	24.82	Fauji Foods	23.15
Millat Tractors	37.99	Al-Abbas Sugar	23.60	K-Electric	17.98

(Share values in rupees) * Volume in millions of traded shares

INDICATORS

	Monday	Previous		Change
KSE 100-SHARE INDEX (Points)	114,230.06	113,247.29	▲	982.77
KSE 30-SHARE INDEX (Points)	35,983.94	35,711.64	▲	272.30
MARKET CAPITAL (Rs billion)	14,362,155	14,230,064	▲	132.091
TRADING VALUE (Rs billion)	28.287	24.825	▲	3.461

ACTIVITY

Total listed	532
Active	449
Gainers	280
Losers	116

PARTICIPANTS

Foreign	▼ $3.33m
Companies	▲ $0.50m
Banks	▼ $0.41m
Mutual Funds	▼ $2.92m
Individuals	▲ $4.89m

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Indian PM opens tunnel to zones near China, Pakistan

SRINAGAR: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a strategic Himalayan road tunnel on Monday, pushing all-weather access northwards towards contested high-altitude border zones with China and Pakistan.

The Z-Morh or Sonmarg tunnel, stretching 6.4km beneath a treacherous mountain pass cut off by snow for between four to six months a year, is part of a wider infrastructure drive in border zones.

It helps connect India-held Kashmir with Ladakh, acting as a stepping stone in opening the Srinagar-Leh Highway all year round.

"With the opening of the tunnel here, connectivity will significantly improve," Modi said, wrapped in a jacket from the freezing cold after cutting the ribbon on the $313 million project that has taken a decade to construct.

India and China, the world's two most populous nations, are intense rivals competing for strategic influence across South Asia, and their 3,500km shared frontier has been a perennial source of tension. Their troops clashed in 2020, killing at least 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers, and forces from both sides today face off across contested high-altitude borderlands.

However, Beijing and New Delhi agreed in October on patrols in disputed areas, shortly before a rare formal meeting — the first in five years — between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Modi.

Another tunnel on the same route, the 13km-long Zojila tunnel, is more than halfway completed and slated to open in 2026, according to the information ministry.

India has also built a $3.9 billion railway line connecting the lowland plains with occupied Kashmir for the first time, including the construction of the Chenab Rail Bridge, the highest of its kind in the world.

The 272km-long railway begins in the garrison city of Udhampur, headquarters of the Indian army's northern command, and runs through Srinagar.—AFP

INDIAN Prime Minister Narendra Modi (second left) with Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari (second right) and chief minister of occupied Kashmir Omar Abdullah (right) during inauguration of the Sonamarg tunnel.—AFP

Ukraine targeted gas pipeline to Turkiye: Russia

MOSCOW: Russia accused Ukraine on Monday of launching a drone attack on the infrastructure of a major gas pipeline that carries Russian supplies to Europe via Turkiye.

The allegation — which Kyiv has not commented on — comes amid an escalating energy row between the two countries, almost three years after Russia launched its full-scale military offensive.

Kyiv halted the transit of Russian gas via Ukraine on Jan 1 — ending decades of energy cooperation that had brought billions of dollars to both countries — in a bid to cut off revenue for Moscow's army.

The United States last week rolled out fresh sanctions on Russia's oil sector. The Russian defence ministry said Ukraine had fired nine attack drones on Saturday at a gas compressor station in the village of Gai-Kodzor, near Russia's southern coast on the Black Sea.

The site is across from the annexed Crimean peninsula — heavily targeted by Kyiv throughout the three-year conflict.—AFP

US to curb AI chip exports in bid to block China's access

New rules update controls on chips, requiring authorisations for exports, re-exports and in-country transfers

WASHINGTON: The United States unveiled new export rules on Monday on chips used for artificial intelligence, furthering efforts to make it tough for China and other rivals to access advanced technology in Joe Biden's final days as president.

The restrictions build on curbs announced in 2023 on exporting certain AI chips to China, which the United States sees as a strategic competitor.

In recent years, Washington has expanded its efforts to curb exports of state-of-the-art chips to China, which can be used in AI and weapons systems, as Beijing's tech advancements spark concern among policymakers. "The US leads the world in AI now — both AI development and AI chip design — and it's critical that we keep it that way," Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo told reporters.

The new rules update controls on chips, requiring authorisations for exports, re-exports and in-country transfers — while also including a series of exceptions for countries considered friendly to the United States.

AI data centres meanwhile will need to comply with enhanced security parameters to be able to import chips. But the latest move drew industry criticism and warnings that it would hurt US competitiveness.

Semiconductor Industry Association chief executive John Neuffer said: "We're deeply disappointed that a policy shift of this magnitude and impact is being rushed out the door days before a presidential transition and without any meaningful input from industry." He added in a statement that the rule could cause "lasting damage to America's economy and global competitiveness" by ceding key markets to rivals.

Chip titan Nvidia said in a blog post that "while cloaked in the guise of an 'anti-China' measure, these rules would do nothing to enhance US security."

Trump decision?

The rules make it "hard for our strategic competitors to use smuggling and remote access to evade our export control," White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said. They also create "incentives for our friends and partners around the world to use trusted vendors for advanced AI," he added. The new rules will take effect in 120 days, Raimondo said, giving the incoming administration of President-elect Donald Trump time to potentially make changes.—AFP

Mali begins seizing gold stocks from Barrick mine

DAKAR: Mali's junta has begun seizing gold stocks from the Loulo-Gounkoto mine operated by Canadian firm Barrick Gold, according to a security source and an internal company memo said on Monday.

Since coming to power in a 2020 coup, Mali's military rulers have promised a fairer distribution of revenue from the lucrative mining industry in the country, stepping up pressure on foreign firms in recent months.

Barrick Gold and the Malian state have been at loggerheads over the underground and open-pit Loulo-Gounkoto site in the country's west — one of the world's largest gold complexes.

Authorities began enforcing a provisional order to seize gold stock at the site on Saturday, Barrick Gold said in a note to local staff. The junta had days earlier issued an interim attachment order against the existing gold stock on site.

Malian authorities sent a helicopter to Loulo-Gounkoto on Saturday to make the seizure, a security official said. When questioned, Barrick Gold referred to a previous statement. The Canadian firm owns 80 per cent of the Loulo-Gounkoto mine, with Mali retaining the rest. The junta has been blocking shipments from the site for more than seven weeks. Last Monday, Barrick Gold said it would be forced to temporarily suspend operations at Loulo-Gounkoto if junta-imposed restrictions were not resolved within the week.

The company reiterated the possibility of halting operations in its internal memo. Authorities charged and detained four Malian employees of Barrick Gold in late November. In December, they issued national arrest warrants for the company's South African CEO and the Malian managing director of Loulo-Gounkoto for "money laundering".—AFP

South Korea's impeached president gets a pay rise

SEOUL: Suspended South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol will receive a scheduled pay rise, official documents showed on Monday, despite an impeachment trial and investigation into his ill-fated martial law declaration. Yoon suspended civilian rule on Dec 3, sending soldiers into parliament and plunging South Korea into its worst political crisis in decades. He was forced to backtrack hours later.

He has been impeached by lawmakers and is awaiting a final Constitutional Court ruling that could finalise his removal from office, while separately facing an insurrection probe with investigators seeking to detain him for questioning. However, Yoon was given a raise, according to the civil servant salary table for 2025, even as he remains holed up in the presidential residence using his security detail to resist arrest. The document from the Ministry of Personnel Management indicates Yoon's salary will rise to 262.6 million won ($178,400) — a three per cent raise compared with last year.

Yoon is only suspended from duty because the impeachment motion is still being deliberated by the Constitutional Court, so he retains his status as president and will be able to receive his salary and security benefits.—AFP

Bangladesh govt files graft cases against Hasina's family

Starmer urged to fire minister hit by Dhaka probe

DHAKA: Bangladesh's anti-graft commission has filed cases against ousted leader Sheikh Hasina and her family, including a British government minister and a senior United Nations official, its chief said on Monday.

The cases are linked to an alleged large-scale land grab of lucrative plots in a suburb of the densely populated capital Dhaka. "Sheikh Hasina, in collaboration with some officials, allocated plots for herself and her family members," Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) director general Akhter Hossain told reporters.

Hossain said those named in the case also include Hasina's niece, British anti-corruption minister Tulip Siddiq. She has insisted she has done nothing wrong. Hasina's daughter Saima Wazed, the World Health Organisation's South East Asia chief, is also listed.

"The ACC investigation team has obtained the necessary documents and found sufficient evidence to file the cases," Hossain said. "They will include relevant details, such as property acquisitions while conducting further investigations." Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy is also named, as well as Hasina's sister Sheikh Rehana, Siddiq's mother.

Siddiq referred herself this month to the standards adviser of British Prime Minister Keir Starmer. The referral came after British newspapers the *Sunday Times* and *Financial Times* reported that she had lived in properties linked to Hasina's administration.

Starmer under pressure

Starmer on Monday faced fresh pressure to sack his anti-corruption minister Tulip Siddiq, amid accusations over her family ties to Bangladesh's toppled premier. Earlier this month, the UK minister referred herself to Starmer's standards adviser, following a flurry of allegations including that she lived in properties linked to her aunt and the Awami League party Hasina led.

Asked on Monday whether Siddiq's position in the UK government remained tenable, senior British minister Pat McFadden told *Sky News* she had "done the right thing" with the self-referral.

He insisted the standards adviser had the powers to "carry out investigations into allegations like this". "That is what he is doing, and that is the right way to deal with this," McFadden said. But UK opposition politicians want Siddiq fired. "I think it's untenable for her to carry out her role," the Conservatives' finance spokesman Mel Stride told *Times Radio*. "It's inappropriate for Tulip to be in the position that she holds at the moment. She is the anti-corruption minister in government."

'Plain robbery'

In December Siddiq emerged as a named target of a probe by Bangladesh's anti-corruption commission into the alleged embezzlement by Hasina's family of $5 billion connected to a Russian-funded nuclear power plant.

Money laundering investigators there have since ordered the country's big banks to hand over details of transactions relating to Siddiq as part of the probe. Siddiq is an MP for a north London seat who is part of the finance ministry and responsible for the UK's financial services sector as well as anti-corruption measures.

Over the weekend, a *Sunday Times* investigation revealed details about the claims that Siddiq spent years living in a London flat bought by an offshore company connected to two Bangladeshi businessmen. The flat was eventually transferred as a gift to a Bangladeshi barrister with links to Hasina, her family and her ousted government, according to the newspaper.

It also reported Siddiq and her family were given or used several other London properties bought by members or associates of the Awami League party.

Bangladesh's interim leader, Muhammad Yunus, a Nobel Prize-winning microfinance pioneer who heads a caretaker government, demanded a detailed probe in light of the allegations.

He told the newspaper the properties could be linked to wider corruption claims against Hasina's toppled government, which he said amounted to the "plain robbery" of billions of dollars from Bangladesh's coffers.—AFP

NEWSMAKERS

AMRITSAR: Girls perform Giddha, a Punjabi folk dance, as they celebrate Lohri, a harvest festival.—AFP

BRUSSELS: Protesters attend a demonstration during a nationwide strike against the Belgian government's pension reform, on Monday.—Reuters

KUWAIT CITY: A black-headed gull calls from a tree branch at a beach, on Monday.—AFP

TWO ACTIVISTS sit on the floor beside the grave of Charles Darwin, after they sprayed "1.5 is dead" over it in protest against the British government's inaction over use of fossil fuels.—AFP

Climate activists paint over Darwin's grave at Westminster Abbey

LONDON: Climate activists from Just Stop Oil painted over the grave of British naturalist Charles Darwin at Westminster Abbey on Monday.

Two activists entered Westminster Abbey — Britain's site for royal weddings, coronations, burials and a major tourist attraction — and used spray chalk on Darwin's grave, the campaign group said in a statement.

The activists wrote "1.5 is dead" in orange over the surface of the white marble gravestone — a reference to recent news that global temperatures in 2024 had exceeded 1.5 Celsius above the pre-industrial era for the first time.

"We have passed the 1.5 degree threshold that was supposed to keep us safe," one of the activists said. "Darwin would be turning in his grave to know we are in the midst of the sixth mass extinction." Darwin, best known for his theory of evolution by natural selection, died in 1882. He is buried in Westminster Abbey's Scientists' Corner, where Isaac Newton and Stephen Hawking are also buried. The church confirmed the incident in a statement.

"The Abbey's conservators are taking immediate action to clean the memorial and do not anticipate that there will be any permanent damage," a spokeswoman said.

"The police were called to the scene and dealt with the incident. The Abbey remains open for visiting and worshipping." Just Stop Oil activists have staged a number of high-profile protests in Britain including by disrupting sports and theatre events, painting over the US embassy building in London and throwing soup at Van Gogh paintings.—Reuters

JILIN CITY (China): Snowman installations beside frost-covered trees on the banks of Songhua River, in China's Jilin province.—AFP

DOVER: Migrants picked up at sea attempting to cross the English Channel from France, disembark from a British border vessel after it arrived at Dover, on Monday.—AFP

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Biden says US 'stronger' on world stage now than it has been for decades

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden, in a swansong foreign policy speech a week before Donald Trump's White House comeback, has said that America is stronger on the global stage than it had been for decades.

The outgoing US president took aim at Russia, China and Iran, and urged the West to maintain support for Ukraine in an address at the State Department setting out his international legacy.

But Biden's unspoken target was Trump as he touted his rebuilding of international alliances over the last four years after his Republican rival's chaotic first term. "The United States is winning the worldwide competition compared to four years ago," said Biden, after diplomats at the State Department gave him a standing ovation.

"America is stronger. Our alliances are stronger, our adversaries and competitors are weaker."

The Democrat added that America's ties with its allies were the strongest "in decades," and said partners in the Nato military alliance were now "paying their fair share".

Trump has repeatedly criticised Nato countries, at one point saying he would encourage Russia to do "whatever the hell it wants" to allies that did not pay their way.

The incoming president has also previously expressed admiration for Russian President Vladimir Putin, but Biden mocked Putin over the progress of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. "When Putin invaded, he thought he'd conquer Kyiv in a matter of days. The truth is, since that war began I'm the only one that stood in the center of Kyiv, not him," said Biden.

He said the US and its allies "can't walk away" from Ukraine, to which Washington has sent billions of dollars in military aid since the war started in 2022.

China won't 'surpass' US

Biden insisted that China would "never surpass us" and that the United States would remain the world's dominant superpower.

"According to the latest predictions, on China's current course they will never surpass us — period," Biden said.

He added that Washington managed its complex ties with Beijing and that the relationship "never tipped over into conflict" in his four years as president.

Gaza truce

His speech was more restrained on Israel's attacks in Gaza, with his administration facing criticism from within his own party for its unstinting support of Israel. But he said a Gaza ceasefire deal was "on the brink" of "finally coming to fruition".

The Democrat also defended another major foreign policy fiasco — the fall of Afghanistan's US-backed government to the Taliban and the US withdrawal of 2021. "Ending the war was the right thing to do. And I believe history will reflect that," Biden said.

The 82-year-old president finally urged the Trump administration to continue Biden's green energy policies, saying climate deniers under Trump were "dead wrong" and "come from a different century".

Biden's foreign policy speech will be followed by a farewell address to the nation from the Oval Office in prime-time on Wednesday. —AFP

Iran, European powers hold N-talks ahead of Trump return

GENEVA: Iran and European powers met in Geneva on Monday under a shroud of secrecy to discuss Tehran's nuclear programme, just a week before US President-elect Donald Trump takes office.

They were the second round of talks in less than two months, following a discreet meeting in Geneva last November between Tehran and the three European powers, Britain, France and Germany, known as the E3.

The meeting was largely shrouded in secrecy, with few details revealed about the topics discussed or even the venue of the talks. "The Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-Ravanchi and his counterparts from the E3 met on Monday evening," *ISNA* news agency reported.

"They discussed issues of mutual interest, including negotiations for lifting sanctions, the nuclear issue and the worrying situation in the region," it added without elaborating. Later, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi described the talks as "serious, frank, and constructive". "We discussed ideas involving certain details in the sanctions-lifting and nuclear fields that are needed for a deal," he said in a post on X.

"Sides concurred that negotiations should be resumed and to reach a deal, all parties should create and maintain the appropriate atmosphere. We agreed to continue our dialogue," he added.

Before the meeting, the German foreign ministry said that the talks were "not negotiations" while Iran similarly emphasised that they were merely "consultations". The talks, will cover a "wide range of topics," Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said.

'Breaking point'

On Thursday, France's foreign ministry said the meeting was a sign that the E3 countries were "continuing to work towards a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear programme, the progress of which is extremely problematic". The talks come with Iran's nuclear programme under renewed focus in light of Trump's return to the White House on Jan 20.

During his first term, Trump pursued a policy of "maximum pressure", withdrawing the US from a landmark nuclear deal which imposed curbs on Iran's nuclear programme in return for sanctions relief.—AFP

LEBANON'S President Joseph Aoun (left) meets Lieutenant General Michael Kurilla (second right), commander of the US Central Command, at the presidential palace in Beirut, on Monday.—AFP

Lebanon's president names ICJ judge Salam as PM

Hezbollah terms the move 'complete US coup'

BEIRUT: Lebanese President Joseph Aoun on Monday picked international jurist Nawaf Salam to form a government for the war-scarred country and pull it out of economic crisis.

A majority of Lebanese lawmakers endorsed Nawaf Salam, the presiding judge at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, after two years of caretaker government.

"The president of the republic called on Judge Nawaf Salam to task him with forming a government, knowing that he is currently abroad. It has been decided he will return tomorrow," the presidency said.

Aoun, whose election last week ended a two-year vacancy for the post, held consultations with lawmakers ahead of announcing his nominee. By Monday afternoon, 84 members of parliament told Aoun they backed Salam, according to a tally by Lebanese media, with nine endorsing Najib Mikati who has served as prime minister in a caretaker capacity.

Aoun's election last week was made possible in part by the weakening of Hezbollah in a war with Israel. With the prime minister named by the president, the eastern Mediterranean country has been run by a caretaker government for more than two years amid a crushing economic crisis.

Under Lebanon's power-sharing system, the president must be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni, and the parliament speaker a Shia.

'Change'

Salam's backers view the judge and former ambassador as an impartial figure able to carry out much-needed reforms, a contrast to Mikati regarded by critics as under Hezbollah's influence.

Lawmaker George Adwan of Christian party the Lebanese Forces said after meeting Aoun and endorsing Salam that it was time for Hezbollah to focus on "political work". "The era of weapons is over," Adwan told reporters.

Hezbollah ended a deadly war against Israel this autumn bruised and weakened.

Under a ceasefire deal, the group must pull its fighters from areas of southern Lebanon near the Israeli border as the national army — until last week under Aoun's command — and UN peacekeepers deploy there.

Hezbollah also lost a key ally in neighbouring Syria when religious-led forces toppled president Bashar al-Assad last month. Independent lawmaker Melhem Khalaf said he backed Salam as a candidate of change.

A source close to Hezbollah said that the movement and its ally Amal movement supported Mikati. The Monday front page of *Al-Akhbar*, a newspaper close to Hezbollah, said Salam's nomination would be tantamount to a "complete US coup", after Washington had backed Aoun for president.

'Two options'

In his inaugural speech on Thursday, Aoun said his election as president would usher in a "new phase" for the country. Lebanese university professor Ali Mrad said support for Salam's nomination reflected "the real changes that Lebanon is experiencing".

"Today there are two options in the country: a serious reform option, called Nawaf Salam, and an option that takes us back, called Najib Mikati," he said.

Some opposition lawmakers on Saturday threw their weight behind anti-Hezbollah lawmaker and businessman Fouad Makhzoumi, but on Monday he withdrew to allow consensus around Salam. Whoever heads Lebanon's new government will face major challenges, including implementing reforms to satisfy international donors amid the country's worst economic crisis in its history.

They will also face the daunting task of reconstructing swathes of the country after the Israel-Hezbollah war and implementing the Nov 27 ceasefire agreement.—AFP

'Islamophobic' narratives

Continued from Page 1

to light through a 2014 report revealing that over 1,400 girls in Rotherham were groomed and abused between 1997 and 2013. Similar cases were reported in other towns, such as Oldham. Authorities faced criticism for failing to address the ethnic dimensions of the crimes, fearing accusations of racism.

Musk accused Starmer of being "complicit in the rape of Britain" by not prosecuting offenders more effectively during his leadership of the Crown Prosecution Service. While Starmer defended his record, Musk's remarks fueled divisive political discourse and calls for a national inquiry.

Amid the growing controversy, Pakistan's FO emphasised the positive contributions of British Pakistanis, who it said have played a vital role in the UK's growth and cultural enrichment.

"British nationals of Pakistani origin have a rich history of contributing to the United Kingdom's growth, development and, indeed, freedom," the statement said. It also highlighted the sacrifices of Muslim soldiers from present-day Pakistan during the two World Wars and the community's current role in the UK's health, retail, and service sectors.

British Pakistanis also hold significant positions in public life, including as members of parliament, councillors, and police officers, the statement noted. "Their cuisine and music enrich British culture," it added.

Pakistan reaffirmed its commitment to its "warm" and "robust" relationship with the UK, emphasising the importance of countering divisive narratives. "We note with deep concern the increasingly racist and Islamophobic political and media commentary in the UK that is aimed at conflating the reprehensible actions of a few individuals with the entire 1.7 million British Pakistani diaspora," the statement said, calling for fair characterisation of Pakistani-origin community.

The FO remarks come as British leaders grapple with balancing demands for accountability over grooming scandals and concerns about fueling xenophobia.

Despite the controversy, Pakistan urged both countries to focus on shared values and mutual respect, implicitly warning that inflammatory rhetoric could damage the longstanding ties between the two countries.

Talks to resume

Continued from Page 1

Dawn that the third round would be a step forward towards finding a solution as the PTI will present its demands in writing to the committee. "Submission of written demands will itself be a breakthrough," he said, adding that the atmosphere for the talks was peaceful and conducive.

Before this, two meetings have taken place, but without any significant progress. A source said that in the third meeting, the PTI could demand the formation of a judicial commission over the events of May 9 and its repercussions.

Senator Irfan Siddiqui, who is a member of the government committee, said that the PTI would present its demands in writing in the third meeting.

"We have to see whether these will be the only demands or if they will also suggest ways to implement them. For example, if they (PTI) demand the formation of a judicial commission, will they also suggest the terms of reference of the commission?" he asked.

The senator said the PTI took 42 days to submit its demands and it should not expect that the government would act promptly.

"We will share these demands with all coalition partners and seek their opinion, and then the final reply will be given," he added. He said the government thought that the PTI would share its demands with the National Assembly speaker, but it seemed the opposition party would table them in the committee meeting.

Nigeria's air force says it killed 16 civilians by mistake

MAIDUGURI: Nigeria's air force said it was investigating reports of civilian casualties during a weekend air strike that targeted armed gangs in the northwest, the latest military operation where innocent people may have been accidentally killed.

The army and air force have increasingly used aerial assaults against the growing threat in the northwest and central region posed by armed criminal gangs, known locally as bandits, that kill villagers and carry out mass kidnappings.

Nigerian Air Force (NAF) spokesperson Air Vice Marshal Olusola Akinboyewa said late on Sunday an air strike in northwestern Zamfara state on Saturday had targeted bandits, and that the air force had managed to rescue kidnapped victims. But residents said that at least 15 civilians, including local security guards, were killed.

An investigation into the matter was being conducted, Akinboyewa said in a statement. Air strikes have inadvertently killed civilians before.

In December, at least 10 people were killed after a military fighter jet pursuing bandits mistakenly bombed civilians in northwestern Sokoto state. Akinboyewa said the NAF would work to minimise and prevent any harm to civilians and civilian infrastructure in its operations.

Nigeria's Chief of Defence Staff General Christopher Musa told local television on Monday that the military did not intentionally target civilians and that the Zamfara incident would be fully investigated.—Reuters

Politicos stress need for security talks with Kabul

Continued from Page 1

unflinching support of the armed forces and law enforcement agencies in nation's fight against militancy and agreed on the need for a unified front beyond political colours against the extremist philosophy of militant groups, ISPR said.

Security briefing

In a separate engagement, Gen Munir was provided with a comprehensive briefing on the prevailing security situation and the ongoing counter-terrorism operations in the province.

An official statement issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said the briefing was also attended by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur.

"This war is ongoing and we will take it to its logical conclusion," the army chief vowed, adding that he was immensely proud of the remarkable achievements of the security forces who successfully degraded operational capabilities of militant organisations, both within borders and beyond.

"Our forces have relentlessly pursued and eliminated key terrorist leaders, dismantled their infrastructure, and neutralised their cells, sending a clear message that terror has no place in our land," the statement quoted the army chief as saying.

He praised the unwavering resolve and unmatched sacrifices of armed forces and law enforcement agencies, who had been instrumental in dismantling militant networks and thwarting their nefarious agenda, it read.

The COAS also emphasised the relentless efforts of law enforcement agencies for ensuring the safety and security of citizens, foiling numerous attacks, and maintaining peace and order, it added.

He highlighted that every operation had been a testament to the courage, professionalism, and operational readiness of the security forces, who continued to thwart the evolving threats posed by terrorists, according to the ISPR statement.

Decisive force

Gen Munir made it clear that any attempt to disturb the peace of the nation would be met with decisive and overwhelming force.

"The enemy may try to sow discord and fear, but we will not relent. Hostile elements will be dealt with an iron hand. They will continue to suffer heavy losses, and their capacity to inflict harm will be decimated," the COAS said.

He also lauded the exceptional morale of the troops, who remained steadfast in their commitment to safeguard the sovereignty of the nation and affirmed that the armed forces and law enforcement agencies stood as an unbreakable force, resolute in their mission to protect the motherland and its people.

Celebrations in Wad Madani as Sudan's army takes over strategic city

Power outages in the country after drone attack on major dam

WAD MADANI/PORT SUDAN: Civilians and soldiers celebrated in Wad Madani, the capital of Sudan's El Gezira state, after it was recaptured by the Sudanese army from the paramilitary Rapid Support Services, marking a possible turning point in a devastating near two-year civil war.

"We are so happy, we can't express ourselves," said one woman on Sunday, as soldiers shot into the air and people cheered on the streets. "A whole year we have been squeezed, we haven't been able to breathe."

The war began in the capital Khartoum in April 2023 over the integration of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Services (RSF). It has created one of the world's largest humanitarian crises, pushing more than 12 million people out of their homes, and plunging half of the population into hunger.

The RSF's occupation of El Gezira turned the fertile state into one at risk of famine. Its tight-knit villages were emptied out by violent raids as fields lay fallow or were set on fire, residents and eyewitnesses have said. The RSF denies the accusations and says it is fighting rogue actors who are committing abuses.

The army's ability to regain full control of the state would be pivotal in its attempts to choke the RSF's supply lines to Khartoum and the army-controlled eastern half of the country. The RSF still controls most of the capital.

"The SAF's capture of Wad Madani boosts its own morale and puts large RSF contingents at risk of encirclement in the area," said Jalel Harchaoui, an associate fellow at the London-based Royal United Services Institute. "It also frees the SAF to intensify pressure on Khartoum before potentially shifting its focus westward," he said, while warning that the RSF could launch a counteroffensive on al-Fashir, the army's last remaining holdout in the western Darfur region.

"This is a big victory that we thank God for, but we are not stopping, we are going swiftly, we are in a hurry, and God-willing soon every inch of Sudan will be cleansed," General Shams al-Din Kabbashi, deputy leader of the armed forces, told troops and civilians in Madani.

The bodies of RSF soldiers could be seen on the road and bridge leading into the city, but eyewitnesses reported few clashes inside Madani. The relatively swift takeover comes after weeks of advances by the army in surrounding villages, newly equipped in recent months with fresh armaments and new recruits to allied forces.

The Joint Forces, a collection of former rebel groups, as well as Sudan Shield, led by RSF defector Abuagla Keikal, participated in the recapturing of Wad Madani. The RSF chose to withdraw after being overwhelmed in the lead-up to the takeover, sources in the paramilitary said. They added that its soldiers were exhausted by airstrikes and by dwindling stocks of ammunition and supplies.

Engulfed electrical infrastructure

As forces were celebrating the recapture of capital of Sudan's El Gezira state, the seat of Sudan's army-aligned government however, battled power outages on Monday after a drone attack blamed on paramilitaries hit a major hydroelectric dam in the war-torn country's north, eyewitness said.

The Sudanese army, at war with the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) since April 2023, said in a statement that the attack on Merowe Dam was part of a "systematic campaign" against military sites but also targeting "vital" infrastructure.

Eyewitness in Port Sudan on the Red Sea, where the army-aligned government and the United Nations have been based since the war's early days, said widespread power outages have persisted since early Monday.

The army said that Merowe Dam and its power station, located about 350 kilometres north of the capital Khartoum and serving Port Sudan and other areas, were hit by "a number of suicide drones".

"Some losses were incurred, which will be repaired," the army statement said. Online footage showed fires engulfing the dam's electrical infrastructure. Since the early morning attack, local media said that the army-controlled cities of Atbara, Dongola and Omdurman — across the Nile from Khartoum — have also been hit by power outages.

In November last year, the army accused the RSF of targeting Merowe with 16 drones, though no casualties or significant damage were reported at the time. The dam is one of Sudan's biggest sources of hydroelectric power. Merowe city, in Sudan's Northern State, is also home to a major military airport.

The latest attack came two days after the army recaptured Wad Madani, the capital of the central state of Al-Jazira, after more than a year of paramilitary control.

In addition to decimating Sudan's already fragile infrastructure, the war has claimed the lives of tens of thousands of people, uprooted more than 12 million and pushed many Sudanese to the brink of famine.

They withdrew northwards towards other towns in the state and Khartoum, eyewitnesses said, chased by army airstrikes. Fiercer fighting could be expected as the RSF fights to maintain control of Khartoum, where the army has made gains, the RSF sources said. Many of the paramilitary's fighters come from militias and tribal groups outside of Gezira and had little will to fight for the country's centre, the RSF sources added.—Agencies

PEOPLE stand near a tank after Sudan's army entered Wad Madani, on Sunday.—Reuters

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'Breakthrough' in talks as Gaza truce deal draft finalised

Norway to host 3rd meeting of Global Alliance seeking two-state solution

DOHA: Mediator Qatar gave Israel and Hamas a final draft of a deal to end the war in Gaza on Monday, after a midnight "breakthrough" in talks attended by US President-elect Donald Trump's envoy, an official briefed on the negotiations said.

The official said the text for a ceasefire and the release of hostages was hammered out at talks in Doha which included the chiefs of Israel's Mossad and Shin Bet spy agencies and Qatar's prime minister as well Steve Witkoff, who will become US envoy when Trump takes office next week. Officials from the outgoing US administration are also thought to have participated.

"The next 24 hours will be pivotal to reaching the deal," the official said.

Israel's Kan radio, citing an Israeli official, reported on Monday that Israeli and Hamas delegations in Qatar had received a draft and that the Israeli delegation had briefed Israel's leaders. Israel, Hamas and the foreign ministry of Qatar did not respond to requests for confirmation or comment.

Officials on both sides, while stopping short of confirming that a final draft had been reached, described progress at the talks.

A senior Israeli official said a deal could be sealed within a few days if Hamas replies to a proposal. A Palestinian official close to the talks said information from Doha was "very promising", adding: "Gaps were being narrowed and there is a big push toward an agreement if all goes well to the end." The United States, Qatar and Egypt have worked for more than a year on talks to end the war in Gaza.

De facto deadline

Trump's Jan 20 inauguration is now widely seen in the region as a de facto deadline. The US president-elect has said there would be "hell to pay" unless hostages held by Hamas are freed before he takes office, while outgoing President Joe Biden has also pushed hard for a deal before he leaves.

The official said talks went until the early hours of Monday, with Witkoff pushing the Israeli delegation in Doha and Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani pushing Hamas officials to finalise an agreement.

The head of Egypt's general intelligence agency Hassan Mahmoud Rashad was also in the Qatari capital as part of the talks, the official said.

Trump envoy Witkoff has travelled to Qatar and Israel several times since late November. He was in Doha on Friday and travelled to Israel to meet Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Saturday before returning to Doha.

Biden also spoke on Sunday by phone with Netanyahu, stressing "the immediate need for a ceasefire in Gaza and return of the hostages with a surge in humanitarian aid enabled by a stoppage in the fighting under the deal", the White House said.

Two-state solution

In a related development, dozens of countries will send delegates to Norway on Wednesday as part of a global alliance aiming to find a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Norway's foreign ministry said on Monday.

Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammed Mustafa, the head of the UN's Palestinian refugee agency UNRWA Philippe Lazzarini, and UN envoy to the Middle East Tor Wennesland are among those due to attend.

It will be the third meeting of the Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution, whose creation was announced in September on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

"While we must continue to work for an end to the war (in Gaza), we must also work for a lasting solution to the conflict that guarantees self-determination, security and justice for both the Palestinians and the Israelis," Norway's Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide said in a statement.

Representatives of more than 80 countries and organisations are expected to take part in the meeting, though no official Israeli delegation has been announced.

Israel was angered when several countries — including Norway — decided to recognise the Palestinian state. —Agencies

GAZA CITY: A Palestinian rescue worker carries a child, injured in an Israeli strike, into Al-Ahli Arab hospital, on Monday. —AFP

FIA begins process to seize properties of human traffickers

By Waseem Ashraf Butt

GUJRAT: In line with recent directions by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has initiated the process of confiscating properties of those involved in human trafficking, *Dawn* has learnt.

The action, initiated under the Anti-Money Laundering Act (AMLA) 2010, mainly targets those booked in human trafficking and other related cases, as well as suspects already in FIA custody.

The AMLA gives investigation officers the power to send a reference for the seizure of a suspect's property to the anti money laundering cell at the directorate level, which can then initiate the process by obtaining the assent of the concerned magistrate within a few days.

Last week, PM Shehbaz Sharif had directed the officials concerned to expedite the prosecution process against all those involved in human smuggling effectively.

He ordered the authorities to appoint top lawyers for prosecution in consultation with the law ministry, and assigned the Foreign Office to contact the relevant states to expedite the extradition of the Pakistanis allegedly running human trafficking operations abroad.

Sources in the local land revenue department in various districts of Gujranwala region confirmed the confiscation of the properties in their respective districts.

An FIA source said that initially, the properties and assets of those human traffickers involved in the recent Greek boat tragedy, would be seized in the first phase, followed by similar action against those involved in the June 2023 boat tragedy, off the Libyan coast, as these incidents had caused the deaths of dozens of illegal immigrants intending to travel towards Europe.

Official sources explained assets were being seized in Sialkot, Gujrat, Mandi Bahauddin and Gujranwala districts, since most of the traffickers hailed from these towns of Central Punjab.

The authorities have already identified human traffickers belonging to the Jajja network of Sialkot's Pasrur tehsil, in Mandi Bahauddin, alleged human trafficker Ashraf Saleem and his associates in Bellan village and other such agents were among those whose properties were marked for confiscation by the FIA.

The FIA claimed to have arrested at least two more human traffickers involved in the recent Greece tragedy, which claimed the lives of at least 40 Pakistanis on Dec 14, 2024.

The arrests have been made from Gujrat and Hafizabad districts by the FIA crime circle, Gujrat.

According to a senior FIA official, the prime suspect in the human smuggling network was identified as Imran Shakoor, a resident of Shaddar village in Kharian tehsil of Gujrat.

The official said the suspect was successfully tracked down and apprehended after his accomplice, Zain Ali, was arrested already in the same case from Sukheki area of Hafizabad district on Saturday the last.

Another suspected human trafficker Zafar Iqbal, resident of Mandi Bahauddin, was arrested for allegedly extorting Rs700,000 from a man promising him to send his son to Italy for overseas employment.

Suparco unveils plan for launch of own EO-1 satellite

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (Suparco) has announced the launch of Pakistan's indigenous Electro-Optical (EO-1) satellite from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre, China, on Jan 17.

According to Suparco, the launch of the indigenous EO-1 mission reflects Suparco's dedication and expertise in advancing Pakistan's technological capabilities in space science and innovation.

This indigenously developed satellite is poised to enhance the ability to monitor and manage natural resources, predict and respond to natural disasters, support food security, and drive economic growth through informed decision-making and sustainable development.

The EO-1 satellite represents a significant achievement in the country's space technology journey as it offers substantial benefits across various sectors in Pakistan.

In agriculture, it will enable precision farming by monitoring crops, assessing irrigation needs, predicting yields, and supporting food security initiatives.

For urban development, the satellite will assist in tracking infrastructure growth, managing urban sprawl, and aiding city and regional planning efforts. In environmental monitoring and disaster management, it will provide timely updates on floods, landslides, earthquakes, deforestation, and land erosion.

Additionally, it will support extraction and conservation strategies for natural resources, including monitoring of minerals, oil and gas fields, glacier recession, and water resources.

The launch of the EO-1 satellite marks a momentous milestone in Pakistan's space journey.

The historic achievement is set to position advanced space technology capabilities at the forefront of national progress and development, aligning with the goals of National Space Policy. —APP

Geopolitics making cybersecurity challenges more complex: WEF

By Amin Ahmad

ISLAMABAD: The global cybersecurity challenges have become more profound and complex due to geopolitical tensions, a new World Economic Forum (WEF) report says.

Global Cybersecurity Outlook 2025" published on Monday said cybersecurity is entering an era of unprecedented complexity as geopolitical tensions are intensifying, new technologies are emerging at breakneck speed and threats are becoming more sophisticated.

Nearly 60 per cent of organisations stated that geopolitical tensions have affected their cybersecurity strategy, as per the report.

The geopolitical turmoil has also affected the perception of risks, with one in three CEOs citing cyber espionage and loss of sensitive information / intellectual property (IP) theft as their top concern. Around 45pc cyber leaders expressed concerns about the disruption of operations and business processes.

"The rapid adoption of emerging technologies is contributing to new vulnerabilities and new threats."

The report called for a shift in perspective from cybersecurity to enhanced cyber resilience — the ability to mitigate the impact of significant cyber incidents on its goals and objectives.

The WEF report underscored the importance of evaluating cyber risks from a socioeconomic perspective to effectively allocate resources and strengthen resilience against these threats.

At the same time, expanding regulatory demands, vulnerabilities in interwoven supply chains and a widening cyber skills gap are compounding the challenges organisations face in staying secure, the report said.

The reports added that 66pc of organisations expect artificial intelligence to have the most significant impact on cybersecurity in years to come and 37pc reported having processes in place to assess the security of AI tools before deployment.

The growing complexity of cyberspace is "exacerbating cyber inequity, widening the gap between large and small organisations, deepening the divide between developed and emerging economies".

Some 37pc of small organisations believe their cyber resilience is inadequate, a proportion that has increased sevenfold since 2022.

This disparity in cyber resilience is further highlighted by regional differences in preparedness, the report said, adding that only 15pc of respondents in Europe and North America lack confidence in their country's ability to respond to major cyber incidents. In contrast, the proportion was 36pc in Africa and 42pc in Latin America.

The public sector is disproportionately affected, with 38pc of respondents reporting insufficient resilience, compared to just 10 per cent of medium- to large private sector organisations.

This inequity extended to the cyber workforce, with 49pc of public-sector organisations indicating they lack the necessary talent to meet their cybersecurity goals.

Justice Shah wonders if 'non-CB' judges can be prevented from hearing constitutional matters

By Nasir Iqbal

ISLAMABAD: Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, the senior puisne judge of the Supreme Court, wondered on Monday whether judges who were not part of SC's constitutional bench could be prevented from hearing cases that involve constitutional interpretation, in the wake of the recently adopted 26th amendment.

The observation came during the hearing of an appeal moved by the federal government's revenue division against a Sindh High Court (SHC) judgement, challenging the vires of the tax regulatory duty.

Headed by Justice Shah, the three-judge bench also consisting of Justice Ayesha A. Malik and Justice Irfan Saadat had taken up the appeal.

The SHC had struck down Section 221(2) of the Customs Tax Act 1969.

Senior counsel Salahuddin Ahmed told *Dawn* that during the hearing, Justice Shah said the court would frame a set of questions and would be requiring the counsel's assistance.

At the outset, Justice Shah wondered would the appeal go to the constitutional bench or the regular bench, asking if the present bench could hear the matter since the case requires interpretation of legal and constitutional provisions.

"Is it possible that the judges of the Supreme Court are kept deprived of hearing constitutional matters?" Justice Shah observed, adding that lawyers could take their time in responding to the court's queries.

Justice Shah observed that the jurisdiction of ordinary benches had been taken away through Article 191A. "We have to see whether the jurisdiction could be taken away or not," he remarked. It also involved the question of independence of judiciary, he added.

Officials fear LA fire will take 'dangerous turn' today

Frustrated evacuees told they can't return home before Thursday

LOS ANGELES: Firefighters were battling massive wildfires on Monday that have ravaged Los Angeles and killed 24 people, with officials warning of incoming dangerous winds that could whip up the blazes further.

The fires ripped through the second-largest city in the United States for the seventh day, reducing whole communities to scorched rubble and leaving thousands without homes.

Massive firefighting efforts have staunched the spread of the Palisades Fire, which was looming toward upscale Brentwood and the densely populated San Fernando Valley.

But conditions are set to dramatically worsen, with "extreme fire behaviour and life threatening conditions" over the coming days.

Winds up to 110 kilometres per hour mean a "particularly dangerous situation" will occur on Tuesday, said National Weather Service meteorologist Rose Schoenfeld.

Those gusts could fan flames and whip up embers from existing burn zones into new areas, firefighters warned.

A fire department official in Los Angeles said his department had received new water trucks and firefighters from far afield and was primed to face the renewed threat.

Asked whether hydrants could run dry again, as they did during the initial outbreak of fires last week, Mayor Karen Bass replied: "I believe the city is prepared."

There was frustration for evacuees who were told they would not be returning home until Thursday at the earliest, when winds subside.

Some have queued for hours in the hope of getting back to homes they fled to pick up medication or a change of clothes.

But Sheriff Robert Luna said on Sunday escorts into those areas were being suspended because of the winds and dangerous conditions among the wreckage, as well as the need to retrieve victims' bodies.

Teams with cadaver dogs were carrying out grim searches with the grim expectation that the confirmed death toll would rise.

Several more arrests of looters were made, including one burglar who had dressed as a firefighter to steal from homes.

Nighttime curfews in evacuated zones have been extended and additional National Guard resources have been requested.

A fire in Palisades, an upscale neighbourhood, has consumed 23,700 acres and was just 13 per cent contained.

Video footage showed "fire tornadoes", red-hot spirals that occur when a blaze is so intense it creates its own weather system.

But containment of the 14,000-acre fire in Eaton, a neighbourhood in Altadena, had improved, with 27 per cent of its perimeter controlled.

The medical examiner of Los Angeles county published a list of fatalities without giving details of any identities. Eight of the dead were found in the Palisades fire zone, and 16 in the Eaton zone, the document said.

The sudden rush of people needing somewhere to live has posed a growing problem for the city, with reports of illegal price gouging from opportunistic landlords.

California Governor Gavin Newsom vowed the city would rebuild, saying there would be a "Marshall plan" ... a reference to the US support that put Europe back on its feet after World War II.

"We already have a team looking at reimagining LA 2.0," he said.—AFP

LOS ANGELES: Firefighters work to clear a firebreak on a hillside covered with pink retardant material in Mandeville Canyon. —Reuters

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SPORT

Leipzig thump Bremen as new Red Bull boss Klopp watches on

LEIPZIG: A Xavi Simons brace and a Benjamin Sesko stunner helped secure RB Leipzig a 4-2 home win over Werder Bremen in the Bundesliga on Sunday, with new Red Bull football boss Jurgen Klopp in the crowd.

Klopp started as the Global Head of Football at Red Bull, Leipzig's parent company, on Jan 1.

Klopp celebrated Leipzig's goals, a day after watching from the stands at sister club Paris FC in the French capital.

The win took Leipzig back to fourth, level on points with third-placed Eintracht Frankfurt, but nine behind leaders Bayern Munich.

Simons, put the hosts in front after 24 minutes, taking advantage of a quick throw in to latch onto a Lois Openda pass and slide the ball into the bottom left corner.

Bremen's Mitchell Weiser levelled two minutes later, finishing from close range after a clever Marco Grull backheel.

Simons however had Leipzig back in front 10 minutes before the break when his long-range effort was deflected past Bremen goalkeeper Michael Zetterer.

Sesko increased Leipzig's lead a minute into the second half, unleashing a dipping shot from outside the box and over Zetterer's outstretched hands.

Christoph Baumgartner added Leipzig's fourth in the final minute of regular time.

Scotland forward Oliver Burke scored a consolation goal for Bremen in stoppage time.

In Sunday's late game, Deniz Undav scored the only goal as VfB Stuttgart won 1-0 at Augsburg.—AFP

BARCELONA players celebrate with the trophy after winning the Spanish Super Cup final against Real Madrid at the King Abdullah Sports City.—Reuters

Barcelona thrash Real to clinch Spanish Super Cup

JEDDAH: Barcelona came from an early goal down to beat Real Madrid 5-2 in the Spanish Super Cup final on Sunday, scoring four goals in a dominant first half and surviving having their goalkeeper sent off to clinch a record-extending 15th trophy.

Lamine Yamal, Robert Lewandowski, Raphinha and Alejandro Balde were all on target before halftime, after French forward Kylian Mbappe put Real in front in the fifth minute. Raphinha grabbed another in the second half while Rodrygo scored for Real.

Barcelona put in a clinical display to lift their first trophy in more than a year, having no silverware to show for last season.

"A goal for big clubs is always to win titles, that's why we work hard. But now we have to show it in the next games," Hansi Flick told a press conference after winning his first trophy as Barca coach.

"Real made many mistakes, and we know how to take advantage of them to control the match."

Barca prevented Real from winning their third title of the campaign, after they won the European Super Cup against Atalanta and beat Mexico's Pachuca to the Intercontinental Cup last month.

"In the first half we didn't play football, we hit long balls and that wasn't the idea," Real coach Carlo Ancelotti said.

"I told the players that they can lose games, but not in the way we played in the first half.

We defended badly and that cost us the game — they found their goals quite easily. We're sad, like all our fans, it's disappointing and we don't have to hide that... we have to look forwards, there's nothing else we can do."

Mbappe earned an early advantage for the Spanish champions, finishing a solo run from around the halfway line with a shot inside the far post.

But what looked like a dream start quickly turned into a nightmare for Ancelotti's men when Yamal levelled for Barca in the 22nd minute. Striker Lewandowski gave them the lead 14 minutes later from a penalty awarded for Eduardo Camavinga's foul on Gavi.

Raphinha increased the advantage with a stunning header from a brilliant long cross by Jules Kounde in the 39th minute, and left back Balde added a fourth for Barca deep into stoppage time after nine minutes were added to the first half.

Yamal released Raphinha with a precise pass following Real's miserable corner kick, before the Brazil forward left the ball to Balde who scored with a simple finish.

Real started the second half with Rodrygo hitting the bar, sparking hopes of the hectic clash taking another turn.

But Raphinha spoiled any sniff of a comeback when he made it 5-1 three minutes after the break, having slalomed past the Real defence.

Barca were left with 10 men when goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny was sent off for fouling Mbappe in the 56th minute and Rodrygo beat substitute keeper Inaki Pena from the resulting free kick.

But Real, who hold a five-point advantage over Barca in La Liga after 19 games, had no shots on goal after the penalty until Mbappe's effort was denied by Pena in stoppage time.

"He was the best (Madrid player)," said Ancelotti, noting an improvement after Mbappe's hit-and-miss start to life at the club following his switch from Paris St-Germain.

"We can't always win, if we have to lose a cup, it's better that it's this one," said veteran Real midfielder Luka Modric.

Barcelona also lost defender Inigo Martinez before the half-hour mark through injury, with Ronald Araujo stepping in.

Barcelona and Real met in the competition's final for third consecutive time, with Ancelotti's side prevailing last year while Barca lifted the trophy in 2023.—Agencies

Conte hails McTominay, Lukaku as Napoli extend Serie A lead

MILAN: Napoli manager Antonio Conte praised the impact of Scott McTominay and Romelu Lukaku, both in their first season at the club, after their 2-0 Serie A win over Hellas Verona on Sunday.

Napoli broke the deadlock early on when Giovanni Di Lorenzo's shot hit the post and rebounded off goalkeeper Lorenzo Montipo, while Frank Anguissa sealed the victory with a powerful long-range shot.

Conte said he is still trying to find the right tactics to suit his squad, even as they secured a fifth successive league win, but that the new signings were integral in helping Napoli lead the standings by four points ahead of Inter Milan.

"There have certainly been changes since the beginning of the summer, especially as I am still trying to find the right tactics for this team," Conte told DAZN.

"The arrival of McTominay and Lukaku, in particular, made a big difference to the switch to 4-3-3. We tried a couple of different formations before we settled on this one."

After revealing that forward Khvicha Kvaratskhelia wanted to leave the Serie A club, Conte said he bore no ill will toward the Georgian and that he was more disappointed with himself.

Meanwhile, Matteo Darmian shot injury-hit Inter to victory at Venezia with the only goal of the game in the 15th minute.

Earlier, Genoa continued their revival under Patrick Vieira with a 1-0 win over Parma. Genoa are up to 13th on 23 points, a point behind AS Roma who snatched a last-gasp 2-2 draw.—Agencies

Atletico go top in La Liga

MADRID: Atletico Madrid claimed a 1-0 home win over Osasuna on Sunday to move top of the La Liga standings thanks to a second-half goal from Julian Alvarez.

Leaders Atletico Madrid secured their 14th consecutive victory across all competitions, a club record, to reach 44 points, one ahead of second-placed Real Madrid. Osasuna are 11th with 25 points.

Atleti had around 60% possession in the first half and had several chances in the second but struggled to create clear-cut chances before breaking the deadlock 10 minutes into the second half with a clever corner routine.

Diego Simeone's side face a gruelling schedule in January, with six matches across three competitions in 18 days.

They take on second-tier side Elche on Wednesday in the Copa del Rey and visit Leganes in La Liga three days later.

Earlier Getafe earned a 2-1 win at Las Palmas to climb three points above the relegation zone.—Agencies

Dembele hits brace as PSG defeat Saint-Etienne

PARIS: Ousmane Dembele of Paris Saint-Germain shoots to score during the Ligue 1 match against Saint-Etienne at the Parc des Princes Stadium.—AFP

PARIS: Ousmane Dembele scored twice in the first half as Paris St-Germain beat Saint-Etienne 2-1 on Sunday to sit seven points clear at the top of the Ligue 1 table halfway through the season.

Dembele opened the scoring with an individual effort on 13 minutes and then netted a penalty midway through the first half as PSG threatened to run riot against struggling opponents.

However a Saint-Etienne side sitting in the relegation play-off place stemmed the tide and managed to pull a goal back through a Zuriko Davitashvili free-kick on 64 minutes.

PSG nevertheless held on and have won 13 and lost none of their 17 domestic league outings this season.

"I would like to congratulate Saint-Etienne because I loved the way they played, with no fear, attacking and pressing high. They were very daring and brave," said PSG coach Luis Enrique, whose team maintained their habit of being wasteful in front of goal.

His side are on course to claim an 11th title in 13 years, with this victory at the Parc des Princes coming in response to nearest challengers Olympique de Marseille's 2-1 win away at Rennes on Saturday.

PSG are building towards a crunch Champions League clash at home to Manchester City on Jan 22, and Luis Enrique rested numerous key players here.

Captain Marquinhos was not involved at all, while Willian Pacho, Warren Zaire-Emery, Joao Neves, Vitinha and Desire Doue all began on the bench.

Instead there was a first start this season in defence for Lucas Hernandez, who has recovered from a knee injury, and 18-year-old prospect Senny Mayulu came into the midfield.Earlier, Le Havre lost 2-1 at home to RC Lens earlier, despite taking the lead through Andre Ayew, with debutant Goduine Koyalipou and Deiver Machado scoring for the away side.

Elsewhere, rock-bottom Montpellier had two men sent off as they went down 3-1 at home to Angers, for whom Esteban Lepaul scored twice.

A brace by Emanuel Emegha helped Strasbourg to a 2-1 win at Toulouse.—AFP

Pakistan beat SL in PD Champions Trophy

COLOMBO: Pakistan's cricket team secured a convincing 140-run victory over hosts Sri Lanka in the Physical Disability Champions Trophy in Colombo on Monday.

Wicketkeeper-opener Saifullah Achakzai stole the show with a blistering 93 off 68 deliveries, featuring eight fours and five sixes. Mohammad Noman contributed 49 off 33 balls, while Ghulam Muhammad chipped in with 27 off 12.

Pakistan posted 209-3 in 20 overs, before bundling out Sri Lanka for 69 in 15.4 overs. Ghulam and Wajid Shah claimed three wickets each, conceding just seven and nine runs, respectively.

Saifullah's explosive innings earned him the man-of-the-match award. The victory marks Pakistan's first win in the tournament, following a defeat to India.—Agencies

POA forms bodies to improve sports, discipline

LAHORE: The Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) has constituted a Sports Commission and Disciplinary Committee in order to enhance the organisation of sports and address related disciplinary matters.

"In line with the guidelines set by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), POA President Arif Saeed approved the formation of both committees. The decision aligns with the POA's constitution. The Disciplinary Committee will be chaired by Lieutenant Colonel Nabeel Ahmad Rana, Secretary of the Army Sports Board, with POA Deputy Secretary General Mohammad Jahangir serving as its Secretary," the POA said in a press release issued on Monday.

"The members of the Disciplinary Committee includes Pervez Ahmed (gymnastics federation), Nazhat Jabeen (weightlifting federation), Ejaz Ali (table tennis federation), Professor Ahmed Bilal (fencing federation), Sohail Ahmed Khan (Balochistan Olympic Association), Haider Usman Advocate, and Muhammad Imran.

"The POA has also established the Sports Commission, which will be headed by Brig Mujtaba Haider, Director of the Army Sports Directorate, with POA Secretary General Mohammad Khalid Mahmood serving as the Commission's Secretary While Rizwan-ul-Haq Rast (rowing federation), Fawzi Khawaja (rugby union), Ahmed Ali Rajput (gymnastics federation), Muhammad Umair Aslam Malik (Wapda Sports), Tariq Pervez (bodybuilding federation), Dr. Shamsa Hashmi (volleyball federation), Rana Amjad Iqbal (HEC), and Imran Ahmed will act as the members of the Sports Commission," it further stated.

"The Disciplinary Committee will ensure the protection of athletes and manage all related matters under the established framework.

"Meanwhile, the POA Sports Commission will have full decision-making authority over the National Games, Inter-Provincial Games, sports development, education programs, and other policies," added the POA release.—Sports Reporter

National junior squash starts

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's National Junior Squash Championship got underway on Monday with the qualifying round of the boys' event, featuring players in the Under-13, Under-15 and Under-17 categories here at the Mushaf Squash Complex.

A total of 150 players from across Pakistan are competing in the championship, which carries a prize purse of Rs400,000.

The qualifying round for the boys' event will continue until Wednesday, with the main round scheduled to take place from Jan 15 to 19.

Results:

Boys Under-13: Mustafa Khan bt Azair Rashid 3-0; M. Luqman bt M. Irsad 3-0; M. Zainaal bt Aslan Shah 3-0; M. Ahmad bt Hamzala 3-2; Fahad Khan bt Zaid 3-0; Faizan Anwar bt Hashim Sikander 3-2; Taha Ashraf bt Fahad Rasheed 3-0; Nabeel Khan bt Ibrahim Habib 3-0; Ayan Naqash bt Usair Khan 3-0; Hasnain Ali bt M. Wali 3-0; Irfan Ullah bt Muhammad Shah 3-0; Salah Khan bt Haider Ali 3-0; M. Shahzaib bt Hassan Ali 3-0; Rehan Khan bt M. Ayan 3-0; M Safdar bt Zakriya 3-0.

Boys Under-15: Sahil Ahmed bt M Khizar 3-1; Aliyan Gul bt M. Hamzala 3-0; Sohaib Khan bt Abdullah Jan 3-0; Ali Mehad bt Joshua Tariq 3-2; Ahsan-Mustafa bt M. Aslam 3-0; M. Abid bt Basser Afridi 3-0; Asan Khalil bt M Ishtiaq 3-1; Ogaail Durrani bt M. Hamzah 3-0; M. Sudais bt Qaiser Khan 3-2; M. Ali bt Yahya 3-1; Manoor Khan bt Zain 3-0; Fawad Khan bt Ahmed Khan 3-0; Hassan Khan bt Abdul Rehman Sialab 3-0; Abubakar Khan bt Khizar Hayat 3-1; Faizan Khan bt Hawad Saeed 3-0; Shayan Zeb bt M Sabir 3-0.

Boys Under-17: M. Malik bt Atiq Ur Rehman 3-0; Danish Alam bt Abdullah Khalid 3-0; Azaan Ullah bt Zeeshan 3-0; Kaif Nazir bt Mohsin Khan 3-2; Mohsin Matti bt Subhan Khalid 3-0.—Sports Reporter

IOC to replace Hall's medals lost in wildfire

CINCINNATI: American former swimmer Gary Hall Jr is set to receive replicas of the 10 Olympic medals he lost in the Los Angeles wildfires that destroyed his home, International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach has said.

Hall represented the US at the 1996, 2000 and 2004 Olympics, winning five gold, three silver and two bronze medals in Atlanta, Sydney and Athens.

The 50-year-old was forced to leave the medals behind at his Pacific Palisades home during the fires.

"I'm too proud to ask for help, but my worldly possessions right now are the clothes that I was wearing and a toothbrush that I bought yesterday," Hall told the *Los Angeles Times*.

"My 10 Olympic medals, everything else I owned and my home and my business were lost."

Bach said the IOC was in "full solidarity" with the people of Los Angeles.

"Currently the full focus must be on the fight against the fires and the protection of the people and property," Bach said. "We have also learned that a great Olympian, Gary Hall Jr, has lost his medals in the fire. The IOC will provide him with replicas."—Reuters

United advance in FA Cup, Spurs need extra time to win

LONDON: Ten-man FA Cup holders Manchester United dispatched Arsenal in a third-round thriller decided by a penalty shootout on Sunday, while Tottenham Hotspur survived a major scare against non-league side Tamworth.

Premier League teams Newcastle United, Ipswich Town, Crystal Palace and Southampton also punched their tickets to the fourth round with victories, while fourth-tier Doncaster Rovers advanced after a shootout.

Joshua Zirkzee struck the winning penalty for 10-man Manchester United after their hectic tie finished 1-1 after extra time at the Emirates Stadium.

Arsenal's Kai Havertz was the only one of the first four penalty takers to miss, denied by a brilliant stop from Altay Bayindir, before Zirkzee stepped up to win the shootout 5-3.

"I just want to help this great team," second-choice goalkeeper Bayindir told the BBC. "I want to make everyone happy for this great club ... if you are not playing it doesn't matter.

"You have to be ready every minute, every second if you are a United player you have to be ready always."

United took the lead in the 52nd minute through Bruno Fernandes' curling effort from just inside the box after a great run by Alejandro Garnacho.

The game turned on its head 10 minutes later though, as United's Diogo Dalot received a second yellow card for a reckless tackle on Mikel Merino.

Two minutes later, Bayindir's poor attempted punch fell at the feet of Gabriel, whose shot took a wicked deflection off Matthijs de Ligt and in to put the Gunners in charge of the tie.

Arsenal were awarded a questionable penalty after Havertz went down under minimal contact from Harry Maguire. But, after a brief melee which saw Maguire, Havertz and Gabriel booked, Bayindir produced a superb save from Arsenal captain Martin Odegaard in the 72nd minute.

"I am working everyday," Bayindir said. "I am patient. I just want to help this great team. I want to make everyone happy for this great club. I'm working here every-day."

Meanwhile, Spurs needed extra time to beat brave fifth-tier Tamworth, 96 places below them in the English football pyramid, 3-0, thanks to an own goal from Nathan Tshikuna and strikes from Dejan Kulusevski and Brennan Johnson.

The game had the makings of a huge upset from the opening whistle as Tamworth more than held their own on the artificial Lamb Ground pitch and had a couple of brilliant scoring chances late on. But the team of part-time players tired and were unable to secure one of the biggest shocks in the competition.

After a goalless 90 minutes, Nathan Tshikuna's own goal in the 101st minute put Spurs ahead. Substitute Dejan Kulusevski doubled the lead when he latched onto a pass from Son Heung-min to shoot into the bottom corner and Johnson added a late third.

Elsewhere, Newcastle survived a scare from fourth-tier Bromley in a 3-1 victory that gave them eight successive wins in all competitions.

Cameron Congreve's long-range strike gave Bromley an eighth-minute lead at St James' Park in their first FA Cup third round appearance.

But Lewis Miley's 25-yard blast hauled Newcastle level in the 16th minute.

Anthony Gordon converted a 49th-minute penalty before Will Osula's 61st-minute rocket sealed the victory.

LONDON: Manchester United's Bruno Fernandes scores from the penalty spot past Arsenal goalkeeper David Raya during their FA Cup third-round match at the Emirates Stadium.—Reuters

Crystal Palace beat third-tier Stockport 1-0 at Selhurst Park, while Ipswich defeated third-tier Bristol Rovers 3-0 at Portman Road.

Southampton's new manager Ivan Juric earned his first win as the Premier League's bottom side beat second-tier Swansea 3-0 at St Mary's.

League Two Doncaster booked their fourth-round berth with a penalty shootout victory over Championship side Hull City. The tense shootout ended 5-4 after regulation and extra time ended in a 1-1 draw.—Agencies

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Djokovic joins Alcaraz, Sinner in Australian Open second round

MELBOURNE: Novak Djokovic survived a scare in his quest for tennis history before following Carlos Alcaraz and defending champion Jannik Sinner into the second round of the Australian Open on Monday.

But Greek former finalist Stefanos Tsitsipas and home favourite Nick Kyrgios both fell at the first hurdle, with the combustible Australian going out swearing and in pain.

In the women's draw, Iga Swiatek and Coco Gauff powered through with minimum fuss as they launched their bids to dethrone two-time defending champion Aryna Sabalenka.

Another winner was two-time Australian Open champion Naomi Osaka, who defeated France's Caroline Garcia 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

On a blockbuster second day in Melbourne, Djokovic lost the first set to 107th-ranked American Nishesh Basavareddy in the prime-time evening match on Rod Laver Arena.

But the Serbian great, hoping to roll back the years and win an 11th Australian Open and record 25th Grand Slam singles title, recovered to ease through 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-2.

In front of new coach and former rival Andy Murray, Djokovic struggled to raise a smile in the immediate aftermath.

"At the end it was great but I think he was the better player for a set and a half," said the 37-year-old.

Italian world number one Sinner was warmly welcomed on Rod Laver Arena before defeating Chile's Nicolas Jarry 7-6(7/2), 7-6(7/5), 6-1.

Sinner is playing under a cloud after twice testing positive for traces of a steroid in March.

He denies wrongdoing and was cleared by tennis authorities, but the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) appealed and is seeking to ban him for up to two years.

"I was curious to see how it was. You never know what's happening," he said about the reception.

"I was happy about the crowd," added Sinner, who has not tasted defeat since losing to Alcaraz in the Beijing final in October.

Alcaraz, a four-time Grand Slam champion but never a winner in Melbourne, had a couple of hairy moments before seeing off Kazakhstan's Alexander Shevchenko, 6-1, 7-5, 6-1.

"This is a tournament I really want to win one day, hopefully this year," said the 21-year-old Spaniard.

There was disappointment for home fans as the colourful but temperamental Kyrgios, only recently back from 18 months out with injury, lost 7-6(7/3), 6-3, 7-6(7/2) to Britain's Jacob Fearnley.

Kyrgios spoke to physios multiple times in the second set after wincing in pain while serving and fired expletives at his coaching box.

The 11th-seeded Tsitsipas became the first major casualty when Alex Michelsen blasted past him 7-5, 6-3, 2-6, 6-4.

The 26-year-old Greek, who played Djokovic in the 2023 final at Melbourne Park, never looked comfortable against the 42nd-ranked American.

"It just sucks in a way that I'll be hanging around for quite a while now before my next tournament comes in," said Tsitsipas.

Two-time US Open semi-finalist Frances Tiafoe vomited twice on court before pulling through in five sets against Frenchman Arthur Rinderknech.

The women's draw provided few upsets on day two.

Red-hot world number three Gauff laid down a marker as she swept aside former Melbourne champion and fellow American Sofia Kenin.

Gauff is unbeaten this year after leading the US to United Cup glory and eased past the 2020 Australian Open winner 6-3, 6-3 in 80 minutes.

"I knew it was going to be difficult, but you know, I'm happy with how I played," said Gauff, the 2023 US Open champion.

World number two Swiatek defeated Czech doubles specialist Katerina Siniakova 6-3, 6-4 to get her tournament up and running.

The Pole has won five Grand Slams but her best performance at Melbourne Park is the semi-finals in 2022.

"For sure it wasn't an easy first round, so I'm happy that I'm through," said Swiatek.

US Open finalist Jessica Pegula, the seventh-seeded American, blew away home player Maya Joint 6-3, 6-0.

Victoria Azarenka, the 2012 and 2013 champion, was a notable early loser as the Belarusian went down 6-2, 7-6 (7/2) to Italy's Lucia Bronzetti.—AFP

GREECE'S Stefanos Tsitsipas (top) hits a return against Alex Michelsen of the US during their Australian Open first-round match at Melbourne Park on Monday.—AFP

Qalandars get Mitchell for PSL 10; Williamson, Warner picked by Kings

By Our Sports Reporter

LAHORE: All six franchises of the HBL Pakistan Super League completed their respective squads for the 10th edition during the players' draft ceremony held here at the historical Hazuri Bagh, Lahore Fort on Monday.

New Zealand's Daryl Mitchell became the first pick of the coming season when two-time winners Lahore Qalandars picked him to strengthen their batting order. Mitchell will make his PSL debut this year.

New Zealand's batting maestro Kane Williamson was one of the prominent signings by Karachi Kings in the supplementary round one.

Former Australian opener David Warner was picked by Kings as they made one of the second pick in the first Platinum round. Warner, with 12,727 T20 runs in 392 T20 matches under his belt, will also be among the PSL debutants.

Peshawar Zalmi used the right to match option for English cricketer Tom Kohler-Cadmore, who was picked by Quetta Gladiators. Kohler-Cadmore has represented Zalmi in the last four PSL seasons. Gladiators then took New Zealand's Mark Chapman, who has played 81 T20 Internationals.

New Zealand's Michael Bracewell and Matthew Short of Australia were the last two picks in the Platinum one round as they were gleaned by Multan Sultans and Islamabad United, respectively.

In the Platinum round two, Quetta Gladiators and Karachi Kings had two picks each. Gladiators used their wild card pick option to snare all-rounder Faheem Ashraf.

Aggressive Kiwi opener Finn Allen, 25, was the other player Quetta picked in this round.

Karachi Kings strengthened their pace arsenal as they went for New Zealand pacer Adam Milne as their first pick of the Platinum two round and followed it up by using wild card on fast bowler Abbas Afridi.

The Diamond round of picks saw Peshawar Zalmi, Islamabad United and Lahore Qalandars bag quality overseas talent in South African Corbin Bosch, Jason Holder of West Indies and Sri Lanka's Kusal Perera, respectively.

Peshawar Zalmi topped up their pace stocks by picking Bangladesh's Nahid Rana in the Gold category round one.

In the same category, Islamabad United picked Aussie fast bowler Ben Dwarshuis who will join compatriots Riley Meredith and Short on the United roster.

In the Silver category round three Bangladesh spinner Rishad Hossain was roped in by Qalandars. In a first, Andries Gous of the United States made it to the PSL 2025. He will turn up for Islamabad United.

Multan Sultans added Irish pacer Josh Little and West Indies' spinner Gudakesh Motie to their side during this round.

In the supplementary round one, Kings' other overseas picks include Afghanistan's Mohammad Nabi, Warner and Bangladesh's Litton Das.

West Indies' Johnson Charles, England's Tom Curran, Kusal Mendis of Sri Lanka and West Indies' pacer Alzarri Joseph were bagged by Sultans, Qalandars, Gladiators and Zalmi, respectively in supplementary round one.

In round two, Sam Billings of England was snared by Qalandars who used the right to match card against defending champions Islamabad United, who later added South African batter Rassie van der Dussen to their squad.

Quetta Gladiators made a strong pick in the Supplementary round two bagging Australia's Sean Abbott while Shai Hope of West Indies was taken by Sultans.

Former Pakistan skipper and all-rounder Shoaib Malik, who is going to feature in his tenth consecutive PSL edition, was procured by Quetta Gladiators in the Supplementary round three.

Among the two Emerging rounds of picks, notable selections were Hasan Nawaz (Gladiators) and Maaz Sadaqat (Zalmi).

Spinner Saad Masood was taken by Islamabad United while Hunain Shah returned to the same franchise. Pacer Ubaid Shah was picked by Sultans.

Final squads:

ISLAMABAD UNITED: Matthew Short, Naseem Shah, Shadab Khan (all Platinum), Imad Wasim (retain), Azam Khan, Jason Holder (both Diamond), Ben Dwarshuis, Salman Irshad, Salman Ali Agha (Retain/Ambassador) and Haider Ali (all Gold), Andries Gous, Colin Munro, Mohammad Nawaz and Rumman Raees (all Silver), Hunain Shah, Saad Masood (both Emerging); Supplementary: Riley Meredith, Rassie van der Dussen.

MULTAN SULTANS: Michael Bracewell, Mohammad Rizwan, Usama Mir (all Platinum), David Willey (retain), Iftikhar Ahmed (Retain/Ambassador), Usman Khan (all Diamond), Chris Jordan, Kamran Ghulam and Mohammad Hasnain (all Gold), Akif Javed, Gudakesh Motie, Josh Little, Faisal Akram and Tayyab Tahir (all Silver), Ubaid Shah and Shahid Aziz (both Emerging); Supplementary: Johnson Charles, Mohammad Amir Barki, Shai Hope and Yasir Khan.

PESHAWAR ZALMI: Babar Azam, Saim Ayub, Tom Kohler-Cadmore (all Platinum), Corbin Bosch, Mohammad Ali and Mohammad Haris (all Diamond), Abdul Samad, Hussain Talat and Nahid Rana (all Gold), Arif Yaqoob, [illegible], Max Bryant, Mehran Mumtaz and Sufyan Muqim (Retain/Ambassador) (all Silver), Ali Raza, Maaz Sadaqat (both Emerging); Supplementary: Ahmed Daniyal, Alzarri Joseph.

QUETTA GLADIATORS: Faheem Ashraf, Finn Allen, Mark Chapman (Platinum), Abrar Ahmed, Mohammad Amir (retain), Rilee Rossouw (all Diamond), Akeal Hosein, Saud Shakeel (Retain/Ambassador), Mohammad Wasim Jnr (all Gold), Shoaib Khan, Khawaja Mohammad Nafay, Kyle Jamieson, Khurram Shahzad and Usman Tariq (all Silver), Mohammad Zeeshan, Hasan Nawaz (both Emerging); Supplementary: Danish Aziz, Kusal Mendis, Sean Abbott, Shoaib Malik.

KARACHI KINGS: Adam Milne, David Warner, Mohammad Abbas Afridi (all Platinum), Hasan Ali, James Vince, Khushdil Shah (all Diamond), Aamir Jamal, Mohammad Irfan Khan and Shan Masood (all Gold), Andre Mishra (Retain/Ambassador), Litton Das, Mir Hamza, Tim Seifert and Zahid Mehmood (all Silver), Fawad Ali, Mohammad Riazullah (both Emerging); Supplementary: Kane Williamson, Mohammad Nabi, Omair Bin Yousuf, Mirza Mamoon.

LAHORE QALANDARS: Daryl Mitchell, Fakhar Zaman and Shaheen Shah Afridi (all Platinum), Haris Rauf (Retain/Ambassador), Kusal Perera, Sikandar Raza (all Diamond), Abdullah Shafique, Jahandad Khan and Zaman Khan (all Gold), Asif Afridi, Asif Ali, David Wiese, Mohammad Akhlaq and Rishad Hossain (all Silver), Mohammad Azab, Momin Qamar (both Emerging); Supplementary: Mohammad Naeem, Sam Billings, Salman Mirza, Tom Curran.

Ex-world champion Fury retires again

LONDON: Former world heavyweight champion Tyson Fury said Monday he had retired from boxing just weeks after suffering a second straight defeat at the hands of Oleksandr Usyk.

"I'm going to make this short and sweet," the British fighter said in a social media post. "I'd like to announce my retirement from boxing.

"It's been a blast, I've loved every single minute of it," added Fury, who has, however, previously performed a number of U-turns over his future in the ring.

The "Gypsy King", 36, last fought on Dec 21 when he lost his rematch against Usyk in Riyadh.

Asked after the fight whether the public would see him fight again, Fury said: "You might do, you might not do. Who knows?"

Fury enjoyed two stints as heavyweight champion and retires with a record of 34 wins, two defeats and one draw.

He announced he was quitting after beating Dillian Whyte in April 2022 but returned to action later that year.

Frank Warren, who promotes Fury, told the BBC he had not spoken to the boxer prior to his retirement announcement.

"I've said all along that there is no way I will be trying in any way to influence him," Warren said. "If that what he wants to do, that's great. He's done everything he can do.

"Probably been the best British heavyweight of his generation by far.

"Two-time world champion, two closely fought fights against Usyk. He's got plenty of money, got his wits about him, got a lovely family. God bless him, enjoy."

Fury was beaten by Usyk on all three judges' scorecards by 116-112 in Saudi Arabia last month.

The Ukrainian won their first fight in May 2024 by split decision.

Fury's retirement appears to mean he will not take on another former world champion, Anthony Joshua, in an all-British showdown.—AFP

Cummins to lead Australia at CT

MELBOURNE: Pat Cummins will captain Australia at the Champions Trophy after being named in a preliminary 15-man squad also featuring fellow quick Josh Hazlewood on Tuesday.

Cummins will skip the Test series in Sri Lanka in January and early February for personal reasons but will return to Australia's colours for the one-day international tournament being played in Pakistan and UAE from Feb 19.

Hazlewood missed the last two Tests in the recent series triumph over India because of calf and side injuries but will reunite with Cummins and Mitchell Starc in the pace attack that has helped Australia to multiple successes over the last decade.

There was no place in the squad for opener Jake Fraser-McGurk, who has been short of runs, but otherwise the squad had a familiar feel with all but three of the team that won the 50-overs World Cup in 2023 included.

All-rounders Matt Short and Aaron Hardie as well as quick bowler Nathan Ellis are the least experienced international players in the squad with less than a dozen ODIs each.

"This is a balanced and experienced squad," head selector George Bailey said in a news release. "It offers a variety of options for touring management depending on opposition and the conditions that may present in Pakistan."

The Champions Trophy, which Australia won in 2006 and 2009, was last played in 2017.

The ninth edition of the tournament will run from Feb 19 to March 9 mostly in Pakistan with only the matches involving India taking place in the UAE for political reasons.

Australia have been drawn with Afghanistan, England and South Africa for the opening group stage.

Squad: Pat Cummins (captain), Alex Carey, Nathan Ellis, Aaron Hardie, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Marnus Labuschagne, Mitch Marsh, Glenn Maxwell, Matt Short, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, Adam Zampa.—Reuters

Nortje back in SA squad for Champions Trophy

JOHANNESBURG: Fast bowler Anrich Nortje was on Monday named in South Africa's 15-man squad for the ICC Champions Trophy One-day International tournament in Pakistan next month.

Nortje, 31, has not played in a 50-over match since September 2023 when he suffered a stress fracture.

He came back to be South Africa's most successful bowler in the T20 World Cup last June but has not played an international match since the final against India in Barbados. He turned down a Cricket South Africa contract in order to play T20 franchise cricket.

Nortje had been due to play in white-ball matches against Pakistan last month but suffered a broken right toe while batting in the nets.

Coach Rob Walter said he was confident Nortje would be in peak physical condition for the Champions Trophy.

"He was at our camp in Pretoria bowling really quickly," said Walter. "He was super-fit and super-energised to be playing for South Africa again and it was just one of those unfortunate circumstances. Anrich is the ultimate professional, he looks after himself and takes care of his conditioning. I've got no doubt he'll be good to go."

Fellow fast bowler Lungi Ngidi will also return after recovering from the groin injury which kept him out of South Africa's home international season.

Ten of the squad played in the 2023 World Cup in India, where Walter said the team had "played exceptional cricket" to reach the semi-finals.

While South Africa's quest for a major trophy continues, Walter said a core group of players would benefit from reaching the semi-finals and final of their last two International Cricket Council events.

"They know what it feels like to be in the cauldron," he said.

South Africa will play in a triangular tournament in Pakistan against the hosts and New Zealand ahead of the Champions Trophy but are likely to have to select some different players because of a clash with the closing stages of the SA20 franchise tournament.

Squad: Temba Bavuma (captain), Tony de Zorzi, Marco Jansen, Heinrich Klaasen (wicket-keeper), Keshav Maharaj, Aiden Markram, David Miller, Wiaan Mulder, Lungi Ngidi, Anrich Nortje, Kagiso Rabada, Ryan Rickelton (wicket-keeper), Tabraiz Shamsi, Tristan Stubbs, Rassie van der Dussen.—AFP

Anderson to play on for Lancashire

LONDON: England's record Test wicket-taker James Anderson has agreed a new one-year contract with Lancashire that takes him past his 43rd birthday, the county side announced on Monday.

The veteran paceman has not played since an emotional farewell to Test cricket against the West Indies at Lord's in July 2024 but repeatedly said he still had something to offer as a player.

Anderson bowed out of Test duty with 704 wickets — the most taken by a seamer in the history of the format and the highest number by an England bowler of any type.

He has since had several spells acting as a mentor to England's quicks, but the urge to play remains strong even though he went unsold at the recent Indian Premier League action.

"I am incredibly excited to sign this contract with Lancashire and resume playing professional cricket again next season," said Anderson, who turns 43 in July.

"This club has played a huge part in my life since I was a teenager, so to have the opportunity to wear the Red Rose again and help the side in both red and white ball cricket is one that I am really looking forward to."

Lancashire's first County Championship match in the 2025 season is against Middlesex at Lord's, starting on April 4.—AFP

Lategan wins Dakar stage eight to consolidate lead

RIYADH: Toyota's Henk Lategan of South Africa consolidated his lead atop the driver standings of the Dakar Rally by winning the eighth stage on Monday.

The 30-year-old, in his fourth Dakar outing, covered the 487km special between Al-Duwadimi and Riyadh in 4hr 51min 54sec.

Lategan, who also won the Jan 3 prologue, extended his lead over home hope Yazeed al-Rajhi to 5min 41sec in the general classification.

Despite a two-minute penalty for speeding on the stage, Lategan finished the day's driving 1min 47sec ahead of compatriot Guy Botterill, also in a Toyota.

"There was one canyon where everybody was getting lost," said Lategan. "And we were a little bit nervous going into there because you see cars coming from the front and cars coming from all angles out the mountains.

"At the end, we were all the way out the canyon and then finally found our way. So we hopped from, let's say, seventh or so on the road all the way to first. And then we were opening for quite a while.

"And then we made one or two small navigation errors. We had a puncture earlier on. So, not a bad day. We're happy to have found that one waypoint, but not the perfect day."

France's Mathieu Serradori [Century] prevented an all-South African podium by finishing third, five seconds ahead of Brian Baragwanath.

Qatar's five-time champion Nasser al-Attiyah completed the stage 12min 17sec off Lategan's pace and now sits fourth in the standings, at 34min 14sec.

Sweden's Mattias Ekstrom is third.

"It was a very tough day," said Attiyah, who has seen fancied rivals Carlos Sainz and Sebastien Loeb withdraw from the gruelling race. "Sometimes when we were opening it was very difficult.

"Yazeed had a good line and when he passed we just followed him, until the dunes when we passed him, but it was really difficult. I am happy to finish this day. We still have four days left and we'll see. The navigation was very hard. Sometimes we were lucky, other times not, but we made it here."

Argentinian Luciano Benavides (KTM) won the bike category's stage, 2min 08sec ahead of French rider Adrien Van Beveren.

Spain's Tosha Schareina was third, while Australian Daniel Sanders retained the overall lead by just over 11 minutes.

Schareina had initially been named provisional stage winner, but Benavides and Van Beveren were recredited with the time spent assisting Chilean Pablo Quintanilla, who fell after 113km and was forced to withdraw due to a shoulder injury.

"Opening a lot of the stage was good and I had a really good rhythm," said Sanders. "I think tomorrow's going to be the last difficult navigation day before we head down to the Empty Quarter."

Tuesday's stage nine features a 357km special from Riyadh to Haradh.—AFP

SOUTH AFRICAN driver Henk Lategan and compatriot co-driver Brett Cummings compete during the eighth stage of the Dakar Rally, between Al Duwadimi and Riyadh, on Monday.—AFP

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DAWN

METRO South

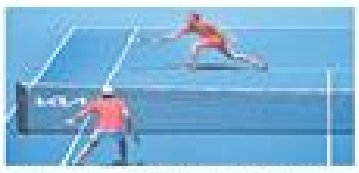
KARACHI Tuesday, January 14, 2025

KARACHI

Sunset	06:04 pm
Sunrise (Tomorrow)	07:18 am

NEXT 24 HRS

Minimum	13°C
Maximum	23°C
Humidity	41%
Outlook	Sunny



Djokovic joins Alcaraz, Sinner in Australian Open second round
Pg.18 SPORT

Luxury car, Rs12.9m recovered in trader kidnap case: IO

By Sumair Abdullah

KARACHI: An anti-terrorism court was on Monday informed that investigators had recovered Rs12.9 million and a "luxury" car allegedly purchased with the ransom paid by a cryptocurrency trader to his kidnappers to earn freedom.

The investigating officer of the case informed the court that the suspects held in the case, including two Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) officials, had transferred the ransom money to a bank and later used the amount to purchase a luxury sedan (Mercedes-Benz), which had been recovered.

On Monday, the IO brought the eight suspects — CTD constables Ali Sajad and Muhammad Umer, along with Haris Ashar, Muhammad Rizwan Shah, Noman Riffat, Tariq Hasan Shah, Muzamil Raza and Umer Jilani — before the administrative judge of the ATCs in Clifton for extension in their remand.

The IO informed the court that the police had recovered a Mercedes Benz purchased with the ransom money and an amount of cash from the suspects.

He also informed the court that complainant Arsalan Malik had identified the two suspects before the judicial magistrate (West) and assigned their roles in the commission of the offence.

The IO requested the court to extend their physical remand as he needed to interrogate them and apprehend the absconding suspects — Hamad, Zaman, Muzamil, Ali Raza, Rasheed Lodhi and others.

After hearing the IO, the court extended their police custody for five more days.

Meanwhile, according to a press statement, a team formed by the AVCC to apprehend the suspects and recover the ransom amount, approximately $340,000 in digital coins, paid by a cryptocurrency trader for his release, has recovered around Rs12m in cash, Rs900,000 in prize bonds and a Mercedes-Benz vehicle from the suspects.

According to the FIR, the crypto trader was abducted on Dec 25, 2024 at 1:40am in a police mobile without number plate by five men in plain clothes. They brought him near the FIA Saddar office, forcibly got opened his finance account and transferred coins worth $340,000 into different digital wallets/accounts.

They reset his cell phone, handed it back to him and dropped him near the mausoleum of the Quaid-i-Azam at 4am. Later, eight suspects were booked and arrested for their alleged involvement in the kidnapping of the trader and releasing him after he transferred the ransom into their digital wallets.

Bilawal touts Sindh's efforts to combat infant mortality

Quoting a report by PALISI network, PPP chief says province's death rate now at 2.9pc, against national average of of 5.4pc; credits public-private partnerships for the success

By Imran Ayub

ACCOMPANIED by CM Murad Ali Shah, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari is briefed during a visit to the telemedicine satellite centre control room of the ChildLife Foundation, at Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi, on Monday.—PPI

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Monday took great pride in the Sindh government's public-private partnership initiatives especially in healthcare sector and lauded its significant achievements in reducing the child mortality rate in the province.

The PPP chief was speaking at a ceremony to mark the release of a report by the Pediatric Acute Lung Injury and Sepsis Investigators (PALISI) network, a US-based health institute, highlighting a significant reduction in child mortality rate at Sindh's public hospitals.

The event was organised by Dow University of Health Sciences at the Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi.

While Mr Bhutto-Zardari did not speak much on the report during his speech, he took to social media later and shared its key findings.

"Infant mortality rates in Sindh now stand at 2.9 percent while rest of Pakistan is at 5.4 percent," he posted on X (formerly Twitter).

He continued: "US-based PALISI Global health reports that both Sheikh Zayed Children Hospital Larkana & Civil Hospital Karachi have a 1.2 per cent mortality rate. Compared to 1.4 percent for Aga Khan which is a Private hospital and 6.3 per cent rate in 19 similar countries.

"Our child-life facility is now the only public sector pediatric facility in Pakistan to be rated 5/5 SafeCare Quality level. Proud of everyone who has been a part of the successful transformation of Sindh's healthcare over the last 15 years," the X post concluded.

'Sindh outperformed other provinces'

During his speech at the CHK, Mr Bhutto-Zardari noted that the public-private partnership programmes of Sindh had outperformed all other provinces and the federal government.

He recalled that the public-private partnership model was first envisioned by former prime minister Benazir Bhutto in the party's 1993 election manifesto, which was now yielding results.

"Punjab has established two emergency rooms, in Multan and Lahore, while Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, and other regions have also set up similar facilities. We need to engage with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Azad Kashmir to ensure their people benefit from this initiative as well," he said.

He congratulated the Sindh government, the provincial health department, and the ChildLife Foundation for their efforts. "It is a moment of pride that your hard work and success are now being recognised globally. Congratulations to all of you," he added.

Recalling the past, PPP chairman said that after 2010, certain segments of the media "exaggerated" child mortality rates in Sindh, often portraying the province in a negative light.

"Reports about child mortality were sensationalised as breaking news, with live feeds from hospitals across Sindh starting from Tharparkar," he stated.

While child mortality rates are improving across Pakistan, the stats remain alarmingly high, posing a challenge for all provinces, including Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, he said.

He said that over the last 15 years, the Sindh government launched several initiatives to address this issue, including partnerships with the ChildLife Foundation under the public-private partnership model.

"Emergency facilities for children have been established in Karachi, Larkana, Nawabshah, Hyderabad, Sukkur, and Khairpur, alongside telemedicine services in 106 tehsils," said Mr Bhutto-Zardari.

"Our dream is to establish ChildLife emergency facilities in every district to provide free and quality healthcare to the public," he said and appreciated the future plans to introduce urgent care centres to reduce the burden on existing emergency facilities."

He attributed this progress to the 18th Amendment and the Sindh government's commitment to the public-private partnership model.

He also pointed out that Sindh often faces resource shortages due to inequitable federal allocations. However, the PPP's government countered these challenges by adopting the public-private partnership programme, he added.

Earlier, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah said that the successful partnership between the Sindh government and the ChildLife Foundation had reduced infant mortality in the province to 2.9pc, which is significantly lower than the national average of 5.4pc.

"The paediatric mortality rate in ChildLife-operated emergency rooms stands at just 1.2 per cent, comparable to the best private hospitals in the country," he said.

The CM emphasised that his government was dedicated to ensuring that every child in the province has access to world-class emergency healthcare within 30 minutes, available round the clock and free of charge.

He said that his government had launched a 24/7 telemedicine network across all 105 tehsils of Sindh, allowing access to expert paediatric consultations, even in the most remote areas.

At the beginning of the programme, Mr Bhutto-Zardari and the CM visited the telemedicine control room and got a briefing on the operation of the system.

Murad appoints 12 more special assistants, eight spokespersons

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Monday appointed 12 more special assistants, taking their number to 22.

The new special assistants were Pir Fazal Shah Jeelani, Liaqat Askani, Tanzila Umme Habiba, Ameer Hamza Rais, Raza Haroon, Khair Muhammad Sheikh, Amanullah Mahsood, Kulsoom Chandio, Muhammad Ali Rashid, Muhammad Ali Bhutto, Hussain Aslam, and Veerji Kolhi.

A CM House spokesman said that the newly inducted special assistants would be allocated portfolios shortly by the chief minister.

He said that the provincial cabinet was not expanded as the special assistants were not cabinet members.

On July 2, 2024, Lal Chand Ukrani, Sardar Faraz Rajar, Qasim Naveed Qamar, Waqar Mehdi, Flavear Singh, Mansoor Shahani, Usman Hingoro, Abdul Jabbar Khan, Junaid Baloch, and Muhammad Saleem Baloch had been appointed as special assistants to the chief minister.

Number of spokespersons reaches 16

Besides, the provincial government also named eight new spokespersons — Nadir Nabeel Gabol, Sukhdev Asardas, Buland Khan Junejo, Sirela Afzal, Tahseen Abidi, Hoor Soho, Agraba Fatima, and Mustafa Abdullah.

Now, there are 16 spokespersons for the provincial government as earlier Barrister Murtaza Wahab, Ghanwar Ikram Ali, Sukkur Mayor Barrister Arsalan Islam Shaikh, Sarmad Palio, Abdul Wahid Halepoto, Makhdoom Fakhar Zaman, Muhammad Ali Rashid and Sadia Javed were appointed as spokespersons.

Teenager 'stabbed to death by stepdad'

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: A teenage boy was killed allegedly by his stepfather over a property dispute on the outskirts of the metropolis on Monday, police and rescue services officials said.

They added that the boy, identified as 18-year-old Asad Abid, was stabbed to death in Noor Mohammed Goth near Ahsanabad.

An Edhi Foundation spokesperson said that the trussed-up body, bearing knife wounds, was recovered from a house.

SITE-Superhighway Industrial Area SHO Khalid Abbasi said that after the death of his father, Asad was living with his stepfather, Tauqeer. On Monday, they had a dispute over the house they were living in which deteriorated to the extent that suspect stabbed Asad to death.

The officer said that after killing the teenager, Tauqeer buried the body in the courtyard of the house and fled.

The police said that their neighbours informed the police about the body, which was shifted to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital for medico-legal formalities.

Meanwhile, a young man was shot at and wounded by robbers on Shahrah-i-Millat Road on Monday.

House committee formed to investigate BIEK exam results

Education minister, six treasury, opposition members to conduct inquiry into students' concerns over first year exam

By Tahir Siddiqui

KARACHI: Accepting the demand of opposition parties, the Sindh Assembly on Monday finally formed a parliamentary committee to investigate the controversial results of the intermediate board in Karachi.

While announcing the formation of the committee, headed by Education Minister Syed Sardar Shah, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Zia Lanjar assured the House that there would be no compromise on the issue of the future of children and said that competent and capable chairmen of education boards would be appointed very soon.

The committee, comprising Sadia Javed, Taha Ahmed, Shabbir Ahmed Qureshi, Yousuf Baloch, Wasim Ahmed, Faroeq Ahmed as members, was constituted following a call attention notice given by the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan member Abdul Wasoom.

The JI and MQM-P had been raising the issue of wrongdoing in the results of intermediate exams in the house since the start of the recent assembly session. They had strongly protested over the issue in the house as the party members were denied to take up the issue.

Mr Wasoom said that he had to move a call attention notice on the issue of the poor results as the party members were not allowed by the chair to speak on point of order.

He said that there were irregularities going on in the city's intermediate board and a large number of students were affected by them.

The law minister said that he had already offered the opposition to hold talks on the matter. "If it is about the future of children, we would definitely resolve the issue amicably," he assured the opposition.

Mr Lanjar told the house that interviews for the chairmen of boards across the province were underway. "Efforts are being made to ensure that good and capable people are appointed chairmen of the boards," he added.

Increase in dog-bite cases

In her call attention notice, MQM-P's Farah Sohail said that there was a huge

Continued on Page 15

80 classic cars, motorbikes on display at first Japanese motor show

By Shazia Hasan

KARACHI: The first Japanese Classic Car and Bike Show was organised on Sunday by the Vintage and Classic Car Club of Pakistan (VCCCP) in collaboration with the Federation Internationale Vehicules Anciens (Federation International Vintage Automobiles) (FIVA), at The Forum Mall parking lot.

More than 60 cars and around 20 motorbikes of models ranging from 1960 to 1995 were featured at the show. Among the cars, one could find Toyotas, including Corollas, Coronas, Mark IIs and Land Cruisers. There were also different models of Honda, Mazda, Datsun and Suzuki, including its car and jeep models.

Aamir Hussain and his children had entered their ash gray with dark aqua roof 1964 Datsun Bluebird and the same colour two-tone seats. Hussain's father had acquired it from a Parsi lady some 50 years ago. Beside the usual key ignition, the car also had a hand crank to start it from the front.

Young Aftullah Khan was seen cleaning the dust off his black 1986 Corolla after every five or 10 minutes. The car was a gift from his late father, who happened to be a lover of classic cars. "It has been with us for 14 years. I learned to drive in it," said Aftullah. He also pointed out the various changes he had made to the car including changing its original colour from white to black. He gave it 14-inch rims, an HKS exhaust, a velvety Alcantara roof, a Nardi steering wheel and a fancy gear knob. The car also had his Instagram handle @abdullah_khan1000 printed on one of his rear door triangular windows.

Kuldeep Panjani had brought his white 1980 five-door Toyota Land Cruiser, which he had bought at an army auction five years ago. "It was originally green when I bought it. But at the time you could say that only its chassis was in one piece. It took me two years to restore. So many of its parts, including its doors, I had to get from Dubai as everything was not available here," he shared.

Fayyaz Moshtaq had come with his lime-coloured 1968 Toyota Corona. "It was light cream originally, when my maternal uncle

A 1968 Toyota Corona and a 1964 Datsun Bluebird (right) are displayed at the show.—Shakil Adil / White Star

Continued on Page 14

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Zardari okays infrastructure upgrade for Cadet College Petaro

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday approved the development and modernisation of Cadet College Petaro (CCP) and directed Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah to announce a special salary package for the college's teaching staff.

"The president approved an upgrade to the infrastructure of Cadet College Petaro and directed the CM to implement these upgrades within the next four years," said a statement issued on Monday.

Presiding over a special Board of Governors meeting of the CCP at the CM House, President Zardari reflected the CCP's commitment to maintaining its status as a premier institution for education and character building in Pakistan.

"The Cadet College Petaro has a significant role in Pakistan, particularly in Sindh. It has produced remarkable leaders in politics, the armed forces, civil bureaucracy, judiciary, and other fields. Even after 66 years, CCP stands strong, continuing its legacy of excellence. Wherever its alumni go, the training and success imparted by the college reflect in their personalities," he said.

During the briefing, the president was told that CCP spans 758 acres and currently accommodates 846 students, with two swimming pools on campus. President Zardari directed CM Shah to establish two more swimming pools and ensure all necessary facilities were provided under a five-year plan.

The president directed the CM to commence the construction of 52 new houses for teaching and ministerial staff. The expansion of the academic block, a new mess and a sitting area for persons visiting the college were also proposed to enhance their experiences.

CM Shah informed the president that he had approved a Rs200 million grant for the college to clear employee pension arrears. He added that the process of installing a 1.5 MW solar-powered electricity plant to reduce energy costs is currently underway.

President Zardari commended CCP's administration and faculty for their dedication to nurturing future leaders and directed the CM to announce a special salary package for the college's teaching staff.

The meeting was held at CM House. It was attended by CM Shah, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, chairman BoG Commodore Muhammad Faisal Iqbal Kazi, Secretary to President Shakeel Malik, Members BOG Commodore Faisal Iqbal, Secretary Finance Fayaz Jatoi, Secretary Colleges Asif Ikram, and others.

PRAYER

Fajr	6.00
Zuhar	12.41
Asr	4.30
Maghreb	6.04
Isha	7.21

Starting time in Karachi

REFLECTIONS

"SOMETIMES YOUR PRAYERS ARE TURNED DOWN, AND THIS IS ALSO IN YOUR INTEREST; BECAUSE YOU OFTEN, UNKNOWINGLY, ASK FOR THINGS THAT ARE REALLY HARMFUL TO YOU."

— HAZRAT ALI (A.S.)

7EA04427

HABIBMETRO Sponsored Karachi Eat Food Festival 2025 as its Exclusive Banking Partner

Karachi, 04 January 2025 – HABIBMETRO brought an unforgettable experience to its customers through an exclusive banking partnership with one of the most anticipated events of the year — the Karachi Eat Food Festival.

As part of this partnership, HABIBMETRO introduced a range of exciting benefits for its customers as well as non-customers:

1. **Free Entry:** HABIBMETRO Platinum and Ladies debit cardholders enjoyed free entry to the festival.
2. **Fast-track Access:** All HABIBMETRO debit cardholders benefitted from fast-track access, skipping the long queues and getting straight into the festival without any wait.
3. **Exclusive Lounge:** HABIBMETRO customers enjoyed complimentary refreshments and rewards with an exclusive lounge, while non-customers got a chance to win these rewards by participating in various engagement activities such as photo booth, spin-the-wheel and more.
4. **Exciting Prizes:** Non-customers had the opportunity to win exciting prizes by opening an account, with our relationship management team providing them assistance throughout the process.
5. **Seamless Transactions:** The Bank ensured a hassle-free experience for visitors at the event, offering mobile ATM services for easy cash withdrawals.

This iteration of Karachi Eat brought a combination of local and global cuisines, with over 120 food stalls offering a wide range of mouth-watering flavours, alongside live music by some of the country's renowned musicians, including Aaroh Arbab, Ali Tariq and SIAH among others. This vibrant mix contributed to the lively atmosphere of the event, attracting a footfall of approximately 140,000 people.

"At HABIBMETRO, our customers are our top priority, and we are committed to enhancing their banking journey. Through this partnership, we are offering a unique three-day event featuring live food, music and exclusive benefits for both our customers and non-customers. This event will be another outdoor activity for the people of Karachi. With a focus on reaching untapped markets, particularly the younger generation, we are excited to be collaborating with Karachi Eat for the first time ever. This partnership not only strengthens our brand presence but also brings value-added digital banking services to a wider audience, embracing convenience and accessibility for all." Mr. Khurram Shahzad Khan, President & CEO of HABIBMETRO said.

This partnership underscores HABIBMETRO's ongoing commitment to delivering a worldclass experience that extends beyond banking. While customers choose HABIBMETRO, they do not merely choose a bank, they go for a life filled with amazing benefits and opportunities.

ADVERTORIAL

80 classic cars, motorbikes on display at first Japanese motor show

Continued from Page 13

bought it from its first owner in 1997," said Mushtaq. "This car has been restored twice," he shared. "First my uncle, Ashiq Hussain, restored it because it was broken and rusting when he got it. Then it was left to the neglect again after his passing in 2019. He had no children so I inherited it to have it restored in his memory. It cost me over one million rupees but I had to do it. The work on it was completed last year only," he said.

Ahmad Kashif, meanwhile, said that he had only come to the show to make a video for his YouTube channel @rukkar021. "Here I realised that I could also enter my Kawasaki KH100, also popularly known as Kawasaki G7D, so I entered it," he smiled. "I have three bikes, a Yamaha Enduro, a Honda Cub, and this Kawasaki. There are many Kawasaki lovers in Karachi. In fact, there is an entire ecosystem around it, with a group of Kawasaki owners, Kawasaki mechanics, etc, also.

The founder and president of VCCCP, organiser of the car show, Mohsin Ikram, told *Dawn* that Japanese cars would usually get neglected during their regular vintage and classic car shows. "Their owners would come to me to include their cars, too, in the exhibitions but I would always be telling them that we just didn't have space," he said. "Still, I would promise them that one day I would do an exclusive car show for them also as their cars, too, deserved a platform just like other classic cars did," he added.

He said that even the FIVA, with more than a hundred member countries, including Pakistan, was happy that he was doing this. "The Dutch president of FIVA also asked if there was any round light Suzuki 800 entered in the show. I told him I was afraid not as we have Suzuki 800 and FX with rectangular lights here. But you never know. It may also turn up," he smiled.

Ikram had also entered his own yellow 1978 Honda 50 bike in the show. "I love classic motorbikes as much as classic cars. I have a collection of British bikes from World War II and several Vespa scooters, too. Whenever I see any bikes in bad condition that need to be salvaged, I take them. The Honda 50 and other Japanese bikes are now also becoming quite rare here," he said.

The VCCCP president also said that with the response that he has received at this first Japanese Car Classic Car and Bike Show, he intends to make it an annual event. "And not just in Karachi but all over Pakistan," he concluded.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is notified to all general public that our client has entered into contract to purchase Plot No. D-27, Measuring 3000 Square Yards, Block-B, Situated in North Nazimabad, Karachi from (1) Mr. Shakeel Arshad Khawaja son of Haji Muhammad Shafi, CNIC No. 42101-5972551-1, (2) Mr. Muhammad Ahmed son of Muhammad Shafi, CNIC No. 42301-8575140-1, (3) Mr. Laiq Ahmed son of Muhammad Shafi, CNIC No. 42101-7970968-1, (4) Mr. Khwaja Muhammad Akbar son of Haji Muhammad Shafi, CNIC No. 61400-0276522-1, (5) Mrs. Nasra Rafi widow of Muhammad Rafi Khawaja (Late) CNIC No. 42101-1040690-8, (6) Mr. Muhammad Rehan Khawaja son of Muhammad Rafi Khawaja (Late) CNIC No. 42101-8946732-1, (7) Mr. Abdul Haseeb Khawaja son of Khawaja Muhammad Rafi (Late) CNIC No. 42101-8997039-1, (8) Mrs. Aysha Aamir wife of Aamir Mahboob Khawaja & Daughter of Muhammad Rafi Khawaja (Late) CNIC No. 42201-0271358-0, (9) Mr. Muhammad Kamran Khawaja son of Muhammad Javed (Late) CNIC No. 42301-4223832-9, (10) Mrs. Aamna Sharjeel Mumtaz wife of Sharjeel Mumtaz & Daughter of Muhammad Javed (Late) CNIC No. 42301-1607808-8, (11) Mrs. Rahila Rehan wife of Rehan Manzoor & Daughter of Muhammad Javed (Late) CNIC No. 42301-6776074-8, free from encumbrance. Any person / authority / Bank having any claim / objection should notify to the Sub-Registrar North Nazimabad Town, Karachi with documentary evidence within seven days of this publication. Otherwise the transaction of Sale Deed will be completed in favour of our client.

SHAIKH ABDUL MALIK LAW ASSOCIATES
Office 304, Third Floor, Al-Rauf Tower, Block-3, Bhadar Yar Jung C.H.S. Alamgir Road, Karachi. Tel: 34948294, 34948279

'Sindh govt committed to meritocracy and gender equality'

Dawn Report

KARACHI: The Sindh government has rejected allegations of a lack of gender balance and merit in its decisions concerning the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) and said that it remains committed to transparency, meritocracy and providing equitable healthcare services to all citizens.

Responding to a 'comment' piece written by two senior JPMC doctors, Iram Bokhari and Nazish Bux, headlined "The JPMC conundrum", published in the Monday edition of *Dawn*, the health department, government of Sindh (GoS) states: "The writers' claims lack factual basis and appear to undermine the substantial progress made by GoS in transforming JPMC into a world-class healthcare facility."

Regarding the lack of gender balance, it said: "Out of the 30 departments at JPMC, 19 are headed by women, and two of the four previous Executive Directors were also women."

It also clarified that the management agreement between the GoS and the federal government was finalised on Aug 8, 2023, not in 2022.

"To manage the expanded capacity at JPMC, GoS created 2,025 new contractual posts, including 543 FCPS-qualified doctors, 878 nurses, and 584 technicians. The 1,498 permanent employees remain unaffected by this arrangement, and their seniority and privileges are fully protected," it added.

"Unfortunately, 19 out of the 1,498 permanent employees, including 14 doctors, have approached the courts on various issues. This litigation has disrupted the appointment of contractual staff, denying millions of patients' access to quality healthcare and depriving young medical professionals of employment opportunities," the health department said.

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KARACHI

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KARACHI

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MARI Poor Road near Due Hotel 3 Shops Size 11x09 and Roof 35x20 new Building 6th Floor best for Travel and Shops also Sale / Rent. Javaid Khan 0308-8969808 (1092799905)

COURT NOTICE

KARACHI

IN The Lahore High Court, Lahore Notice Under Order 9 Rule XX CPC, Writ Petition No. 236/30 of 2023. Abdul Ghayyum Vs Mahdi Zulgarnain etc. 1) Mahdi Zulgarnain. 2) Muhammad Shahzad Mahdi. 3) Muhammad Shahbaz Mahdi. 4) Abdul Razzaq Mahdi sons of Muhammad Zaman Mahdi Caste Jutt Gondal R/o Hassan Tehsil & District Mandi Bahauddin. Whereas the above named petitioner has filed Writ Petition No. 236/30 of 2023 and the case has now been fixed for hearing on 29-02-25 (Fixed by Court) 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. 2. Now, therefore, you are hereby informed to appear before the Hon'ble Court in person, through an attorney or advocate on the date fixed for great your cause. 3. If you or your counsel fails to appear before the Hon'ble Court on the given date, the case will be heard and decided in your absence and no excuse thereof shall be acceptable on this count. Given under my hand and seal of the Lahore High Court, Lahore this 2nd January, 2025. Deputy Registrar (Writ) Lahore High Court Lahore. (2676323414N)

HYDERABAD

IN the Court of Family Judge-II, Tando Allahyar (Execution Application No. 27/2024 Family Suit No. 11/2024) Mst. Beena D/o Muhammad Hashim, Plaintiff C/N, Versus, Kiln Memon S/o Mumtaz Ali Memon, R/o Work Shop Road Tando Jam, District Hyderabad, Present: 300, Forest View Avenue, New Jersy 07001 United State of America. Defendant / JD. Whereas, the above named Plaintiff / DH has filed Execution Application Under Order 21 RULE 11 C.P.C. before this Court against you. You are, therefore, hereby given this notice of the above application to appear before this Court on 14-01-2025 at 09:00 am and filed objections if any otherwise said application will be heard and decided in your absence according to law. By Order. Reader. (1102994452)

UNITED KIGDOM

IN the Court of Qamar Abbas Tarar Civil Judge, Rawalpindi. Suit for Declaration etc. Muhammad Umar Farooq versus Shahida Parveen etc. To, Malik Muhammad Sattar son of Malik Muhammad Sattar R/o 127 Rochester Street Bradford BD3 8SA England. Zunish Sattar W/o Usama R/o House No 3, St 03, Defence Road near Mosque Faizan Akhtar Adyala Road Rawalpindi. You are informed to attend the Court on 19-01-2025 at 9 am to avoid ex-parte proceedings. (2761277756N)

USA

IN the Court of Javed Iqbal Sipra Sb Additional and District Judge Islamabad, Civil Appeal, Rewaid Khurshed etc vs Public and Large etc. ad against defendant no 4 Sons all permanent residing USA if Defendant will / shall not appear personally or by Pleader in Court on 12 February 25 proceedings will be taken ex-parte against the defendant given under my hands and seal of this Court. (2761277758N)

KARACHI

MARRIAGE BUREAU

CLIFTON Women Welfare Society (Regd.) 1982 for matrimonial social service in Karachi / America also. Mrs. **MUMTAZ QUREISHI** 0301-2433778, 0333-2433768, 0341-2969439. (1092800440)

QUETTA

AUCTION

UNDER instruction from OE (Air) PAF Base Samungli, Quetta. Auction of Demolition of Unserviceable Store of Electrical & Mechanical Water Supply BWP will be held on 29 January, 2025 at 10 am. On as is where is basis (25% cash on the Spot. Original CNIC along with photocopy required. All Government Taxes Applicable as per Government Rule. OE (Air) reserve the right to accept or reject any lot without assigning any reason. Pakistan Auction Mart 0315-8235331. (1092799196)

KARACHI

NOTICE TO PUBLIC

ALHAMDULILLAH client of **ADEEL CORPORATION** Purchases Plot # **169**, Khayaban Qasim, Phase VIII measuring **2000** square yards, from Mr. Sohail Ali Gilani S/o Syed Ali Gilani, holding CNIC No. (42301-3968141-5) free from all claims, litigation, dues whatsoever. Any person, institution having any claim, objection should notify us within seven (07) days. Contact: 0300-8252133. (1092800478)

ALHAMDULILLAH our client has contracted to purchase Residential Plot No. 209, Sector 2-D, measuring 120 square yards (Approx) DHA City Karachi, from Mr. Rizi (R) Khan Wazir S/o Khanzam Khan (Late) CNIC No. 42201-3943789 Resident of Kohat through (Heaven Bricks) free from all claims, dues, taxes, charges, litigations, disputes, mortgage etc. Any Person / Bank, Authority having any claim / objection should notify us and Admin Director DHA City Karachi with documentary evidence within seven days of this publication. Otherwise transaction will be completed in favor of our client. **ROOTS PROPERTY NETWORK** 0321-9996370, (1092799958)

I, Sher Hassan Jan S/o Gul Hassan Jan CNIC No. 42201-7317609-1 have contracted to purchase Bungalow No. 5-D-21, Clan Boulevard, measuring 777 yards, Phase-IV DHA Karachi from Mr. Suhail Majid Qazi S/o Abdul Majid Qazi CNIC No. 42301-9436721-3 resident of Karachi free from all dues, charges, liabilities, etc. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any claim / objection should notify us / Sub Registrar-I Clifton Town Karachi within 07 days of this publication otherwise transaction shall be completed in My favour. 0321-2966662 (1092800100)

OUR client has contracted to purchase Residential Plot No. 4-C, Zulfiqar Commercial Street 2, Phase VII, measuring 199 square yards Approx. DHA, Karachi, from Mr. Fawad Junaid S/o Muhammad Junaid CNIC No. 42201-0662681-1, R/o Karachi, free from all claims whatsoever. Any Person having any claim should notify us and Administrator DHA Karachi within (7) days of this publication. **WAHENTI ESTATE FAIZAN** 03002114747 (1092800487)

IT is hereby inform that Public Notice published in Dawn Regarding the Civil Against Plot 179 Sector 3-A with Brig Rehan Aqil Khan on January 07, 2025 stands null and void due to Miss Communication we regret any inconvenience caused. **PROPERTY HOME** Zeeshan 0300-3444433 (1092800280)

MR client has contracted to purchase all that Double Storied Bungalow on Plot No. 21-A3, measuring 416.666 sq yds, Situated at Golf Course Road No. 2, Phase-IV, DHA, Karachi, free from all disputes, mortgages, with complete vacant possession from its owners (1) Mr. Kashif Siddiq Khawaja S/o Siddiq Ahmed, CNIC No. 42201-0790810-9, (2) Mrs. Sadia Bibi W/o Muhammad Bilal Siddiqui, CNIC No. 42201-4104342-2, (3) Mrs. Saher Danyal W/o Danyal Ahmed, CNIC No. 42201-8202367-4, (4) Mrs. Seema Nadeem W/o Nadeem Iftikhar, CNIC No. 42201-6239850-8, all residents of Karachi. Any Person, Authority, having any claim, right, title or share in the said property should notify the undersigned, along with documentary evidence within seven days, failing which objection if any shall be deemed to have been waived and the said property shall be transferred in favor of my client. Imran Magsi Advocate High Court A-607 & 707, Salma Trade Towers, 11 Chundrigar Road, Karachi (1092800480)

MR client has contracted to purchase all that Plot No. GK-1, measuring 2168.54 square yards, Situated at Jami Street, Phase-VII Extn, DHA, Karachi, Ref. No. DHA/SD/W1-3702 from its Owner M/s. Dolmen (Pvt) Ltd. through its Directors Mr. Nadeem Riaz S/o Riaz Qadir, Holder of CNIC No. 42201-4071573-3, resident of Karachi, anyone having any claim, right or share in the said property should notify to DHA Office, Karachi and undersigned, along with documentary evidence under Registered Post within seven days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which claims, lien or objections if any shall be deemed to have been waived and the said property shall be conveyed and transferred in favour of my client. Imran Magsi Advocate High Court A-607 & 707 Salma Trade Towers, 11 Chundrigar Road, Karachi (1092800350)

MR. ASAD ULLAH QUREISHI S/o Hafeez Ullah Qureshi (L) has agreed to sell to our client, immovable property being **PLOT NO. 26-C, AL-MURTAZA COMM. LANE-4, PHASE-VIII**, measuring 200 sq. yds. (approx.) situated in Pakistan Defence Officers Housing Authority, Karachi free from all encumbrances, charges, liens, demands and dues whatsoever. Any Person / Authority having any claim / objection should notify the same to us with documentary evidence, under Registered A.D. cover within 7 days from the date hereof. Failing which all claims and objections whatsoever shall be deemed to have been waived and abandoned. **KASHIF AHMED KHYANI** Advocate High Court, **KHYANI & KHYANI LAW ASSOCIATES**, 1 Mezzanine Floor, **HAMILTON COURT**, Plot No. D-2, Main Clifton Road, Block-7, Clifton, Karachi. Phone: 35864643 (1092800180)

MR client has contracted to purchase Residential Plot No. 69-G, measuring 400 yards, Situated at Block-2, PECHS, Karachi from Muhammad Farook Mays S/o Mr. Ali Muhammad Mays, free from all claims, objections, and encumbrances. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any objection whatsoever should notify to me and the Honorary Secretary PECHS, Karachi, Sub-Registrar I Jamshed Town Karachi within fourteen days of this Publication. Contact 0334-8222818 (1092800481)

THIS is for the information of General Public that my client has contracted to purchase a Sub-Divided Portion of Plot Bearing Plot No. 14, Block-7 & 8, measuring 500 sq. yards, situated at Overseas C.H.S. Ltd., Karachi from Mst. Roshan Ahmed W/o Yousuf Ahmed, holding CNIC # 61101-1862037-6, Resident of Karachi. Advertiser Syed Asamul Haq, Advocate High Court, Room No. 603, 6th Floor, Rauf Chamber, Saddar, Karachi. Phone 0300-2417792. (1092799954)

OUR client has contracted to purchase File No. U-RES-47907 Plot No. 15/36, Sector G-3, DHA City Karachi. Measuring 125 yards from Mrs. Misbah Sahar W/o Raja Muhammad Shahzad CNIC No. 42201-0526010-9 R/o Karachi. Free from all claims, objections, encumbrances. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any objection whatsoever should notify to Administrator DHA City Karachi within seven days. **MALIK CORPORATION** Ashar 0300-8675255. (1092800190)

MY client Nadeem Aslam S/o Sheikh Muhammad Hanif CNIC No. 42000-8060820-9 has agreed to purchase House constructed on Residential Plot bearing No. S-30, Iqbal Lane 5, Phase VIII-B, DHA, Karachi, Pakistan, together with Basement plus Ground Floor Plus First Floor constructed thereon from Shah Sohail Masood S/o Shah Muhammad Masud CNIC No. 42201-0734365-3 R/o Karachi, free from all encumbrances, with peaceful complete vacant possession. Any Person, Authorities, Any Schedule Bank, Government / Semi-Government, Organization or Authority, having any claim or objection over the said property should notify undersigned and Director Administration, Defense Officers Housing Authority 2-B East Street, Phase-I, DHA, Karachi, along with documentary evidence under Registered A.D. within seven (7) days, failing which, any claim / lien / objection shall be deemed to have been waived and transaction will be completed in favor of my client. Advocate **ZAINUDDIN SHAIKH**, Office No. G-1, Ground Floor Signature Villa, Plot No. 40-B, Opp. Edal Mosque, Mohammad Ali Memorial C.H. Society, Karachi and 511, Al-Rehmat Trade Centre, Opp. City Courts, Karachi, Pakistan. (1092799955)

DUR client has contracted to purchase File No. J-Comm-1128, Plot No. 109 Sector CBD (DM) DHA City Karachi. Measuring 200 yards from Mr. Mohsin Abdul Sattar S/o Shaikh Abdul Sattar CNIC No. 42201-7646587 R/o Karachi. Free from all claims, objections and encumbrances. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any objection whatsoever should notify to Administrator DHA City Karachi with documentary evidence within seven days from this publication **ITTEHAD ESTATE** 45-C, Bukhari Lane 10 Phase VI, DHA Karachi **0333-2116666**, 0300-2878333. (1092800194)

DUR client has contracted to purchase File No. S-Comm-1309, Plot No. 605 Sector CBD DHA City Karachi. Measuring 200 yards from Maj (R) Zulqarnain S/o Muhammad Naseem, Ute Sagian (Late) CNIC No. 42201-6239587 R/o Karachi. Free from all claims, objections and encumbrances. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any objection whatsoever should notify to Administrator DHA City Karachi with documentary evidence within seven days from this publication **ITTEHAD ESTATE** 45-C, Bukhari Lane 10 Phase VI, DHA Karachi **0333-2116666**, 0300-2878333. (1092800196)

OUR client has contracted to purchase Plot No. 602, 5th Floor, Block-A, Type Hotels, measuring 1200 square feet, Clifton Suites & Apartment, Plot No. FL-15, Block-1, Clifton Karachi from Mr. Talash Ali S/o Muhammad Ali CNIC No. 34400-6231639-1 Resident of Karachi free from all dues, charges, liabilities etc. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any claim / objection should notify us / Sub Registrar-II Clifton Town Karachi within 07 days of this publication. Land Professional Associates Amin Shah 0321-4235319 (1092800198)

CORRECTION Daily Dawn dated December 3, 2024 regarding House No. 157 Block 2-, the area of 263 square yards should be read and understood in public notice. Farooq Khawaja Wahabuddin (1092779806)

OUR client has contracted to purchase Plot No. 214-1, 26th Street, Phase VIII-B, DHA Karachi Measuring 666 square yards, from Mrs. Nadia W/o Muhammad Faraz CNIC No. 42201-0862860 R/o Karachi. Free from all claims, objections and encumbrances. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any objection whatsoever should notify to Administrator DHA Karachi with documentary evidence within seven days from this publication. **SAZAQ ESTATE** Muhammad Jibran Jameel 021-32020511 Office No. 1, 1st Floor 27-C, Bukhari Lane 4 / 11 (Corner) Phase VI, DHA Karachi. (1092800403)

OUR client has contracted to purchase Plot No. 20-C, Bukhari Commercial Lane 12, Phase VI measuring 200 yards DHA Karachi from M/s. Shaft Gluconhem (Pvt) Ltd through Director Amjad Hafeez S/o Abdul Hafeez CNIC No. 42201-2246823-7 Resident of Karachi through Ittehad Estate free from all dues, charges, liabilities etc. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any claim / objection should notify us / Administrator DHA Karachi within 07 days of this publication otherwise transaction shall be completed in favour of our client. Sughra Law Associates 0300-2346616. (1092800140)

OUR client has contracted to purchase Plot No. 241, 28th Street Phase VIII, DHA, Karachi. Measuring 666 yards from Mr. Shaikh Faisal Ashfaq Siddiq S/o Ashfaq Siddiq (Late) CNIC No. 42201-0194507 R/o Karachi. Free from all claims, objections and encumbrances. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any objection whatsoever should notify to Administrator DHA, Karachi with documentary evidence within seven days from this publication **ITTEHAD ESTATE** 45-C, Bukhari Lane 10 Phase VI, DHA Karachi **0333-2116666**, 0300-2878333. (1092800400)

OUR client has contracted to purchase Plot No. 528-D, 19th Street Phase VIII-C, DHA Karachi. Measuring 500 yards from Mr. Sohail Shah S/o Hafiz Shafi Ullah (Late) CNIC No. 42000-2289997 R/o UK. Through **SAYERA ENTERPRISES**. Free from all claims, objections and encumbrances. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any objection whatsoever should notify to Administrator DHA, Karachi with documentary evidence within seven days from this publication **ITTEHAD ESTATE** 45-C, Bukhari Lane 10 Phase VI, DHA Karachi **0333-2116666**, 0300-2878333. (1092800402)

OUR client has contracted to purchase Plot No. 47-B, Khalid Comm. Street No. 2, Phase VII Ext. DHA Karachi. Measuring 100 yards from Mr. Sheikh Faisal Ashfaq Siddiq S/o Ashfaq Siddiq (Late) CNIC No. 42201-0194507 R/o Karachi. Free from all claims, objections and encumbrances. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any objection whatsoever should notify to Administrator DHA, Karachi with documentary evidence within seven days from this publication **ITTEHAD ESTATE** 45-C, Bukhari Lane 10 Phase VI, DHA Karachi **0333-2116666**, 0300-2878333. (1092800403)

OUR client has contracted to purchase Plot No. 528-D, 19th Street Phase VIII-C, DHA Karachi. Measuring 500 yards from Mr. Sohail Shah S/o Hafiz Shafi Ullah (Late) CNIC No. 42000-2289997 R/o UK. Through **SAYERA ENTERPRISES**. Free from all claims, objections and encumbrances. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any objection whatsoever should notify to Administrator DHA, Karachi with documentary evidence within seven days from this publication **ITTEHAD ESTATE** 45-C, Bukhari Lane 10 Phase VI, DHA Karachi **0333-2116666**, 0300-2878333. (1092800404)

OUR client has contracted to purchase Plot No. 61, Beach Street 13, Phase VII-C, DHA Karachi. Measuring 500 yards from SQN. LDR (R) Amir Munir Khan S/o Munawar Ali Khan (Late) CNIC No. 42201-6302469 R/o Karachi. Free from all claims, objections and encumbrances. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any objection whatsoever should notify to Administrator DHA, Karachi with documentary evidence within seven days from this publication **ITTEHAD ESTATE** 45-C, Bukhari Lane 10 Phase VI, DHA Karachi **0333-2116666**, 0300-2878333. (1092800405)

OUR client has contracted to purchase Plot No. 241, 28th Street Phase VIII, DHA, Karachi. Measuring 666 yards from Mr. Madboot ul Rehman S/o Faqir Muhammad CNIC No. 42000-0600623 R/o Karachi. Free from all claims, objections and encumbrances. Any Person, Bank, Authority having any objection whatsoever should notify to Administrator DHA, Karachi with documentary evidence within seven days from this publication **ITTEHAD ESTATE** 45-C, Bukhari Lane 10 Phase VI, DHA Karachi **0333-2116666**, 0300-2878333. (1092800406)

OUR client has contracted to purchase Residential Plot No. 235-B/II, 24th Street, Phase VIII-E, measuring 499.99 square yards Approx. DHA Karachi, from Mrs. Shamim Begum W/o Sign Lal (R) Nasseem Uddin Ahmed (L) CNIC No. 42000-1266388-4, R/o Karachi, free from all claims whatsoever. Any Person having any claim should notify us and Administrator DHA Karachi within (7) days of this publication. **WAHENTI ESTATE FAIZAN** 03002114747 (1092800489)

OUR client Mr. Atif Khalil S/o Khalil Ur Rehman CNIC No. 42101-0878409-1 has contracted to Purchase Villa No. 12, Road No. 16, Precinct-35, measuring 350 yards, situated in Sports City, Bahria Town (Pvt) Ltd. Karachi as per Registration No. BTKSC-001399, from Mrs. Samreen Kashif W/o Kashif Ali CNIC No. 41303-0060080-2 Resident of Karachi free from all dues, charges liabilities etc. **ANY PERSON OR INSTITUTION** having any claim or objection should notify us and Head Office Bahria Town Karachi within 07 days of this publication along with documentary evidence. No objection or claim will be acceptable after lapse of above mentioned period of 7 days. **ALPHA BUILDERS & REALTOR** Aitbar Shah 0333-2991802 (1092800184)

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Bail for GDA's Moazzim Abbasi, others extended

By Our Correspondent

LARKANA: The district and sessions court on Monday extended interim bail of former GDA MPA Moazzim Ali Abbasi, his son Waleed Abbasi and Asad Tunio to Jan 22.

Moazzim Abbasi appeared before the court along with his counsels, Advocate Javed Buledi, Barrister Kazim Abbasi and others to attend hearing for the confirmation of his bail at antiterrorism court.

Judge Simkan Hussain Mughal, who is also in-charge judge of the antiterrorism court, asked police officials concerned to submit final challan in the case on next hearing of the case.

In a brief chat with media persons outside the court, Abbasi expressed confidence in the judiciary and said that he, his family and supporters had faced many such cases prior to this one but courts had always acquitted them honourably. The current case was also merely a tool of political victimisation, he said.

In a related development, PPP MPA Sardar Khan Chando, who was also chieftain of Chando clan, met Abbasi at Kot Dorab on Monday and held closed door meeting on possible settlement between Siyals and Abbasis, said sources.

Man, sister die in car collision

By Our Correspondent

LARKANA: A man and his sister were critically injured in a head-on collision between two cars on Raza Shah Kafir road late on Sunday night and died later at Trauma Centre.

The victims were identified as Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Junejo, 30, and his sister Bachul Khatoon, children of famous Sindhi short story writer Zahid Hussain Junejo.

Nobody in the other car involved in the accident was injured and one of its occupants, who was said to be member of Magsi clan, escaped after the accident, said police officials but they avoided identifying his name.

However, police arrested Parvaiz Burirо, driver of the car, which was owned by a Magsi clansman, and took the two cars into custody.

The bodies were handed over to heirs after completion of medico-legal formalities. The tragedy saddened residents of Dhamraho village, 15 kilometres from Larkana, when the bodies arrived there for burial.

Man killed, woman injured for 'honour'

NAWABSHAH: A young man was stabbed to death in the name of honour but the woman, who was accused of being his lover, survived axe attack by her husband in Yousuf Bhambro village near Padidan on Monday.

The enraged husband Inteziar Bhambro and his associates identified as Zahid Ali, Wazir Ali and Sultan Bhambro attacked the victim Anees Bhambro with knives when he was busy working at a brick kiln in the village, leaving him for the dead, and managed to escape.

The injured was taken to Padidan Rural Health Centre from where he was shifted to Peoples Medical University Hospital, Nawabshah, in critical condition but was pronounced dead on arrival.

Inteziar Bhambro had earlier attacked his wife Ms Izzat with an axe and left her critically injured. She was rushed to hospital and luckily survived the attack on her life.

Sabir Ali, brother of late Anees lodged an FIR at Padidan police station against Inteziar Bhambro, Zahid Ali, Wazir Ali and Sultan Bhambro under Sections 302 and 34 PPC.—Correspondent

Severe cold disturbs life, fog disrupts road and rail communication in upper Sindh

By Waseem Shamsi

A FAMILY huddles around a bonfire to keep themselves warm as the minimum temperature in Hyderabad dropped sharply on Monday evening.—APP

SUKKUR: Thick fog has badly affected the rail and road transport networks in the upper Sindh districts — gripped in severe cold for the last few days.

The sharply declining minimum temperatures have forced most people to remain indoors, and still, use woollens to save themselves from cold-related effects and ailments.

Over the last three days, attendance in both private and public sector offices and movement of vehicles on roads has been very thin in Sukkur, Ghotki, Jacobabad, Kandhkot-Kashmore and Shikarpur districts.

The chilling cold waves had started sweeping through the Sukkur and Ghotki region on Friday evening and gradually gripped the entire region within the next two days. On Monday, the minimum temperature in most districts of upper Sindh ranged between three and five degrees Celsius but the feels-like temperature was stated to be below the freezing point.

The minimum temperatures in central and southern Sindh also dropped sharply on Monday evening.

Train schedules disturbed

The schedule of the arrival and departure of passenger trains has been disturbed due to the thick fog in the norther areas of Sindh. According to senior railway officials in Lahore, the timings could not be maintained as the country's northern areas, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Balochistan were also hit by thick fog.

They said the extremely low visibility situation remained dangerous during night hours and usually started improving at different timings in different areas till afternoon. Therefore, they said, most train services had to be run behind schedule, hence late arrival at their destinations.

Passengers helpless

Scores of men, women and children intending to travel by train were found to be helpless due to the absence of staff at the 'inquiry window' of most railway stations. Media personnel visiting several stations in Sukkur, Ghotki and some other districts reported that the families and individuals were seen looking for the staff to know about the exact timings of the arrival and departure of their desired trains but in vain.

Some of the passengers speaking to them said they braved the chilling weather conditions to catch the train but were disappointed to find no one here to tell us to how long they would have to wait for the same. They said they had decided to leave their homes after failing to receive such information from the 'inquiry' over phone.

An official, who had no answers with the inquiry or information, told the media that how could the staff at the inquiry give people such information when they too did not have any idea.

The perturbed passengers said the railways authorities must at least have a perfect telecommunication network and the government should ensure an uninterrupted Internet service so that people should not undergo such miseries.

Road communication

The intercity bus services were also hit by fog and severe cold. Operators of these services told the media at their stands that they had been getting a very low number of bookings over the last few days. Most intending travellers seemed to have postponed their plan due to the tough weather conditions. "We are also avoiding to run our services during the hours when thick fog envelops our route because driving in such a situation is highly risky," they said.

Other modes of transport, like cabs and tri-wheelers, are faced with a much decline in availability of passengers. The number of such vehicles plying on roads and in lanes appeared to be around 10-20pc as against the normal quantum.

'Life-saving utilities'

Life for the people of upper Sindh districts' rural areas is as tough as it has been for decades because there has been no improvement in the electricity and gas supplies to them. Winters are even tougher for them as most villages lacked even infrastructure of these essentially required utilities. These people burn dry wood, straws and junk to keep themselves and their homes warm.

The urban areas do have the infrastructure but power loadshedding, suspension of supply and breakdowns mostly stretch over 12 hours a day, hence little respite from harsh weather conditions.

Like most other areas of the country, upper Sindh also faces a deepening gas crisis for months. Absence of proper and adequate electric and gas supply not only deprives the urban population of a source of heating their homes, but also disable them to cook food. The situation has now become a matter of survival for people of both urban and rural areas.

The worst-hit in harsh winters are the elderly, weak and ailing men and women, besides small children.

House committee formed to probe BIEK results

Continued from Page 13

increase in dog-bite incidents in 2024 and asked the minister concerned as to what steps were being taken to contain the menace.

She said as many as 18 people were killed in dog bite incidents in 2024, adding that 11 of the victims died as they did not get vaccine.

The MQM-P MPA said that Rabies Control Programme Sindh (RCPS) was launched in 2021 but according to media reports it was not functional due to paucity of funds. "There is helpline 1093 which is not active, while the RCPS website is also closed," she said.

In reply to her notice, Parliamentary Secretary for Municipalities Siraj Qasim Soomro said that the RCPS faced shortage of funds due to Covid-19 and other financial constraints of the provincial government.

He said that the RCPS office was properly working with the sanctioned staff and application was also there to lodge complaints of stray dogs.

However, he said that the towns and union committees were responsible to curb the menace of stray dogs.

He shared that the over 13,500 stray dogs were neutered and over 25,000 others were vaccinated by the RCPS, adding that the antirabies vaccine was available at government health facilities across the province.

Bill to appoint bureaucrats as VC introduced

The law minister also tabled a bill to amend the universities law.

The chair referred the legislation to the standing committee concerned for deliberations.

Later, the house was adjourned to Tuesday (today).

Wapda workers protest sackings

By Our Correspondent

HYDERABAD: Wapda workers staged a demonstration on Monday outside the office of Hesco Lasr operation circle in Qasimabad in protest against retrenchment of five colleagues.

Office-bearers of All Pakistan Wapda Hydro Electric Workers Union (CBA) Iqbal Ahmed Khan, Azam Khan, Hamid Khan, Allah Dino Kaimkhani and others, who led the protest, demanded immediate reinstatement of the five employees in the Hesco Lasr operation circle.

They said that despite shortage of staff, employees were being sacked by officers on the basis of personal likes and dislikes and some employees' failure to pay to the officers 'monthly', a euphemism for bribe in cash.

They said that officers accused the sacked employees of failing to meet recovery targets to justify their decision. The dismissal of experienced employees, who should rather be respected for their hard work, was just condemnable, they said.

They rejected low recovery as pretext for their retrenchment and said the recovery targets pertained to only July-August period of last year, which had improved in subsequent months still they were dismissed.

The union leaders claimed that they had worked hard for the department over the last 30 years of their service but they were sacked with one stroke of pen. The sacked employees were also deprived of all monetary benefits in sheer violation of labour laws, they lamented.

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

In Loving Memory of Our Beloved Mother

Anis Fatima (Bikhala)

With profound sadness, we announce the passing of our dearest mother, **ANIS FATIMA**, who left us on **13th January 2025**. She was an extraordinary person, full of love, kindness and unwavering strength, touching the lives of everyone she met. She will be deeply missed and forever remembered in our hearts.

Namaz-e-Janaza: Sultan Masjid after Zuhr prayers **Tuesday, 14th January 2025, 1:30 PM.**

Burial: Phase 8, DHA Graveyard.

For Ladies: 37 Khayaban-e-Shaheen, Phase-5, DHA, Karachi.

IN GRIEF:

Masarrat Misbah — **Farhat Misbah**
Nighat Misbah — **Talat Misbah**
Sitwat Misbah — **Swaleh Misbah**
Nusrat Misbah — **Asif Misbah**

JOB OPPORTUNITIES
GOVERNMENT OF SINDH, HEALTH DEPARTMENT DIRECTORATE OF THE EXPANDED PROGRAMME ON IMMUNIZATION (EPI)

CORRIGENDUM

This is with reference to advertisement titled "Job Opportunities" published under Information No. INP/KHY/118/2025 in leading newspapers i.e. Kawish & Dawn on 11th January, 2025 & in Jang Newspaper. The following vacant post published at Serial No. 01 in the referred newspaper, it is hereby advertised in the largest interest that academic & professional qualification mentioned in the said advertisement kindly may be read as under:

S.#	Name of Post	Required Qualification	Location
1	Provincial Cold Chain Engineer Post (01)	• Bachelor Degree in Electrical Engineering from HEC recognized Institute/University with at least in 2nd Division along with 3 to 5 years of field experience in Refrigeration. OR Three (3) years Diploma/CME in Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Maintenance or equivalent from HEC/Sindh Board of Technical Education registered Institute with 5 Years of field experience. • Age upto 30 years and age relaxation shall be entertained as per rules & policy Govt. of Sindh. • Domicile Sindh Province. • Ability to communicate with staff, stakeholders and customers in oral and written English. Well versed with local language (Urdu & Sindhi) • Well versed in using MS Office (Word / Excel / Power point). • Ability to perform safely and correctly the procedure of repair and maintenance Cold Chain equipment and systems. • Ability to perform field visits all over province as per tour plan.	EPI PHQ Directorate

TERMS & CONDITION

- Note: All other terms & conditions of the said advertisement will remain the same.

HOW TO APPLY:

- Interested candidates fulfilling the above criteria should fill online form & download the application form along with the prescribed Test Fee Deposit Slip from STS website, (www.sts.org.pk).
- Pay the Screening Test fee through prescribed deposit slip on any online branch of designated bank. Attach the paid copy of original deposit slip with the filled-up application form.
- Application Forms improperly filled-up, incomplete, without paid copy of deposit slip will be rejected.
- Applications submitted by hand will NOT BE ENTERTAINED.
- Last Date of Submission of Application Form is: 10 February, 2025.
- Please send the Filled-up Application Form along with Original paid Bank Deposit Slip through Post or any courier service to Sindh Testing Service-Pakistan (Address mentioned in the form), before Last Date.
- STS will not responsible for the late receipt of applications sent through post or by any courier service.

LAST DATE SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION FROM IS 10th FEBRUARY, 2025

STS

For further information please contact www.sts.org.pk
Helpline: 021-34761617
SINDH TESTING SERVICE-PAKISTAN

DR. MUHAMMAD NAEEM RAJPUT
PROJECT DIRECTOR (EPI)
HEALTH DEPARTMENT/GOVERNMENT OF SINDH

INP-KHY-130/25

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of our beloved mother

Mrs. Anis Fatima B-Khala

Her **Namaz-e-Janaza** will be offered, Insha Allah, on **Tuesday, January 14, 2025**, after Zuhr prayers at **1:30 p.m.**, at Sultan Masjid, Phase-V, DHA-Karachi.

We pray to ***Allah*** (SWT) to grant our mother eternal peace and a place in Jannat-ul-Firdaus, and to provide strength and patience to our grieving family. ***Ameen.***

We request you to remember her in your prayers.

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SUDOKU ALPHA

QUICK **A4942**

	1	7	6		4			
							6	
	2	4	5	3		8	7	1
	5	8		6				9
								3
4						2		
3		1	4					
2				9	5			
	8		1		6		9	

TRICKY **B4942**

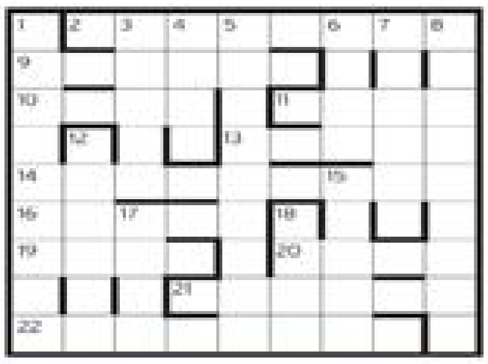
			7	6		2		
	8	2		4		1		
1	7						9	
			9					7
9				5		3		8
6						9		
	9			1		4		
		8						
5	4			9				

To solve this puzzle each 3x3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9. While the rules may be simple, there are numerous strategies to help you solve sudoku. For hints and information visit www.sudoku.org.uk.

Created by Peter Ritmeester (C) PZZL.com

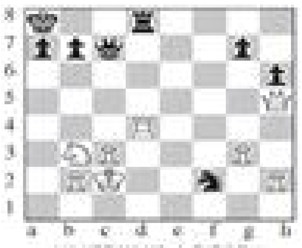
CROSSWORD

ACROSS
2 Teaches (8)
9 _ Steadman, actress (8)
10 Otherwise (4)
11 Educating _, play by Willy Russell (4)
13 Desert animal (5)
14 Nile horse (anag.) (9)
16 Singing voice (5)
19 Stench (4)
20 Character from Disney's Frozen (4)
21 Edit for publication (6)
22 Price reduction (8)



DOWN
1 Powerful whirlpool (9)
3 Dance hall (5)
4 Utilises (4)
5 Worried (9)
6 Slight haircut (4)
7 Scope (6)
8 Deadlock in chess (9)
12 _ Easton, singer (6)
15 A relation by marriage (2-3)
17 Close (4)
18 Perform again (4)

CHESS



WHITE WINS A PIECE
HINT: FIND A DOUBLE THREAT

Solution:
1. Qf7! (threatens both Qxc7 and Qxf8). If 1. ... Qxf7, 2. Rxd8 mate.

TARGET

D	O	V
R	U	A
E	L	B

HOW many words of four letters or more can you make from the letters shown here? In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each must contain the centre letter and there must be at least one nine-letter word. No plurals or verb forms ending in "s".

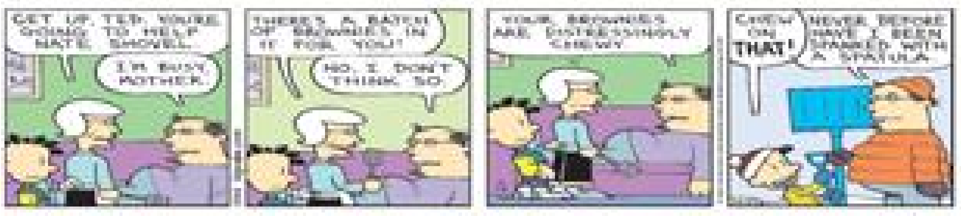
TODAY'S TARGET
Good 29;
Very good 42;
Excellent 55 (or more).
Solution tomorrow

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTIONS

GROUNDHOG
doggo dong donor door dough dour drongo dugong gong good goon gorgon gourd grog ground GROUNDHOG honour hood horn hound hour odour rondo rood rough round undo

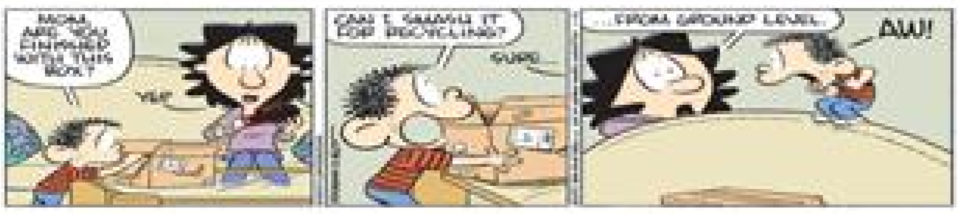
THE METRO FUNNIES

BIG NATE | BY LINCOLN PEIRCE



THE WIZARD OF ID | BY BRANT PARKER AND JOHNNY HART

BABY BLUES



WEATHER

Sunset & Sunrise

	Hyderabad	Islamabad	Karachi	Lahore	Peshawar	Quetta
Sunset	05:57pm	05:24pm	06:04pm	05:22pm	05:28pm	05:58pm
Sunrise	07:13am	07:09am	07:18am	07:01am	07:17am	07:25am

Three Day Forecast

	Today				Tomorrow			Day After		
	Min	Max	Outlook	Humidity%	Min	Max	Outlook	Min	Max	Outlook
Faisalabad	6	20	Mostly Sunny	66	6	20	Sunny	6	19	Partly Cloudy
Hyderabad	9	23	Sunny	57	9	24	Sunny	9	25	Sunny
Islamabad	7	19	Overcast	56	7	19	Sunny	6	19	Cloudy
Lahore	8	19	Cloudy	68	5	18	Sunny	5	17	Partly Cloudy
Multan	8	20	Sunny	76	7	19	Sunny	8	20	Sunny
Peshawar	5	18	Overcast	52	6	20	Mostly Sunny	5	19	Cloudy
Quetta	0	13	Mostly Sunny	31	-0	9	Partly Cloudy	-1	10	Sunny

Temperature estimates are internationally sourced and may differ from local estimates.

HELP

EMERGENCIES

Police Help	15, 99212652-13, 99215554
CPLC	1102, 35682222
Fire Brigade	16, 99215007, 99215009
Bomb Disposal	99212679
KE Complaints	118
Telephone complaints	1218
Railway Inquiry	99212957-60
PCAA Flight inquiry	99072284, 99071278
	99072285, 114

HOSPITALS

Abbasi Shaheed	99260400-09
Civil Hospital	99215740, 9215850
Jinnah Hospital	99201300-99201301
NICVD	99201271-6
Aga Khan Hospital	34930051
Kharadar Gen Hospital	32500113-18
Indus Hospital	35112709
Tabba	35811254, 111844844
Ziauddin Hospital	35862937-9, 36648237-9
Kiran Cancer Hospital	99261601-04
Liaquat National	111-456-456, 34412873
Memon Medical	34651107-14
A.O. Clinic	36683344, 36683301-04
Saifee Hospital	36618340, 36618380
Holy Family Hospital	32258934, 32258891
Patel Hospital	111174674
South City Hospital	35374072
Kidney Centre Institute	35661000-10
Karwan-e-Hayat	021-111534477
Usman Memorial	021-36630951-15

AMBULANCE

Edhi	115, 32310066, 32310077
Chhipa	1021
SIEHS Rescue	1122
St.John	32780500, 32780099
Red Crescent	35350227, 35358028

BLOOD BANK

Fatimid	32225284, 32256076
Husaini	32236405-06
PMA (Civil)	99215740, 99215650

WORD GAME

By Kathleen Sava

▼ **TODAY'S WORD**
GENERATE

(GENERATE: JEN-at-ate: To bring into existence; to produce.)

Average mark 40 words
Time limit 60 minutes

Can you find 56 or more words in GENERATE?

The list will be published tomorrow.

SOLUTIONS

▼ **YESTERDAY'S WORD — CARILLON**

cairn call carol ciao clan clarion coal coil coin coir cola collar coral corn acorn alnico racino racon rail rain rani rill roan roil roll icon lino inro laic lain lair liar lilac lion llano loan local loin loran oilcan oral orca nail noir noil

RULES OF THE GAME:

1. Words must be of four or more letters.
2. Words that acquire four letters by the addition of "s," such as "bats" or "dies," are not allowed.
3. Additional words made by adding a "d" or an "s" may not be used. For example, if "bake" is used, "baked" or "bakes" are not allowed, but "bake" and "baking" are admissible.
4. Proper nouns, slang words, or vulgar or sexually explicit words are not allowed.

YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

ACROSS
Set fire to
Alarms
Biplane
Card
Fir
Chaotic
Sag
Also
Trample
Stifle
Conductor

DOWN
Sarcastic
Elba
Friday
Impromptu
Era
Tunic
Overpower
Italic
Cargo
Solo
Ann

METRO EVENTS

BIRTHDAY

The 94th birthday celebration of poet Ahmed Faraz is being held at Josh Maleehabadi Library, Arts Council, at 5pm.

LECTURE

A lecture on 'A Hyderabadi Begum in Ottoman Lands: Travel Writing, Urdu Literature, and the Global Imagination in Muslim South Asia' is held at Horizon H-506, Habib University, at 5:30pm.

WORKSHOP

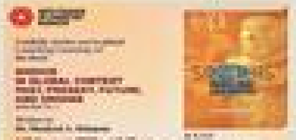
A workshop on 'AI in Social Media' at Iqra University, Airport campus, at 11:45am.

SEMINAR

An awareness seminar on 'Redefining Education: Transitioning from Rote to Conceptual Learning through Assessment' organised at main auditorium, Dawood University of Engineering and Technology, main (Jinnah) campus, at 9am.

BOOK LAUNCH

Launching ceremony of a book, *Sindhis in Global Context: Past, Present, Future, and Origins*, by Dr Maqbool A. Halepota, is scheduled at Haseena Moin Hall, Ahmed Shah Building, Arts Council at 3pm.



HOROSCOPE

By Georgia Nicols

ARIES | March 21-April 19
***** This is a lovely day to socialize! Get out and interact with others. Meet friends for coffee, happy hour, lunch, dinner or casual get-togethers. Sports events and fun activities with kids will please you! Anything to do with the entertainment world and the hospitality industry will get a lift! Tonight: Socialize.

TAURUS | April 20-May 20
**** Today you can enjoy domestic peace and happiness and feel happy to be in your home. However, this is also a good day to invite others to your home and your excellent table, because you are an admired host who provides good food and drink to your guests. Tonight: Cocoon.

GEMINI | May 21-June 20
***** This is an upbeat, happy day for you! Get out and interact with others. You'll enjoy short trips, talking to neighbors, siblings and relatives, as well as running errands and dealing with appointments. It's also a great day to learn something new, because you're enthusiastic and keen. Tonight: Discussions.

CANCER | June 21-July 22
**** Financial negotiations will go well today. In fact, this is an excellent day to discuss business. Trust your moneymaking ideas. You might see ways to boost your income. Travel or foreign interests could be involved. Tonight: Check your belongings.

LEO | July 23-Aug. 22
***** This is a lovely day, because the Moon is in your sign dancing with lucky Jupiter. It's a great day to get together with old friends. You also might be concerned for the welfare of someone. Group activities in particular are favored. You'll be persuasive in sales, public relations and marketing. Tonight: You win!

VIRGO | Aug. 23-Sept. 22
**** Today you have a warm feeling in your tummy; you're relaxed and content with your world. Relations with partners and close friends are warm and congenial. Meanwhile, you're up for some fun socializing, even though you will seek some quiet times today. Tonight: Solitude.

LIBRA | Sept. 23-Oct. 22
**** This is the perfect day for any kind of group effort or interacting with clubs and organizations, because people are keen to see each other today. They'll be enthusiastic to share ideas and pool their efforts to get something done. In particular, working together for the benefit of others will appeal to you. Tonight: Be friendly.

SCORPIO | Oct. 23-Nov. 21
**** People notice you today, and it's a good thing, because you look upbeat and happy. You might even use your high-viz influence to rally your troops to work for a good cause. People are idealistic and generous today, which is why many are willing to lend a helping hand. Admirable! Tonight: You're admired.

SAGITTARIUS | Nov. 22-Dec. 21
***** Do something different; you want some adventure today. Shake things up a little. If possible, travel or take a short trip. If not, go someplace you've never been before so that you feel stimulated by new surroundings. Enjoy learning something new today. Tonight: Explore!

CAPRICORN | Dec. 22-Jan. 19
**** Financial discussions, especially about inheritances and shared property, will go well because you are favored today. Oh yes, you'll be laughing all the way to the bank. Admittedly, relations with partners and close friends might be strained. Tonight: Check your finances.

AQUARIUS | Jan. 20-Feb. 18
**** Be prepared to go more than halfway when dealing with others today, even though your relations with everyone are friendly and upbeat! Nevertheless, you will have to compromise. Activities with kids, sports events and social outings will appeal to you. Enjoy your day! Tonight: Cooperate.

PISCES | Feb. 19-Mar. 20
**** Work-related travel is likely for many today. Regardless of what you're doing, do be aware that you will get the most done today by working with others. Teamwork is the key. People are surprisingly willing to join forces today to work for a positive cause. (You can steer this energy how you want.) Tonight: Work.

CONTRACT BRIDGE

Bidding Quiz
By Steve Becker

Famous Hand -- Part two

East dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ A
♥ A 8 6 5 4
♦ 9 3 2
♣ 10 6 5 3

WEST
♠ J 10 9 8 7 6 2
♥ 10 7 3
♦ 10
♣ K J

EAST
♠ 5 4 3
♥ Q J 2
♦ A K Q 7 6
♣ 8 7

SOUTH
♠ K Q
♥ K 9
♦ J 8 5 4
♣ A Q 9 4 2

The bidding:

East	South	West	North
1 ♦	1 NT	3 ♠	3 NT

Opening lead — jack of spades.

Yesterday we featured this deal from the 1974 match between Italy and North America where an Italian pair, holding the North-South cards at the first table, got to five clubs doubled and went down 800.

The bidding went very differently at the second table, where a North American pair reached three notrump with the North-South cards.

West led a spade to dummy's ace and declarer had to decide how to play the clubs. He needed five club tricks to make the contract and so was forced to assume that East had the king.

But when he led the ten of clubs from dummy and East followed low, South had to further decide whether East had the K-x of clubs or the K-J-x. After great thought, he played low from his hand.

West won with the jack and returned the ten of spades to declarer's king. South then led a heart to dummy's ace and — consistent with his original plan — took a second club finesse.

Disaster! West won with the king and cashed the 9-8-7-6 of spades, producing this position:

North
♥ 8 6 5
♦ 9 3

West
♠ 2
♥ 10 7 3
♦ 10

East
♥ Q
♦ A K Q 7

South
♥ K
♦ J 8 5 4

When West now cashed the deuce of spades, on which East discarded the queen of hearts, poor South was squeezed and could not take another trick! So declarer finished down six — 600 points — almost neutralizing his team's plus 800 at the other table, and thereby added another zany chapter to the annals of world championship history.

Tomorrow: It takes two to tango.

YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU SOLUTIONS

Quick — A4941

5	7	9	8	6	3	1	2	4
3	1	8	4	2	7	5	6	9
2	6	4	9	1	5	7	8	3
6	3	5	7	4	9	2	1	8
4	8	2	1	5	6	9	3	7
1	9	7	3	8	2	6	4	5
8	5	3	6	9	1	4	7	2
7	2	1	5	3	4	8	9	6
9	4	6	2	7	8	3	5	1

Tricky — B4941

2	8	6	9	1	4	3	7	5
5	1	7	8	3	2	6	9	4
3	9	4	6	5	7	1	2	8
9	6	3	7	4	5	2	8	1
4	5	2	1	8	6	9	3	7
8	7	1	2	9	3	4	5	6
7	3	5	4	6	9	8	1	2
6	2	8	3	7	1	5	4	9
1	4	9	5	2	8	7	6	3

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DAWN

METRO North

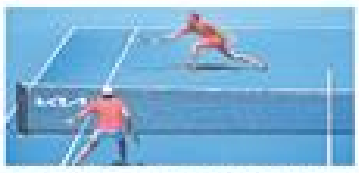
ISLAMABAD Tuesday, January 14, 2025

ISLAMABAD

Sunset	05:24pm
Sunrise (Tomorrow)	07:09am

NEXT 24 HRS

Minimum	07°C
Maximum	19°C
Outlook	Overcast



Djokovic joins Alcaraz, Sinner in Australian Open second round

Pg.18 SPORT

STUDENTS leave Government Higher Secondary School, Murree Road, on the first day of the academic session following the end of winter holidays in Rawalpindi on Monday. — Photo by Mohammad Asim

CDA opens one underpass of Serena interchange to traffic

Entire project likely to be completed by end of this month

By Kashif Abbasi

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) opened one of the underpasses of the Serena interchange project to traffic on Monday.

Under the said project, three underpasses with loops will be constructed: one on Khayaban-i-Suhrwardi and two on Srinagar Highway.

The underpass on Khayaban-i-Suhrwardi in front of Serena has been opened. This single-barrel underpass will cater to traffic moving from Globe Chowk (Constitution Avenue) towards Aabpara.

The traffic moving towards Constitution Avenue outside Serena will use the old route, which is also being overhauled.

During a visit to the site on Monday, *Dawn* noticed that structural work on two other underpasses on Srinagar Highway had been completed, but it seemed that it would require some time to complete the entire project.

The foundation stone of the project worth Rs4.2 billion was laid by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on November 5.

The project was supposed to be completed in 60 days i.e. on January 5. But it faced delays due to slush and a nullah, said the CDA officials.

"Despite all challenges, we completed Suhrwardi underpass and today, it has been opened to traffic," said an official and added that work on the remaining two underpasses continued at a full pace.

"We are making all-out efforts to get the entire project completed by Jan 24. Hopefully, we will get it completed, as now our work is in the final stages," he said. After the completion of this project, the traffic mess at this junction will likely be resolved.

According to a statement by the CDA, Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa visited the site on Monday and showed satisfaction with the pace of work.

"Completion of this underpass is a milestone as it will provide easy access to citizens," the statement quoted the CDA as saying. He also directed the CDA teams to get the horticulture work of the project completed at the earliest.

Sources said that Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi had directed the CDA to complete this project as early as possible.

He had directed the CDA to complete all aspects of the project, including horticulture work and lane markings, by the end of this month, as Pakistan was going to host the Champion's Trophy next month and visiting teams would stay in Islamabad.

As per PC-I, the completion time of this project was six months, but the target had been revised to 60 days after the directions of the prime minister and the interior minister. After 68 days, the Suhrwardi underpass has been opened.

Meanwhile, CDA is also working on another important and separate project to provide a direct link between Murree Road and Srinagar Highway to get maximum benefit from underpasses being constructed on Srinagar Highway.

Without the construction of an underpass on Murree Road to link it with Srinagar Highway, traffic from Murree Road cannot enter Srinagar Highway. Without it, the motorists will have to go to the Kashmir Chowk (also known as Dhokri Chowk) to move towards Srinagar Highway. In light of this requirement, the CDA through a consultant has already completed the initial design of the underpass.

"Soon we will start work on the Murree Road underpass as well," said an official, adding that the CDA chief had already visited the Murree Road site and directed the officials concerned to expedite pre-tender requirements, such as the approval of final design and budget estimates.

Muslim world's VCs conference from Feb 4

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is all set to host Muslim world's vice chancellors' forum next month in Islamabad as Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC) Dr Mukhtar Ahmed on Monday extended an invitation in this regard to officials of Somalia.

The event from Feb 4 to 7 will bring together over 150 vice-chancellors from universities across OIC member states, aiming to enhance collaboration in higher education within the Islamic world.

A Somalian delegation led by Minister of Education Farah Abdulkadir and Ambassador of Somalia in Pakistan Sheikhnur Mohamed Hassan visited HEC Secretariat on Monday and met HEC Chairman Dr Mukhtar Ahmed.

The officials of Somalia are in to Pakistan to attended international girls conference that concluded on Sunday.

During the meeting, both sides discussed opportunities for the mutual development of higher education sector of the two countries. The Somalian delegation also included Director General of the Ministry of Education Abdullahi Omar, Advisers to the Ministry of Education Ms Doka, and Ms Asma from the Embassy of Somalia.

HEC Adviser on Global Engagement Aware Ahmad and director administration Mr Tariq Iqbal attended the meeting.

According to a press release, the HEC Chairman emphasised the organization's ongoing efforts to increase scholarships for international students in Pakistan, particularly for youth from Muslim countries.

He highlighted the success of the Afghan Student Scholarship Programme, which has enabled numerous Afghan students to pursue higher education in Pakistan's top universities.

Dr Ahmed assured the Somali delegates of HEC's full support in advancing higher education in Somalia and providing opportunities for Somali students to benefit from academic programmes in Pakistan.

He particularly emphasised the collaboration for strengthening quality assurance systems as well as enhancing collaboration in the areas of agriculture and information technology.

Dr Mukhtar Ahmed also briefed the delegation on 'Ilm-Bank,' a virtual platform that aims to serve as a knowledge consortium for higher education institutions in OIC countries.

This platform will facilitate cross-border education, training, and research opportunities, allowing students and scholars to connect with resources from across member states.

Woman arrested for allegedly killing stepson

RAWALPINDI: A woman accused of torturing to death her four-year-old step son was arrested by the Civil Lines police.

Shahnaz Bibi, a resident of Jhanda Chichi, lodged an FIR with Civil Lines police saying that she got married to Mohammad Ali 15 years ago and was blessed with five girls and two sons.

She said that her husband's second wife, Aqsa Naz, lived in the same house in Jhanda Chichi and often used to beat her children. Upon returning home, she found Aqsa beating her four-year-old son, Abdul Hadi, with a baton and choking him.

She added that she intervened to rescue her son, with the help of her husband's elder brother, and took him to the District Headquarters Hospital (DHQ) where he was pronounced dead.

According to initial police investigation, several torture marks and bruises were found on the body of the boy.

The body of the deceased was handed over to his family after postmortem.

Police said the accused woman had been arrested after a murder case was registered against her. — Staff Reporter

Lawmakers asked to help constituents reap benefits of CM's initiatives

By Aamir Yasin

RAWALPINDI: Punjab transport minister Bilal Akbar Khan on Monday asked lawmakers to help their constituents register for the Punjab government's aid programmes, including the Ramazan Package, to realise the potential of these initiatives.

During a meeting at the Commissioner's office to review the performance of the government departments, the minister said he had been entrusted by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz to oversee coordination among stakeholders in Rawalpindi Division to provide relief to the public.

Public representatives and divisional heads participated in the meeting, which was briefed by Rawalpindi Deputy Commissioner Dr Hassan Waqar Cheema, and Regional Police Officer Babar Sarfraz Alpa regarding the divisional performance.

Speaking on the occasion, Bilal Akbar Khan said that the Punjab CM said that joint efforts of parliamentarians and administrative officers would lead to public relief. "We will try to bring regional policies after mutual consultation.

Regional policies will be made keeping in mind the local problems and needs," he added.

Sharing details about the initiatives, the provincial minister said the government was about to launch a solar panel project in the energy sector, so public representatives should inform the people about its registration process.

He claimed that 32 new field hospitals had been added to the healthcare system over the past 100 days, adding that up to 35,000 people were getting free treatment in the remote areas of Punjab daily.

In order to resolve the traffic problems, he said e-buses would be procured. "Electric buses have been ordered to solve the transport problems of Rawalpindi.

78 e-buses will be operated on six routes, including Taxila-Wah Cantt, IJ Principal Road to Chungi No. 26, and Dhurlala to Rawalpindi," he said. Mr Khan said that the government's target was to transform 150 bus stands into model bus stands within one year.

He said that every institution in Punjab will provide services to the public on their doorstep through the Dastak mobile application.

'Maryam Ke Dastak' offers services such as domicile certificates, FIR copies, birth certificates, learner's driving licenses, and e-stamping through the 'Dastak Doorstep Delivery App' and web portal.

During the briefing by RPO Rawalpindi, it was informed that the crime rate in Rawalpindi has reduced significantly.

According to the latest data, there has been a 24 per cent decline in property dispute cases in Rawalpindi, a 29 per cent decline in robbery cases, and a 52pc decline in theft cases. Similarly, the cases of car theft have reduced by 27pc.

Deputy Commissioner Dr Hassan Waqar Cheema, while giving a briefing on the progress made on the special initiatives of the chief minister in the district, said that 553 students have benefited from the Chief Minister Internship Programme so far.

In the first phase of school outsourcing, 256 educational institutions have been outsourced, the deputy commissioner added.

Minister accuses PTI of running away from £190m scam case

Tarar says verdict in case was supposed to be announced on Monday, but the accused failed to appear in court

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Monday said the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) leadership was running away from the 190 million pound corruption case because they knew that their hands were not clean and they were involved in the scam.

Addressing a press conference along with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Senator Talal Chaudhry, he said there was no example in the history that billions of rupees were waived like this, as the black money was whitened through creation of a fraudulent trust.

He said the 190 million pounds case was a classic example of "robbing Peter to pay Paul".

The minister said the verdict in the 190 million pound case was supposed to be announced on Monday, but the accused failed to appear in the court.

The minister said the PTI leadership had made a habit of not appearing in courts.

He said the PTI had also used delaying tactics for six years in the foreign funding case. Similarly, he said in the Toshakhana case, they also used delaying tactics and sought adjournments after adjournments.

"Sometimes the PTI leaders changed lawyers, sometimes they changed the letters of attorney," the minister remarked. He said innocent people never change attorneys and lawyers but it has been the practice of the PTI to use delaying tactics in court cases.

He asked why the PTI needed to take a sealed envelope to the cabinet meeting and get its approval without opening it when it was in power.

He alleged that the then cabinet approved the £190m deal without knowing the facts in the sealed envelope brought by Shahzad Akbar. He said it was a mega corruption case in the history of Pakistan.

"It was not just a coincidence, it was a well-thought-out plan", he said.

The minister said the PTI chief also rebuilt his house in Lahore from the mega corruption. Billions of rupees were collected from the person whose billions of rupees were written off by the federal cabinet, he said.

Replying to a question, the minister said the founder of PTI was in jail but why his spouse Bushra Bibi did not turn up in the court.

He said it was the discretion of the concerned judge to decide whether to announce the verdict in the presence of the accused or otherwise.

He said the PTI leadership was divided now and they did not see eye to eye on many matters.

Mr Tarar remarked that the PTI had sown the seeds of mistrust and hatred among the nation but it was itself reaping its harvest.

He said the judge could issue warrants for mandatory presence of an accused during the trial only.

To another question, he said Farha Gogi was wanted in many cases but she was a co-accused in this case, whereas the PTI founder was the main accused.

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PRAYER

Fajr	05:48
Zuhar	12:20
Asr	03:45
Maghreb	05:23
Isha	06:51

Starting time in Islamabad

REFLECTIONS

"SOMETIMES YOUR PRAYERS ARE TURNED DOWN, AND THIS IS ALSO IN YOUR INTEREST; BECAUSE YOU OFTEN, UNKNOWINGLY, ASK FOR THINGS THAT ARE REALLY HARMFUL TO YOU."

— HAZRAT ALI (A.S.)

Governing body approves reforms to strengthen AJK medical colleges

By Tariq Naqash

MUZAFFARABAD: The governing body overseeing three public-sector medical colleges in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on Monday took several significant decisions to enhance the performance of these institutions.

The meeting, held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq, endorsed the establishment of two additional nursing and midwifery colleges, which will operate under the umbrella of the AJK Medical College (AJKMC) in Muzaffarabad and Poonch Medical College (PMC) in Rawalakot.

This step was taken in line with the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council's (PMDC) requirement for medical colleges to establish allied nursing and midwifery colleges within a specified timeframe after their creation.

The three medical colleges were launched in Azad Kashmir between 2011 and 2013.

The governing body also approved the affiliation of the existing State Nursing College in Mirpur with the Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Shaheed (MBBS) Medical College in the lakeside city.

In another key decision, the body sanctioned the affiliation of the 100-bed District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital in Rattian Bala and the 250-bed DHQ Hospital in Bagh with the AJKMC Muzaffarabad and PMC Rawalakot, respectively, as teaching facilities.

With the affiliation of the DHQ Hospital in Bagh, PMC Rawalakot would fulfill the PMDC's requirement of having at least 500 beds across its teaching hospitals.

The AJKMC already met the criteria, with two teaching hospitals in Muzaffarabad offering a combined capacity of 650 beds, and the addition of DHQ Hospital Rattian, with its state-of-the-art building, was expected to improve its services under the college's faculty.

Furthermore, the governing body approved the allocation of land in Muzaffarabad for a regional centre of the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP). Approval was also granted for the appointment of essential faculty for the medical colleges.

Addressing the meeting, Prime Minister Haq assured attendees that issues related to faculty and other administrative matters in the public-sector medical colleges would be addressed on a priority basis.

He stressed that there should be no compromise on educational standards, expressing hope that graduates from these institutions would contribute significantly to the welfare of the state's population.

The premier also underlined the importance of maintaining transparency in the admission process to ensure that deserving boys and girls secure seats purely on merit.

The meeting was attended by Health Minister Nisar Ansar Abdali, Communications and Works Minister Chaudhry Arbar Sadiq, Chief Secretary Khushbul Khan, Secretary Health Brig Muhammad Fareed, and the principals of AJKMC, PMC and MBBS Medical College — Prof Dr Adnan Mehraj, Prof Dr Mumtaz Ahmed, and Prof Dr Faisal Bashir, respectively.

Secretary Finance Islam Zeb Khan and University of Health Sciences Vice Chancellor Ahsan Waheed Rathore participated via video link.

Punjab governor highlights PPP's role for continuity of democracy

By Our Correspondent

TAXILA: Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan on Monday attributed continuity of democracy in the country to the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), saying the party's chairperson, Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, had taken the initiative and issues were resolved amicably when the passage of the 26th amendment was critical.

Addressing a gathering of PPP workers in Fatehjang, the governor said only Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari was capable of steering the country out of the present problems, adding that the country needed Bilawal Bhutto Zardari as prime minister.

Calling for a change in the country's leadership, he stressed the importance of youth-led governance.

"The nation needs young and dynamic leadership to tackle modern challenges and Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari had the credentials of such a leadership," he added.

Sardar Saleem Haider also highlighted the PPP's long-standing dedication to the rights of the underprivileged and middle-class masses and emphasised the pivotal role played by the PPP in shaping the country's political landscape.

"PPP remains the only political party in Pakistan that consistently raises its voice for the rights of the poor and the marginalised," he said. "We will have to mobilise our die-hard supporters and workers across the province to revive the PPP in the Punjab," he added.

Governor Haider said the PPP believed in politics of service and always worked for the welfare of people, adding that despite difficulties, "our leadership made sacrifices to promote unity and solidarity in the country".

He also talked about PPP-introduced programmes like the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), which had become a source of sustenance for countless families across the Pakistan.

"We don't just promise change, we deliver it through concrete initiatives for betterment of the society," he added.

Reflecting on the recent political climate, Governor Saleem Haider justified PPP's alliance with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

"The partnership with PML-N was formed in the interest of national stability and development. It was a difficult but a crucial decision to ensure progress and stability in the country," he added.

از دفتر کمانڈنٹ/میڈیکل سپرنٹنڈنٹ
شیخ خلیفہ بن زید النہیان ہسپتال (سی ایم ایچ) مظفر آباد

ٹینڈر ٹونس نیلامی

ہسپتال ہذا میں موجود ناکارہ سامان الیکٹرونک/میڈیکل/الیکٹریکل/فرنیچر وغیرہ بذریعہ بولی فروخت کرنے کے لئے اشتہار دیا جاتا ہے۔ بولی میں حصہ لینے والی مستند فرمز/رجسٹرڈ ٹھیکیدار/ٹھیکیدار کی رجسٹریشن کا سرٹیفکیٹ/این ٹی این کارڈ/ایف بی آر کی ایکٹو ٹیکس پیئر لسٹ میں نام/ایف بی آر کی ایکٹو ٹیکس پیئر لسٹ میں نام نہ ہونے کی صورت میں ٹیکس کا اسٹیٹس/ایف بی آر کی ایکٹو ٹیکس پیئر لسٹ میں نام نہ ہونے کی صورت میں ٹیکس کا اسٹیٹس/ہسپتال ہذا

Robbers, thieves strike at eight places in capital

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Culprits looted cash and valuables worth over six million rupees from eight places, including three houses and a shop, in the capital, police said on Monday.

Moreover, a battery was stolen from a car parked alongside the heavily-guarded Chief Commissioner Complex.

In the first incident, a gang of robbers looted a house located in the limits of Humak police station, the police said. Three persons armed with weapons raided the house of Mohammad Zulfikar Khan at Model Town and held the residents, including women, at gunpoint.

They ransacked the house and looted cash and gold ornaments worth Rs1.2 million and escaped.

Similarly, robbers looted another house located in the area of Sumbal police station. The police said four armed men entered the house of Mazhar Siddiq at Mera Aku when the residents were asleep.

The gunmen detained the inmates in a room and also beat up Mr Siddiq. They looted Rs100,000 cash, and valuables worth Rs500,000.

Three gunmen entered the house of Mohammad Waris at G-10/3, in the area of Ramna police station, and looted cash Rs8,000 and householdarticles and escaped.

In another incident, two persons armed with weapons looted a medical store in Shalimar, the police said, adding that the robbers raided the store owned by Safdar Abbas at E-11 and held up the shopkeepers at gunpoint and looted Rs170,000.

Furthermore, two gunmen snatched six mobile phones from different persons at G-9/4 in the limits of Karachi Company police station.

Besides, a gang of two robbers looted cash, and valuables from Syed Danial Kazmi and his friends in the area of Shalimar police station.

Meanwhile, thieves stole gold ornaments worth Rs1 million from a house at Shahzad Town police station. The thieves broke into the house of Sher Khan at Farash Road when the residents were away and stole 13 tola gold ornaments.

Moreover, thieves also stole a battery from a vehicle parked along the wall of the Chief Commissioner Complex, housing the office of Chief Commissioner at G-11/4.

Policeman shot, injured in Pindi

By Our Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: A police official was shot and injured by unidentified motorcycle riders and managed to escape firing gunshots creating panic and fear in the Westridge police area on Sunday night.

The police have registered a case against the two unidentified motorcycle riders under section 7- Anti Terrorism Act (7-ATA) and other relevant sections of the law and launched a search for the culprits.

Foot constable Abdul Jabbar lodged an FIR with the police saying that he and constable Zubair Saleem were patrolling in the area on motorcycle on Sunday night and were doing random checking of vehicles.

He said that while they were patrolling in the area, they signaled a motorcycle rider on suspicion. Instead of responding to the police, the motorcycle riders opened fire on the police patrol.

As a result, he was injured after being hit by a bullet fired by the motorcycle riders. However, Zubair responded to the gunmen in the same manner.

The motorcycle riders tried to speed off on their motorcycle, but it could not start and they had to escape on foot. Police said panic and fear gripped the area due to firing.

Meanwhile, City Police Officer Syed Khalid Hamdani on Monday visited the City Traffic Police Headquarters.

During his visit the CPO visited various branches and reviewed the facilities provided to the citizens.

Police spokesman said that the CPO also inspected the new driving simulator being added to the driving school and showed interest in modern technology and gave instructions to extend the driving simulator to other driving licence centres.

During the visit to the One Window Licensing Hall, the CPO reviewed the facilities provided to citizens and issued orders for immediate solution of citizens problems.

The CPO also inspected the driving licence road test track and gave instructions to further improve its quality.

The CPO took individual briefings from the branch in-charges at the Traffic Headquarters and issued instructions.

CPO Syed Khalid Hamdani appreciated the steps taken by the Chief Traffic Officer Benish Fatima for the convenience of the citizens.

Gunmen escape with policeman's SMG

ISLAMABAD: Suspects escaped with an official sub machine gun (SMG) of the capital police on Monday, police said.

A police officer told *Dawn* that the incident took place at IJP Road near Wheat Godown where four-member Dolphin Squad was deployed at a picket on the IJP Road.

They set up a picket near the Wheat Godown where three persons riding on a motorcycle appeared, he said, adding that on suspicion the police personnel signaled them to stop. However, they started firing on them when reached close to them.

The police personnel ran away in panic to save their lives while leaving behind their weapons and motorcycles on the spot, the officer said, adding that while running away from the spot one of the officials fell on the road and sustained bruises.

Later, the suspects took an official SMG and escaped towards Faizabad, he added. — Staff Reporter

STUDENTS from various educational institutions paint a wall of Zero Point Interchange in Islamabad on Monday. The activity was arranged by the Azerbaijan government with the assistance of a local company under an agreement with the Pakistani government to carry out beautification of the capital city. — White Star

Pakistan takes lead in tackling issues of girls' education, out-of-school children

Education minister terms international conference historic achievement to address cultural impediments to access to education for girls

By Our Staff Reporter

EDUCATION Minister Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui poses for a photograph with former Norwegian prime minister Kjell Magne Bondevik in Islamabad on Monday. Education Secretary Mohyuddin Ahmed Wani and former member of the Oslo Parliament Aamir Javed Sheikh are also present. — APP

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui said on Monday Pakistan is taking the lead in Islamic countries to tackle the issues of girls' education and out-of-school children.

The federal minister met a high-powered delegation led by former Prime Minister of Norway Kjell Magne Bondevik here. The meeting was also attended by Secretary Education Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani and former Member of the Oslo Parliament, Norway, Aamir Javed Sheikh.

Dr Siddiqui said Mr Bondevik is a friend of Pakistan who has always worked towards helping Pakistan in fighting its challenges.

The minister said the presence of former Norway prime minister internationalised the agenda of the international conference on girls' education which concluded in Islamabad on Sunday. The minister said Pakistan faced a myriad of challenges but his ministry had taken up the issue with utmost emergency. He said that we have mobilised all our resources to address this issue, adding that the government had also declared an educational emergency.

Dr Siddiqui said that currently the Ministry of Education was addressing issues of access to schools, limited infrastructure, teachers' training and nutritional problems of children in collaboration with other ministries.

He said that to address cultural impediments of access to education for girls, the international conference was a historic achievement. He said that Pakistan had taken the lead to eradicate the misconception surrounding girls' education in the Islamic countries.

The former prime minister of Norway Kjell Magne Bondevik said that he always worked towards helping Pakistan in resolving its numerous strategic and internal challenges. He said Pakistan had made history by conducting the international conference on girls' education. He said that Pakistan had huge potential and through proper management of resources all the issues can be addressed. The secretary education said Pakistan had adopted latest techniques and approaches to tackle all challenges of the education sector.

Separately, the education minister met another delegation led by Minister of Education and Science of Kyrgyzstan Dogdurkul Kendirbaeva. During the meeting, he said the international conference on girls' education had provided the Islamic countries with an opportunity to come closer. He said he wanted to enhance cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan in the field of education.

The minister discussed exchange of expertise and knowledge regarding vocational and technical training, adding that the two countries could benefit from the experience of each other. He said Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan should enhance their ties especially in exchange of technology, education and research. He said that digitalisation of the education sector can address numerous challenges of today and tomorrow.

Ms Kendirbaeva said people of Kyrgyzstan had deep affiliation with Pakistan. The Kyrgyzstan minister said the university-to-university cooperation was the way forward. She also briefed the minister about a digital learning platform being used in Kyrgyzstan that had reaped good results.

Meanwhile, the minister also met a delegation led by Deputy Minister for Education of Yemen Dr Ali Alabali. The meeting was also attended by Ambassador of Yemen to Pakistan Mohammed Motahar Alashabi and officials of the education ministry.

During the meeting, the education minister said both Yemen and Pakistan had suffered due to terrorism. He said education was the best way to progress for any country, adding collaboration in the fields of mutual benefit was essential.

Earlier on Sunday, Senate Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani hosted a reception in honour of the participants of the international conference at Parliament House, which was attended by leading figures from across the globe, including political leaders, policymakers, and experts in the field of education and development.

A COUPLE collects mustard greens from a field along Adiala Road in Rawalpindi. — Online

Pims sets up helpline for patients

ISLAMABAD: On the directions of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims) has established a helpline to address the complaints of patients.

Moreover, it has been decided that at least one senior doctor of every specialty will be available in the hospital round the clock.

According to spokesperson Dr Mubashir Mushtaq Daha, the decision has been made to ensure quality medical facilities for every patient.

"In case of an emergency or complaint, patients or their attendants can contact at helpline number 051-9071711. Moreover, a number of signboards have been placed in the hospital for the convenience of the patients and their attendants," he said.

Pims Executive Director Dr Rana Imran Sikander said that the hospital gets thousands of patients in the outpatient department (OPD) on daily basis.

"Prime Minister's Coordinator Dr Malik Mukhtar, during his visit, had also directed to facilitate the patients," he said.

He said that considering the direction it had been decided that senior doctors would remain in the hospital round the clock so that they could tackle emergency cases without lag of time.

Earlier, senior doctors remained on call and in case of emergency they were called to reach hospital and attend the patient.

Dr Sikander claimed that every call at the helpline would be taken seriously and all possible efforts would be made to address the complaint. He also claimed that free of cost medicines were being provided to thousands of patients daily. — Staff Reporter

Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan keen to explore opportunities in medical education

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) president, Dr Rizwan Taj, on Monday made it clear that no compromise would be made on the quality of medical education being provided to Pakistani students within the country, or abroad.

He was talking to a delegation from Republic of Kyrgyzstan, led by Minister of Science and Education D.Sh Kendirbaeva, which visited the PMDC to discuss promotion of medical education and explore opportunities for collaboration.

Kyrgyz Ambassador Avazbek Atakhanov, rectors, heads of Kyrgyz universities and representatives from the education sector were also part of the delegation.

The discussion revolved around the registration criteria for foreign medical graduates, admission standards for Pakistani students in foreign institutions and accreditation protocols for foreign medical colleges.

The PMDC president emphasised that Pakistan had made significant progress in the medical field. He noted that the country currently had 186 medical and dental colleges, producing healthcare professionals.

He further stated that over 365,000 doctors were registered with the PMDC, which was playing a crucial role in meeting the healthcare needs of the nation.

He said Pakistani graduates were respected across the globe.

"Only graduates from PMDC-recognised foreign institutions are eligible for provisional registration and can appear for the National Registration Examination (NRE). The graduates who successfully pass NRE steps I and II qualify for a full licence to practice medicine or dentistry in Pakistan," Dr Rizwan Taj said.

According to a statement, while sharing admission criteria for Pakistani students seeking enrollment in foreign medical institutions, he said students must be admitted to a PMDC-recognised foreign institution and candidates must check the list and fulfill the criteria available on its website before proceeding abroad for their studies.

Regarding the accreditation of foreign medical institutions, Prof Dr Rizwan Taj explained that the PMDC had maintained a list of recognised foreign institutions on its official website.

"This list is provisional and subject to periodic review. PMDC has developed a new accreditation pro forma, requiring foreign institutions to meet the standards set by the national regulator, the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME), and the PMDC criteria," he said.

The PMDC president said Pakistan's medical education system had earned global recognition for its high standards.

"Collaboration with Kyrgyzstan will provide an excellent opportunity for mutual growth and the advancement of medical education in both countries. However, no compromise will made on the quality of medical education within the country, or outside for the Pakistani students," he added.

The Kyrgyz minister of science and education appreciated Pakistan's contributions to the global medical fraternity and expressed keen interest in strengthening ties between the two countries in the field of medical education.

Both the sides also agreed to explore avenues for joint capacity-building measures to further enhance the quality of medical education.

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DAWN

METRO Central

LAHORE Tuesday, January 14, 2025

LAHORE

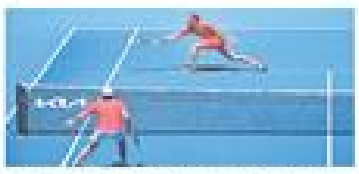
Sunset	05:22 pm
Sunrise (Tomorrow)	07:01 am

NEXT 24 HRS

Minimum	08.0°C
Maximum	19.0°C
Outlook	Cloudy

AQI

Maximum (Yesterday)	239



Djokovic joins Alcaraz, Sinner in Australian Open second round

Pg.18 SPORT

WORK starts on a separate lane for motorcyclists and cyclists on Ferozepur Road. — White Star

Separate lanes project for bikers launched

By Khalid Hasnain

LAHORE: The pilot project to allocate dedicated lanes for cyclists and motorcyclists on Ferozepur Road was formally launched to ensure smooth and uninterrupted traffic flow, reduce accidents and for safety of the commuters, especially those riding cycles and bikes.

The pilot project will lead to similar interventions on other major roads in Punjab capital, according to the Lahore Development Authority (LDA) officials.

"Under the pilot project, Ferozepur Road will soon have dedicated lanes, covered with low-height concrete walls on both sides, for the cyclists and motorcyclists, as the work has been launched by the team of LDA's urban development wing," an official source in the authority told *Dawn* on Monday.

According to him, the pilot project consists of four-kilometer-long lanes on both sides of the road from Kalma Chowk to Lahore Bridge (Qainchi). And upon success of this pilot activity, a regular project is likely to be launched on other major roads in the city, including Jail Road, The Mall, Multan Road, Wahdat Road and Canal Road.

LDA Director General Tahir Farooq also paid a visit to the pilot project site and inspected the ongoing work there. On this occasion, LDA Chief Engineer Amar Saeed and the Project Director Haroon Saifi briefed the DG on the development works.

"These lanes will be separated from the main

Continued on Page 15

Katcha gangsters kill four in Khanpur revenge attack

By Irfanul Haq

RAHIM YAR KHAN: A gang of Katcha area attacked the house of relatives of an alleged police informer and killed four of his relatives, including three brothers, at Basti Chandia/Lashari of village Jajja Albanian in the Zahirpir town of tehsil Khanpur at night.

On the other hand, police claimed that two attackers were killed when they were trying to escape towards the Katcha area.

According to the rescue sources, the dacoits of Indhar Gang attacked the house of Irfan, an uncle of the late Usman Chandia, at around 10pm. Immediately after their arrival, the dacoits killed Irfan's three sons, Muhammad Arabi (15),Muhammad Makki (15), Muhammad Mahdi (10), and a relative Muhammad Zaman (38).

In a video message Irfan said he had informed police about the attack of the dacoits but police did not reach even after half an hour of the attack. He said the police had just used his nephew Usman Chandia who was killed in the confrontation with the dacoits in 2021. He further said that it was the duty of police to provide them with security because police were already providing security and meals to the family of Usman Chandia. He said his whole family was murdered and now even the inspector general police or DIG could not help him. Irfan said that the dacoits took revenge of the killings of Jassu Indhar and his accomplices.

According to some locals, the area of Jajja Albanian witnessed the sound of shots fired by the dacoits and there was panic among the villagers. The police did not respond to calls at 15 when the district police officer and Station House Officer Zahirpir were a few kilometers away from the scene. In a WhatsApp message, a police spokesperson claimed that after the killing of four innocent citizens, police failed the attempt of the attackers to escape. After the attack of dacoits, they were being chased and the heavy firing started in which two dacoits were killed. He claimed that they belonged to the Indhar, Shar and Kosh gangs; however, he did not disclose the name of the deceased suspects.

Jassu Indhar, the ring leader of Indhar Gang, and his three accomplices, Munshi Indhar, Sotter Shar and Kala Shar, were killed in an encounter in July 2021 while two dacoits were injured. The encounter happened in the Katcha area of Kashmore and Kandhkot. According to the sources, after the killing of Jassu Indhar, Jamil Indhar and Tanvir Indhar were leading the gang and it is suspected that they were behind the attack on Irfan's house and killing of his three sons and a relative.

Court seeks report on Anti-Rape Act

Failure to enforce law resulting in acquittals: CJ

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Lahore High Court Chief Justice Aalia Neelum on Monday issued a notice to the attorney general for Pakistan to assist on a matter related to implementation of the Anti-Rape Act 2021.

The chief justice was heading a full bench seized with a bail petition of a rape suspect, Wajid Ali.

Justice Faroog Haider and Justice Ali Zia Bajwa were the other members at the bench.

The chief justice expressed concern that failure to enforce the anti-rape law could lead to the acquittal of accused persons in rape cases. She remarked that the number of rape cases had surpassed murder cases. She emphasized that the lack of enforcement of the Anti-Rape Act 2021 is resulting in the acquittal of accused individuals.

Prosecutor General of Punjab Syed Farhad Ali Shah informed the bench that the rules under the anti-rape law were being implemented. He said under Section 7 of the Act, special prosecutors

Continued on Page 15

May 9 riots cases

LHC sets aside objections to Imran's seven pleas

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: A Lahore High Court two-judge bench on Monday overruled the registrar office's objections to seven bail petitions of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) incorporated founding chairman Imran Khan in as many cases of May 9 riots, including an attack on the Lahore corps commander's residence.

The bench comprising Chief Justice Aalia Neelum and Justice Aajad Javed Gheral took up eight separate bail petitions of Mr Khan filed through Barrister Salman Safdar.

During the hearing, the counsel informed the bench that the registrar office raised a similar objection on seven bail pleas, saying they lacked the (bomb) impression of the petitioner.

He said the office raised an objection to the eighth plea about the absence of a certified copy of the Iddat case judgment against the petitioner.

Barrister Safdar assured the court that he would submit a new affidavit at the next hearing to address the objections.

The bench set aside the objections raised by the office on seven bail applications and directed the office to allot diary numbers to the cases for hearing.

However, the bench sustained the objection on eighth petition regarding the missing certified copy of the Iddat case judgment, instructing the counsel to attach it with the applications.

An anti-terrorism court had on Nov 27 denied bail to the former prime minister in these eight cases.

The petitions mainly argued that the prosecution failed to establish the petitioner's association with the unfortunate occurrences narrated in the FIRs.

They said the petitioner has been implicated in the May 9 cases as a result of a well-orchestrated plan, merely to harass and humiliate him for political reasons, even though admittedly he was in the

Continued on Page 15

Police work out Rs1.9bn losses in riots

Clashes with PTI activists erupted on May 9, 2023, Sept 28, Oct 4 and Nov 26 in 2024; report suggests introduction of anti-riot regulations

By Asif Chaudhry

LAHORE: The Punjab police have estimated huge damages exceeding Rs1,900 million (Rs1.9 billion) in the wake of four riot incidents which took place during the last two years, mainly during the May 9 violent attacks in 2023, and total injuries to over 500 police personnel.

In a detailed report sent to the Punjab government through the home department, the central police office (CPO) revealed that the protesters of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) damaged a total of 142 police vans and nine multistorey buildings in the four events so far which required a significant repair and reconstruction work to make the buildings fully operational.

While assessing the financial loss against the damaged vehicles, the police department came up with the whopping figure of Rs1.17m, providing details of all the police mobiles and other vehicles, including those completely burnt by the protesters when they had thrown the petrol bombs in most parts of Punjab.

The report further said a policeman and four citizens also lost their lives during the protests, submitting claim for the compensation for the riot victims and the specific damages caused to the police resources, saying the provincial police can't bear the loss 'in isolation'.

The Punjab police report said the violent events took place on Sept 28, Oct 4 and Nov 26 in 2024 besides those occurred on May 9, 2023. (A copy of the report is also available with Dawn). The report has marked Lahore, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Mianwali and Attock, the cities where fierce clashes had erupted between the supporters of Imran Khan, leaving majority of the police personnel deployed to maintain the law and order injured, many of them seriously.

It added the loss to the exchequer was assessed on the basis of the detailed reports prepared and sent by the districts' police to the CPO.

The heads of the investigation, operations and legal branch of the Punjab police got the assessments verified before sending the same to the provincial government.

The Punjab police authorities also stressed upon the government to introduce anti-riot regulations to avoid the huge loss in future.

The event-wise statistics shared in the report declared the May 9 attacks alone as a nightmare for the Punjab police.

The report said four citizens lost their lives, and 569 police personnel were injured in the violent attacks. Similarly, the Punjab police estimated a loss of Rs1,800m it has suffered when the protesters attacked and damaged nine police buildings and Rs112m for destroying 97 police vehicles on May 9.

The protests carried out on Sept 28, 2024 damaged 21 police vehicles amounting to Rs2.29m, besides leaving 28 personnel injured, some of them seriously.

The report stated the police suffered a loss of Rs1.98m during the clashes with the PTI workers when the latter attacked and damaged 18 vehicles on Oct 4 across the province besides injuring 17 personnel.

On Nov 26, the data shows, 267 personnel were injured by the unruly protesters and caused a damage of Rs1.17m when they attacked and damaged six police vehicles.

Five of family die as container loaded on trailer falls on car

BAHAWALPUR: Five persons, including women and children, of a family died and three others suffered serious injuries when a container loaded on a trailer fell on a parked car they were occupying at Musafirkhana Adda, about 30kms from here late on Sunday night.

According to Rescue 1122 officials, the trailer first hit the car (No BFM-3536) parked in front of a shop, after which a container loaded on the vehicle fell on it.

As a result, five persons, identified as Shahzia (40), Sumaiyan Qasim (28), Hafsa (14), Hamna (9) and Zain (8), died. In the incident, three others – Asif (34), Ayesha(30) and Hurraila (12), were seriously injured.

Dawn has learnt that the deceased and injured persons were residents of nearby Fair Colony, Musafirkhana.

The bodies and the injured persons were retrieved after cutting the badly-damaged frame of the car by the rescuers and Musafirkhana police personnel, reaching the spot on being informed of the incident.

The injured persons were shifted to the Bahawal Victoria Hospital (BVH), where bodies of the deceased were also transported.

Police official reached the scene to take the legal action against the trailer's driver.

The funeral prayers for the deceased, attended by a large number of people, were later offered in a cotton factory, after which they were buried in a local graveyard. — **Correspondent**

Maula Jatt producer passes away

LAHORE: Noted film producer Muhammad Sarwar Bhatti passed away in Lahore due to heart attack on Monday.

Bhatti produced one of the most iconic films of Pakistan, *Maula Jatt*, that made Sultan Rahi a mega star. Other famous films produced by Bhatti included *Chan Waryam*, *Bazaar-e-Husn* and *Haq Mahr*.

He established his production house by the name of Babu Productions. He did not produce any films for a long time.

Director Bilal Lashari produced a film the *Legend of Maula Jatt* based on Maula Jatt. Bhatti wanted to release his Maula Jatt movie once again for which he made the digital print of the movie but it could not be released. He also wanted to produce a film Lakhpat Dakoo but his dream could not materialise. The film fraternity expressed deep sorrow and grief on his demise. — Staff Reporter

Maryam pledges 100,000 houses in a year

LAHORE: Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has promised provision of as many 100,000 houses to homeless people in Punjab within a year.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony of the three-marla Zahra Homes/Maskan Flats at Kala Shah Kaku here on Monday, she said: "Some 100 deserving families have got their own houses. I appreciate RUDA (Ravi Urban Development Authority) and the housing ministry for completing Zahra Homes/Maskan Flats in a short span of two-and-a-half month."

"I want to tell the allottees of Zahra Homes that this house belongs to them for life. This is your house. Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar is one of the best schemes in the world."

She said as many as 2.2 million families in Punjab did not have their own houses.

"Some 100,000 houses will be provided to the deserving families within a year. Those who own plots of one to 10 marla are being given interest-free loans up to Rs1.5m on easy conditions. Those who get the loan will have to pay Rs14,000 per month in easy installments for seven years. If someone has borrowed Rs1.5m for seven years, he has to pay only Rs1.5m. Not even a single penny will be paid in addition to it. Thousands of houses are under construction in 37 districts of Punjab under the Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar scheme. A few [houses] are in the final stages of completion."

"A scheme is going to be introduced in which free residential plots will be given to the deserving people to build houses soon. Thousands of deserving and poor people will be given three marla plots," she said. — **Staff Reporter**

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PRAYER

Fajr	5.36
Zuhr	1.00
Asr	3.45
Maghrib	5.22
Isha	6.46

Starting time in Lahore

REFLECTIONS

“SOMETIMES YOUR PRAYERS ARE TURNED DOWN, AND THIS IS ALSO IN YOUR INTEREST, BECAUSE YOU OFTEN, UNKNOWINGLY, ASK FOR THINGS THAT ARE REALLY HARMFUL TO YOU.”

— HAZRAT ALI (A.S.) (78AH427)

Qureshi, others indicted in Askari Tower case

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Monday indicted PTI vice chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi, along with other leaders and activists including fashion designer Khadija Shah in the Askari Tower attack case of May 9 riots.

ATC-I Judge Manzar Ali Gill conducted the hearing at Kot Lakhpat jail where the incarcerated leaders and workers of the PTI were presented for framing of the charges against them.

However, all the accused persons pleaded not guilty and the judge summoned prosecution witnesses for recording their statements on Jan 23.

Besides Mr Qureshi, those indicted among the incarcerated include PTI Punjab President Dr Yasmin Rashid, former governor Omar Sarfraz Cheema, Senator Ejaz Chaudhry and former provincial minister Mian Mehmoodur Rasheed.

Those out of jail including former MNAs Aliya Hamza Malik and Rubina Jamil, social media activists Sanam Javed and Tayyaba Raja, and fashion designer Khadija Shah also attended the hearing and denied the charges against them.

They have already been indicted in multiple cases of May 9 riots.

The accused persons have been charged with offences, including inciting public against state and resorting to attacks on public and private properties, during the attack on Askari Tower.

Gulberg police registered the case of the attack.

Separately, the judge adjourned the trial proceedings of other cases, including Jinnah House attack and burning police vehicles in Mughalpura for Jan 27 and Jan 23 respectively, due to the unavailability of the prosecution team.

The judge was informed that the prosecutors concerned could not make it to the jail due to strict security arrangements.

May 9, Nov 26 incidents

PA speaker links judicial commission to complainant

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan says there must be some complainant in a case for setting up a judicial commission on it.

“A plaintiff must come forward for the judicial investigation of November 26. Show me any case in which neither bodies nor their heirs exist. For establishing a judicial commission there should be some complainant,” he said while answering a query during a media talk here on Monday.

“A person whose own character is stained with lies cannot be a plaintiff in a case. Somebody should come up and say that someone is missing and then a commission may be formed on it.”

Responding to a question about the ongoing dialogue between the PML-N government and the opposition PTI, he called for distinguishing between “crime and politics”.

“Is burning the country an act of politics or a crime? Is turning political activists into a violent mob with the agenda of targeting a certain area, a cantonment, to burn it, not a crime? ... My country is my home and no one has the authority to set fire to my house and call it politics,” he said, stressing,

“You cannot mitigate a crime with a political act.”

Asked why those who held press conferences, dissociating themselves from the PTI, were not tried in the May 9 attacks cases, the speaker said he had his own point of view regarding the dialogue and this issue.

“In my opinion, those who quit PTI by holding a press conference were also involved in the crime. They had committed the crime.”

To a question that if Imran Khan tenders an apology, should he too be forgiven, the speaker said “he who needs to tender an apology should do so, and he who is in a position to forgive should do it (forgive).”

Responding to a query about putting off the announcement of the court verdict in the 190 million pound case against Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi, he said there was no harm in it because evidence has been recorded, prosecution and defence witnesses have appeared and all other due processes stood completed.

“If the judges are taking time in announcing the verdict, there is no harm in it. In my opinion, there’s neither undue haste, nor delay in the case.”

NCHR orders vehicular emission check

LAHORE: The National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) directed the Environment Protection and Climate Change Department to ensure that vehicle emissions conform to environmental standards, with a particular focus on motorbikes.

Earlier, NCHR took suo motu notice of the severe air pollution in Punjab, particularly in Lahore. In a recent hearing conducted by NCHR member Nadeem Ashraf, several directives were issued to the Environment Protection and Climate Change Department to address the escalating issue.

The directives include conducting a comprehensive study on the quality of fuel used in vehicles and assessing engine efficiency to identify methods for reducing emissions. The Environment Protection Department is tasked with ensuring that vehicle emissions conform to environmental standards, with a particular focus on motorbikes. This initiative aims to enhance the precision of policy interventions related to air quality.

Air pollution in Lahore poses significant health risks, economic losses, and reduced visibility. The Air Quality Life Index indicates that air pollution in Pakistan shortens the average life expectancy by 3.9 years. — **Staff Reporter**

Private firm to begin waste management operations

By Our Correspondent

MUZAFFARGARH: Under the ‘Suthra Punjab’ (Clean Punjab) programme, initiated by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, services from the private sector have been engaged for garbage collection and disposal in cities and rural areas.

An agreement was finalised with Daewoo, set to commence operations on Jan 28, with the system going online by Jan 26.

This was announced by Deputy Commissioner Quratul Ain during a meeting with officials from Daewoo and related departments.

The DC said the company should appoint a supervisor at the union council level who would work with the UC secretary.

She directed the company officials to recruit local people and make the recruitment process very transparent and recruit working people on merit.

She said a report on the funds spent so far should be submitted. She directed assistant commissioners to monitor all matters and guide the company.

Representatives of the Daewoo Bus Service, said that a survey was underway at the district headquarters, tehsils and union council levels, which would be completed soon and work would start from Jan 24 as per the schedule.

They said discussions were also underway to rent machinery and appropriate steps were being taken to hire sanitary workers.

BURNT: A two-year old child suffered burns when he fell into a stove while playing at his home on Monday in Khanpur Bagga Sher, some 15 kilometers away from city area.

According to the family, the child, Muhammad Zeeshan, suffered burns when he accidentally fell into the stove.

A rescue team was dispatched to the scene and officials confirmed that the child had been burned in the incident. He was later shifted to the hospital in a critical condition.

Power pilferage detected in Attari Saroba

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Lahore Electricity Supply Company (Lesco) inspection team on Monday detected a large number of power pilferers in Attari Saroba area.

A Nishtar Colony Sub-Division team led by its SDO conducted an operation in the area and nabbed the suspects who were stealing electricity by attaching a hook to the Lesco supply line on Ashiana Road.

The Lesco team disconnected the illegal connection and registered cases against the suspects, besides charging them for 40,000 units as a detection bill, according to a spokesman.

Meanwhile, Lesco on Monday recovered Rs9.018 million from 257 chronic defaulters in all the five districts Lahore, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara -- during its recovery campaign.

Lesco spokesman told the media that the company has recovered outstanding dues of Rs5m from 31 defaulters in Northern Circle; Rs 0.085m from 27 defaulters in Eastern Circle; Rs2.051m from 48 defaulters in Central Circle; Rs0.066m from 24 defaulters in Southern Circle; Rs0.017m from 22 defaulters in Nankana Sahib Circle; Rs0.094m from 44 defaulters in Sheikhupura Circle; Rs0.041m from 40 defaulters in Okara Circle; and Rs0.051m from 21 defaulters in Kasur Circle.

‘Advocacy expo’ to fight social evils

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Acting Vice Chancellor of Punjab University Prof Dr Khalid Mahmood inaugurated ‘Advocacy Expo’ against social evils organised by the 5th semester students of the PU Department of Communication and Media Research (DCMR) on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, he said ‘jihad’ against social evils is our primary responsibility for a better society.

Dr Mahmood also led an awareness walk regarding sexual harassment against women. Students set up stalls against the scourge of drugs and dowry. Awareness stalls were also set up on the importance of preventing water wastage and drinking clean water. A stall was also set up at the expo on the need to provide a safe environment for women in offices. Another stall highlighted measures to prevent smog.

Department of Communication & Media Research Chairperson Prof Dr Nosheena Saleem said students had also prepared public service messages against social evils.

FBR condemned for revoking 25pc rebate for teachers

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Federation of All Pakistan Universities Academic Staff Association (FAPUASA) has condemned the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for its decision to discontinue the 25 per cent tax rebate for researchers and full-time teachers, deeming the move illegal and illogical.

In an online meeting chaired by FAPUASA President Dr Amjad Abbas Magsi and moderated by General Secretary Dr Muhammad Uzair, the association criticized the FBR’s letter issued on December 30. The letter, titled “Intimation Regarding Discontinuance of 25pc Rebate in Respect of Researchers/Full-Time Teachers,” was described as a direct violation of legislative authority, as the rebate had been approved by the federal finance minister and incorporated into the National Assembly proceedings on June 28, 2024.

Dr Magsi said that the rebate, consistently provided during the fiscal years 2021-22 and 2022-23, was explicitly extended in the 2023-24 budget.

He said that the FBR’s unilateral decision undermines the democratic process and called for the immediate withdrawal of the letter. He urged the finance minister and prime minister to hold the FBR accountable for overstepping its jurisdiction.

The meeting also expressed solidarity with the All Government Employees Grand Alliance (Agega) Pakistan in its protest against the Punjab government’s new pension rules and leave preparatory to retirement (LPR) regulations. Dr Muhammad Uzair termed the new rules unjust and illegal, highlighting that pensions are an integral part of the BPS service structure. Any cuts or modifications, he said, violate the rights of public servants.

FAPUASA announced its participation in the Agega rally scheduled for Jan 22 in Islamabad, followed by a sit-in to demand the immediate withdrawal of the new pension rules.

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LHC seeks reasons for readvertising VC slot

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court on Monday sought reasons from the Punjab government for re-advertisement of the vice chancellor post at the Islamia University Bahawalpur (IUB).

Justice Shahid Karim was hearing a petition filed by Prof Dr Muhammad Nawaz, challenging the government's decision to re-advertise the post.

A counsel for the petitioner argued that his client met the eligibility criteria for the VC slot and was even recommended by the search committee for the position.

He pointed out that the petitioner had stood first and was placed on the top of the merit list in a panel of three shortlisted candidates out of more than 200 after scrutiny.

He stated that the government suddenly halted the appointment process, without providing any justification.

He contended that despite the earlier selection process, the higher education department issued a new advertisement for the position, raising transparency concerns.

The petitioner's counsel claimed that the government failed to provide reasons for not finalising the earlier recommendation.

He asked the court to direct the authorities concerned to appoint the petitioner as IUB VC in the light of his eligibility and the search committee's recommendation.

The judge directed a law officer to submit a reply on behalf of the government, explaining reasons for the new advertisement and the delay in the appointment process.

PTI challenges election tribunal having ex-judge

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) Secretary General Salman Akram Raja has filed a petition before the Lahore High Court challenging the establishment of an election tribunal comprising a retired judge.

Through his counsel Barrister Sameer Khosa, the PTI leader pleaded that the election tribunals consisting of both serving and retired judges were formed simultaneously, which contradicts the principles of judicial independence.

He argued that such an arrangement undermines the separation of judiciary from the executive and violates constitutional principles.

The petitioner asked the court to set aside the amendment to the Election Act 2017, which allowed the appointment of retired judges to election tribunals. He also sought the dissolution of the election tribunal chaired by retired justice Rana Zahid Mehmood.

The petitioner requested the court to issue a stay order restraining the tribunal from functioning until a final decision on the matter is made.

Advocate Salman Raja had contested the Feb 8 general election as a PTI-backed candidate for national assembly seat from NA-128, Lahore. However, Awn Chaudhry of Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party (IPP) had won from the constituency.

Awn secured 172,576 votes against 159,024 of Raja. — **Staff Reporter**

Mechanic kills self after shooting employer

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: A shop worker allegedly shot and killed his employer before taking his own life in the Kahna area on Monday. Police arrived at the scene, shifted the bodies to the city morgue and initiated investigations into the incident.

According to an official, Sajid, a fridge/AC mechanic had a monetary dispute with shop owner Shahid. On the day of the incident, a heated argument between the two escalated into a physical altercation.

Sajid later returned with a weapon and allegedly shot Shahid, killing him on the spot. He then turned the weapon on himself, dying from a self-inflicted gunshot to the temple.

Court seeks report...

Continued from Page 13

had been appointed and a separate cell had been established to monitor rape cases on a daily basis.

The bench summoned the provincial secretary for prosecution to appear in person in the next hearing. It also gave relevant institutions a final chance to submit their reports. The bench sought reports on the trial proceedings involving minor victims in rape cases.

The bench directed the prosecutor general and the advocate general of Punjab to submit reports on meetings and progress regarding the implementation of the anti-rape act. The bench adjourned the proceedings till submission of the reports by the authorities concerned.

LAHORE: Girl students return to school after the winter vacation. — White Star

CM awards Honhaar scholarships to 3,100 students

Says 500 e-buses being imported

By Our Correspondent

BAHAWALPUR: Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz called upon the youth to desist from destructive activities amid announcement to launch soon laptop, e-bicycles (with Rs100,000) schemes and 50,000 scholarships for second and third year students next year.

She was speaking at a Honhaar scholarship programme function at the IUB auditorium and gave away scholarships to 3,100 students of public and private universities and institutions of Bahawalpur division here on Monday.

On the occasion, the CM also gave a cheque of Rs5 million to Bahawalpur's Sohail Adnan, who recently won Pakistan's British under-13 squash championship in the UK.

The chief minister criticised the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf founding chairman and other party leaders, who, she said, were not the well-wishers of the country. She said the youth should not be misled by those, who targeted army men and police.

She condemned the attackers of the personnel of law-enforcing agencies (LEAs), opening firing on them, saying that they could not be the "Pathan' of the country. She said youth should be true Pathans of the country and should always keep the country's flag high.

She said soon a fleet of 500 e-buses was being imported. Talking about the Honhaar scholarships programme, the chief minister claimed that it was the biggest scheme of Rs172 million in the history of Pakistan for 10,000 students in the province.

She said the scholarships were being given purely on merit irrespective of any political affiliation for which Punjab Education Minister Rana Sikandar Khan had taken personal interest. She said there were about 60 per cent girls in the list of scholarship holders.

She said scholarships were not given to them freely but they earned these scholarships with their own ability, merit and hard work. She congratulated all the stipend holders and their parents.

Earlier, the chief minister Maryam was welcomed at airport by divisional and district administrations officials, PML-N leaders and MPs including former governor Balighur Rehman and ex-senator Saood Majid Chaudhry.

TWO INJURED: Two persons were injured in a collision between a truck and a trailer carrying stones near Sukh Bara Canal on Haidipur Road in Vehari district on Monday.

As per Rescue 1122 and police officials, after the collision, the truck laden with sugarcane fell into the canal.

The two men (names could not be known) injured in the incident were shifted to the Vehari District Headquarters Hospital.

Faisalabad Clock Tower bazaars to go vehicle-free

By Our Correspondent

TOBA TEK SINGH: Faisalabad Deputy Commissioner retired Capt Nadeem Nasir has said that all eight bazaars around Clock Tower are being made vehicle-free to facilitate pedestrians.

Addressing a traders meeting here on Monday, he assured them that the administration would provide sufficient parking facilities outside the bazaars. He said vender carts will be relocated to designated spots where they will also be supplied with free electricity. Specific timings for the loading and unloading of goods in the bazaars will be enforced, and residents living in the area will have access to parking services.

Mentioning the importance of the eight bazaars in terms of business activities, he said that there are no such markets anywhere. He also revealed plans to introduce a fleet of beautiful rickshaws that will transport the buyers to the markets after they will park their vehicles outside bazaars.

The DC said a Lunda Bazaar has been completed on Rafiah Road, offering ample parking space, and efforts are underway to expedite the completion of a parking plaza. He said the Clock Tower Chowk and its surrounding markets would become Pakistan's first major markets to offer high-quality pedestrian facilities and entertainment opportunities.

He said the city's parking company had generated a profit this year and that the entire parking system would soon transition to e-ticketing. Two model bazaars are planned for Satyana Road and Narwala Road. The locations used for Ramzan bazaars will be repurposed throughout the year, with plans to establish Lunda Bazaars at these sites.

LOHRI FESTIVAL: Lohri was celebrated in the Catholic Church at Warispura in Faisalabad.

The event was held in collaboration with Lok Virsa, a non-government organization working in development sector.

Comrade Shahid Mushtaq and Dr Tobeel Chatha said people enjoyed the festival that had a bonfire. Gurmeet Singh-led group did Bhangra and sang songs to pay tribute to Dulla Bhatti. Girl students performed Giddha.

RAPE: An unidentified motorcycle-rickshaw driver allegedly raped a 16-year-old girl with the help of his accomplice at Gojra on Monday.

Complainant 'I' of Warir Park locality alleged in his first information report registered under section 376 of Pakistan Penal Code that his daughter was waiting for a rickshaw near motorway M-4 interchange on Jhang Road at Gojra when the suspect asked her that he would drop her at Chak 428 JB where she was to go to her aunt's house. But he took her to a roadside crop with the help of an accomplice. The driver allegedly raped her and later threw her near the interchange. The girl was shifted to Gojra THQ hospital.

Police are investigating the matter.

BURNT TO DEATH: Abdul Ghafoor, 70, security guard, burned to death in Muslim Town Phase 1, Faisalabad, on Sunday night. Rescue 1122 said that the deceased had lit firewood for warmth, which accidentally set his quilt and bed sheet ablaze. Firefighters extinguished the flames, but Ghafoor was found dead.

Separate lanes...

Continued from Page 13

road by using curve stones and eco-friendly blue paint. In the first phase, a four-kilometer-long lane is being built on both sides from Kalma Chowk to Lahore Bridge," said Mr Saeed while briefing the DG. He said the bikers' lane would be 12 feet wide and cater the convenience for the people.

"The objective of promoting biker lanes is to improve traffic flow and reduce accidents," he added.

MEETING: The 26th Board of Directors (BoDs) meeting of the Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) was held here at the Jilani Park Headquarters on Monday, presided over by PHA Chairman Ghazali Saleem Butt.

During the meeting, PHA DG Muhammad Tahir Watto briefed the board members on the agenda. After a consensus on the 34-point agenda, the meeting approved a raise in the monthly salary of daily-wage employees to Rs37,000. An increase of 50 per cent allowance based on the 2022 basic salary formula was also approved for permanent employees.

The development and upgrade of parks, picnic points, and seating points was also approved at the meeting. The approval was also given to construction of a restaurant in Jilani Park (Racecourse) and a canal restaurant.

Additionally, the Horse and Cattle Show plan was also approved.

The meeting also discussed various proposals for the improvement of different PHA departments, including administration, coordination, M&O, engineering, marketing, and horticulture.

The board members provided updates on their respective projects during the meeting.

LHC sets aside...

Continued from Page 13

custody of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

The arrest of the petitioner was never required in the cases, which was evident from the fact that police remained reluctant to secure his arrest during the period of five months and 12 days after the dismissal of his pre-arrest bail by the trial court.

The petitions alleged that the indifferent behaviour of police and lack of effort in securing the arrest of the petitioner at a time when he was detained at Adiala Jail, supplement the argument that arrest of the petitioner was not required in the cases.

The sole allegation against the petitioner in the cases is of 'abetment', which has been supplemented by the prosecution most vaguely, the pleas added.

They argued that the trial judge overlooked the fact that frivolous and baseless allegations related to the May 9 events have already been rejected due to inconsistencies in the story of the investigating agency.

The petitions asked the court to set aside the trial court's decision and grant bail to the former prime minister in the eight FIRs.

Surgeon dies in road crash, spouse critical

By Our Correspondent

TOBA TEK SINGH: Dr Rai Khizer Hayat Bhatti, 40, orthopedic surgeon posted at Toba DHQ Hospital, and another man, Ahmad Ali, 60, died in a road accident on Gojra Road on Monday.

Dr Bhatti's wife Dr Shumaila Khizer Bhatti, a gynecologist, and another man sustained critical injuries and were shifted to Jhang DHQ Hospital. Dr Bhatti was laid to rest in his native village near Shah Jewna Mandi.

WALL COLLAPSE: Labourer Nawaz Kanwar, 45, died and two others, Bashir Ahmad, 43, and Liaqat Ali, 40, were critically injured when a house wall and roof collapsed on them during demolition in People's Colony, Faisalabad, on Ehsan Yousaf Textile Mills Road.

Rescuers recovered the victims from the debris, but Sarwar had already died. The injured were shifted to DHQ Hospital.

PROTEST: Scores of men and women blocked traffic on Jhang Road in Kabirwala, Khanewal, on Monday, protesting the alleged killing of Mushtaq Ahmad, 40, by police.

Protesters claimed Kabirwala City police raided Ahmad's house to arrest gamblers and shot him during the operation. He succumbed to his injuries on the spot.

Police assured protesters that a murder FIR would be registered against the responsible officers, leading to the protest's end.

Missing boy's remains found after three months

By Our Correspondent

SAHIWAL: Remains of a missing teenage boy were found in a field near Chak 11/14-L, Iqbalnagar Adda, three-and-a-half months after he went missing.

Sabir Ali, 14, a resident of Green Town, near Chak 11/14-L, was working at a junk shop for the last one year. On Sept 20, Sabir did not return home after work. His family contacted his employer who said the boy had left for home. The family searched for him at all possible locations but could not trace him.

On Sunday, a light blue shirt, jeans pants, mobile phone cover and remains of a human body were found in the fields. The matter was reported to the police. Sabir's family identified the remains from the shirt. Family later learned that Sabir was murdered.

Sabir's father Muhammad Sardar said the family initially thought Sabir had gone to his aunt's home in Kasur but no one followed up.

Kasowal SHO Zeeshan Dogar said no complaint had been filed with the police in the past three months. Zeeshan said Sabir's skull and bones were scattered within a one-meter radius. Police sent the remains to Lahore for forensic analysis.

Kasowal Police registered a murder case against unidentified persons on a complaint of Sardar.

MURDER: A woman was shot dead by her in-laws over a domestic dispute at village Matanwala, tehsil Chichawatni.

Reports said Hina Sajid, daughter of Sajid Shah, a resident of Mauza Jatabi, tehsil Mian Channu, was married to Tajamal Shah. From the beginning, she had complaints about mistreatment from both her husband and in-laws. Her father, Sajid, frequently intervened to resolve the issue but there were constant reports of Hina being tortured by her in-laws.

The FIR states that on Jan 11, Hina called her father, Sajid, requesting him to take her home as she could no longer bear the violence from her husband.

Next day Sajid, along with Asad Shah and Khawar Shah, went to Matanwala for negotiations. During the discussion, Qaisar Abbas entered the room, pointed a 30-bore pistol at Hina and shot her in the head. Hina received two bullets and died on the spot while Qaisar escaped.

Shahkot Police registered a murder case against Hina's husband, Tajamal Shah, and her brothers-in-law, Mateel Hasan and Qaisar, on the complaint of Sajid.

SHOT DEAD: A boy was shot dead over a minor dispute at Chak 19/15-L.

Reports said 15-year-old Karam had quarrelled with his village mates, Muhammad Hanif, Sharif and Jamal, some days back over a minor issue. Eyewitnesses reported that both groups used abusive language and sticks during the fight. Yesterday, Karam was walking in the village street when Hanif shot him dead.

Saddar police registered a murder case against three suspects on the complaint of Karam's father, Akram.

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DAWN

METRO North

PESHAWAR Tuesday, January 14, 2025

PESHAWAR

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NEXT 24 HRS

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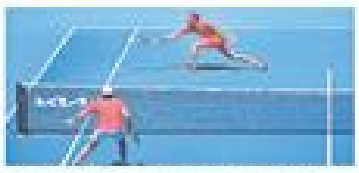

Djokovic joins Alcaraz, Sinner in Australian Open second round

Pg.18 SPORT

WORKERS fix cement tiles on a pavement at new bus terminal in Sardar Garhi, Peshawar, on Monday. — White Star

KP proposes solutions to Rs1.5tr hydel profit dues issue

Seeks NHP payments in line with CCI decisions, control of Wapda power stations

By Manzoor Ali

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has come up with three proposals to settle its long-standing issue with the centre over the nonpayment of Rs1.5 trillion net hydel profit dues from 2016 to 2022.

During the Jan 10 meeting of a special committee, the KP government proposed payment of outstanding NHP amounts in accordance with the Council of Common Interest's decisions, granting control of Wapda's power stations to province, and implementing an interim NHP payment agreement by enhancing consumer tariff by Rs1/Kwh to generate requisite funds.

The committee was formed by the CCI on Dec 23, 2019, to propose an "out-of-box solution" for the payment of NHP to the provinces. It has so far held five meetings.

The issue of Rs1.5 trillion NHP dues in line with the Kazi Committee Methodology (KCM) for the period of 2016-22 has been subject of prolonged negotiations since 2018.

In its latest submission, KP has said the federal government should pay NHP in line with Article 161(2) of the Constitution, Presidential Order No 3, decisions of the CCI from 1991, 1993, 1997, 1998, 2016, 2018 and 2022, and the calculation made by the Jehanzeb Khan committee in the report approved by the CCI on Dec 23, 2019.

It added that the federal government should fund the power house component of Wapda development projects through PSDP instead of revenues generated through Wapda generation tariff to make funds available for the payment of the NHP to the entitled province.

The second proposal stated that the transfer of the Wapda hydropower station to provinces as proposed by the Punjab government and agreed by KP and decided in the third meeting of the out-of-box committee on Jan 11, 2022.

Besides, the proposal said that transfer of HPPs to provincial government on analogy of generation policy 1995 and 2015 and outstanding payment of NHP as per KCM to be made by the federal government till date of transfer of HPP to the provinces while the operation and maintenance can be retained by Wapda.

The third proposal stated till the finalisation of these two options, the federal government should announce the second interim agreement of NHP payment by enhancing the consumer end tariff by Rs1/Kwh to generate the requisite funds.

"Options may be finalised within a month," the proposal read, adding that payment of NHP should be made directly by the CPPA-G through escrow account instead of Wapda.

It said that Pakhtunkhwa Energy Development Organisation projects should be facilitated to sell up to 1500 MWs of power through electricity wheeling while water use charges to be enhanced to Rs1/Kwh.

When contacted, Bimayatullah Khan, the KP government's representative tasked with negotiating NHP with the federal government, said that the province presented its proposal in the fifth meeting of the "out-of-box" committee, which was formed on December 23, 2019.

He said Article 161(2) of the Constitution declared that the net profits earned by the federal government, or any undertaking established or administered by the federal government from the bulk generation of power at hydro-electric stations shall be paid to the province in which the hydro-electric station is situated.

Mr Khan said that CCI was the relevant forum to determine net profits.

He said that after the numerous CCI decisions on the matter and recommendations of a committee led by deputy chairman of the Planning Commission Dr Jehanzeb for the payment of NHP in line with the KCM, the federal government came up with the excuse of having no money.

He, however, said that the power component of new hydro-electric stations was funded from Wapda revenues and the water component from the Public Sector Development Programme.

"The power component of Diamer-Basha, Mohmand and Dasu dams amounts to Rs2.24 trillion, while the water component totals Rs8.4 trillion. When the federal government says it has no money, KP's contention is that the Rs2.24 trillion funneled Wapda into this project is our money," he said.

The KP's representative also said that the federal government's stand that payment of NHP to the province would raise electricity prices was incorrect.

He said that the price of a unit of electricity had gone up from Rs88 to Rs60, while the circular debt had touched Rs2.2 trillion and that had nothing to do with the payment of NHP.

In April 2018, the KP government had taken the implementation of KCM, adopted by the CCI in 1991 and the forum constituted a committee to deliberate upon the issue of determination of rates/net profits in light of the decision of CCI.

The committee presented its report to the CCI on December 23, 2019, which stated that practicality of the implementation of the KCM couldn't override the constitutional dictates and the rise in the price of electricity was a matter of public policy and couldn't be given preference over Article 161(2).

It added that the federal government should ensure payment of NHP on the basis of calculations made by the committee for 2016-17.

The KP government has calculated NHP dues at Rs1.5 trillion as per KCM for the period from 2016-17 to 2022-23.

Waziristan forest fire controlled after two days

By Our Correspondent

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: The raging forest fire in Wana Kot Korr mountain of Lower South Waziristan, which gutted precious trees and plants, was finally brought under control on Monday.

Rescue 1122 officials said a firefighters' team and fire tenders worked tirelessly for two days to contain the blaze.

They said teams from rescue and forest departments participated in the operation.

The cause of the fire remains unknown, but its impact was devastating. Precious trees of chestnut and Ooor Ginny (blackcurrant) were destroyed in the blaze, which left a trail of destruction in its wake.

Rescue officials said despite challenges, the teams completed the operation in extremely difficult conditions, battling darkness, cold and rugged terrain. Their efforts finally paid off as the fire was brought under control on Monday.

The forest fire had broken out on Saturday, engulfing hundreds of valuable chestnut and blackcurrant trees.

Swabi man ends life after killing wife for 'honour'

By Our Correspondent

SWABI: A man allegedly killed his wife for honour and later died by suicide in Chota Lahor tehsil here on Monday.

Police and Rescue 1122 officials said that the incident took place in Jalsai Dhok area.

Chota Lahor city SHO Gohar Khan said that the accused shot dead his wife from a close range inside a room of his house, and later also shot himself dead.

Sajjad Khan, a brother-in-law of the deceased woman, reported to the police that he was with his family at his house when at 3am his nephew knocked at the door to their room, saying his father opened fire on his mother, and later got himself injured with a pistol.

Sajjad said when they went there, his 20-year-old sister-in-law was lying in a pool of blood and his brother was injured, while a pistol was also lying with him. He said his injured brother was taken to Bacha Khan Teaching Hospital, Shahmansoor, where he later succumbed to his injuries.

Sajjad said his brother was angry that his wife had gone to her parents' house without his permission, which created a gulf between the couple.

The police have registered an FIR and started investigation.

Six injured in Kohat gas leak blast

PESHAWAR: Six members of a family, including five children, were injured, two of them critically, when a blast occurred inside a house in Kohat due to gas leak on Monday.

The police said the incident occurred in Garhi Risalder area.

Rescue workers shifted the injured to the District Headquarters Hospital, Kohat, from where two of the critically injured children were referred to a Peshawar hospital.

The injured were identified as the wife of Arshad, Haleema, 10, Bakhtawar, 7, Fatima, 8, Warina, 12 and Hasiba, 4. — APP

No robbery, terrorism cases reported in Chitral last year

By Our Correspondent

CHITRAL: The Lower Chitral police registered nine cases of murder and 13 cases of attempted murder, seven cases of rape and 10 cases of abduction in 2024, but no case of robbery was reported during the period.

The police also registered 34 cases of hurt, 53 cases of lethal attack, while zero cases of attack on police, child abduction, missing persons and kidnap for ransom were reported in 2024.

As per data gathered from the office of the district police officer, no incidents of robberies, including bank heist, vehicle and bike snatching were reported, while the number of theft cases decreased to 13 compared to 28 in 2023.

No case of terrorism was reported, while the number of fatal traffic accidents rose to 11 compared to only six in 2023.

As many as 255 cases were registered during 2024 under different sections of Control of Narcotics Act, while 16 cases of Arms Ordinance, 12 of Foreigners Act, four of arson, six of cheating were registered. No case of forgery, fake CNIC, hate speech and gambling was reported.

The Lower Chitral police recovered 145 kilogrammes of charas, 645 litres of liquor, 6.5kg of opium, 0.5kg of heroin and 1.5kg of ice drug, while the arms and ammunition seized during the period included a shot machine gun, two rifles, 13 shotguns, 10 pistols, 214 rounds, three meter detonator, five daggers and four kg explosive powder.

A total of 125 proclaimed offenders were arrested in 2023, which dropped to 115 in 2024.

PA forms committee to discuss bill returned by governor over objections

Law minister insists legal cover will be provided to CM aides as they hold several departments

By Umar Farooq

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly on Monday constituted a special committee for a detailed discussion on the KP Laws Amendment Bill, 2024, which was returned by Governor Faisal Karim Kundi over objections about the move to oppose the chief minister's advisers and special assistance with the ministers.

The development came during a session chaired by Speaker Babar Saleem Swati.

The speaker said the governor had returned the bill and wanted it to be reconsidered by the house.

He read out the governor's message about the bill, which read, "After careful examination of the proposed bill, titled KP Laws Amendment Act 2024, he is constrained to withhold assent and return the bill to the KP Assembly for reconsideration."

The governor noted that the bill proposed inclusion of advisers and special assistants, where the word minister appeared in the existing law, rules and regulations, notification or all other legal instruments. "This blanket amendment appears to lack any clear justification or identified need."

The governor insisted that as per the Constitutional framework, advisers and special assistance were not members of the cabinet and couldn't exercise executive authority, which was the prerogative of elected representatives serving as ministers, and that they're not accountable to the provincial assembly, a fundamental principle ensuring democratic oversight of the executives.

He added that ministers, as elected representatives, enjoyed constitutionally-defined status and direct accountability to the legislature and the public. "Expanding advisers and special assistants who lack electoral legitimacy with ministers, raises serious constitutional concerns," he noted.

According to him, the KP Government Rules of Business, 1985, which derives legitimacy from the Constitution, govern the formation and functioning of various committees, he said adding that extending powers and privileges to the unelected individuals under these provisions risks disrupting cabinet functions enduring the constitutional role and responsibilities of ministers, and would be clearly unconstitutional.

"Given the broad and undefined scope of the amendment, the assembly must reconsider its recently scope and constitutional validity. A more focused approach, based on demonstrable need, would be preferable to the current generic proposal," he said.

The governor pointed out that in order to ensure compliance with Constitutional provisions, the KP Amendment Bill, 2024, was being returned to the provincial assembly for reconsideration.

During the session, opposition PPP member Ahmad Karim Kundi said that special advisers had never been elected.

"During PTI government, Rafiq Shaikh was nominated for NFC meetings as an adviser, so people filed a writ petition in the court objecting that Shaikh was not a federal minister to chair the NFC meeting," he said.

The lawmaker said the provincial government didn't have a finance minister and if an unelected person was sent to a committee's meeting, the federal government would stop him from attending it.

He added that people would go to the court as the ministers were replaced with advisers and special assistance in the Act.

"It will be much more effective and appropriate to reconsider the apprehensions and concerns of the governor KP," he said.

Member of the opposition JUI-F Adnan Khan said that he had proposed amendments but they were not considered.

"Advisers and special assistance are not part of the cabinet," he said, wondering how an unelected person could be held accountable.

MPA Hussain Laghmani said that the committees were part of the house and unelected persons attending the meeting, was contrary to the definition of democracy and supported the opposition benches that unelected people should not be part of the cabinet or proceedings of the house calling it against the

Continued on Page 15

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PRAYER

Fajr	05:53
Zuhar	12:25
Asr	03:50
Maghreb	05:28
Isha	06:56

Starting time in Peshawar

REFLECTIONS

"SOMETIMES YOUR PRAYERS ARE TURNED DOWN, AND THIS IS ALSO IN YOUR INTEREST; BECAUSE YOU OFTEN, UNKNOWINGLY, ASK FOR THINGS THAT ARE REALLY HARMFUL TO YOU."

— HAZRAT ALI (A.S.)

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Anti-encroachment operations begin in Lakki, Bannu and Karak

Battagram Bazaar also cleared of illegal structures

Dawn Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Anti-encroachment operations were launched in Lakki Marwat, Bannu and Karak district on Monday to clear roads and bazaars of temporary and permanent structures, obstructing smooth flow of traffic and people's movement.

Additional assistant commissioner Mohammad Arif led the operation in Lakki city, said an official. He said that deputy commissioner Zeeshan Abdullah ordered the launch of operation on public complaints about traffic mess and inconvenience caused by illegally structures.

He said the anti-encroachment squad of the tehsil municipal administration used machinery to remove encroachments from the roadside in the Lorry Adda area.

The municipal workers also demolished makeshift outlets, kiosks and food stalls.

Mr Arif warned the traders against using roadsides for business activities. He said construction of illegal structures caused traffic mess and inconvenience to the general public.

Meanwhile, under the supervision of additional assistant commissioner Azmat Afridi, the workers of Ghanikhel TMA removed illegally structures from the Tajori Bazaar.

Mr Afridi directed tehsil municipal officer Attaullah to set up dustbins and containers at different points in the bazaar. He asked the shopkeepers and residents to obtain no objection certificate from the municipal body before building any structure.

Also on Monday, municipal workers removed makeshift outlets from the new vegetable market in Bannu. The action was launched on the directives of deputy commissioner Abdul Hameed Khan.

An official said that some traders occupied the government land for business activity. He said municipal workers razed illegally outlets and retrieved the state land from occupants.

Assistant commissioner Salman Yousaf also led an anti-encroachment operation in the Takht Nusrati area of Karak district. The municipal workers assisted by police cleared roadsides of encroachments with the help of machinery.

In Battagram, the tehsil municipal administration launched an anti-encroachment drive in the main bazaar along the Karakoram Highway the other day.

TMA teams cleared encroachments from the roadsides. Almost all footpaths along the main road had been encroached upon.

Municipal workers removed 'sitting areas' from footpaths made by restaurants and makeshift eateries.

Dosti Rehman, TMA law enforcement officer, who led the anti-encroachment squad, asked traders not to encroach upon government property, warning that strict action would be taken against violators.

Warning letters were also issued to traders for encroaching upon the spaces in front of their shops.

Mr Rehman said the anti-encroachment drive would be extended to other areas of the district. "The TMA squad will work closely with the local administration and the police to ensure that all encroachments are removed and public spaces are restored to their original state."

Abbottabad traffic police accused of harassing tourists

SSP says no one will be spared if found guilty

By Our Correspondent

ABBOTTABAD: Tourists have alleged that personnel of traffic police harass them by imposing heavy fines on them for incomplete documents of vehicles without violation of any traffic rule.

They said that traffic wardens, standing in groups on Karakoram Highway and Abbottabad-Murree road, stopped each and every vehicle coming from other cities and checked documents of vehicle without noticing that no traffic rules was violated by the visitors.

"Traffic police even do not care that tourists are females, children or senior citizens but they are bent upon to fine each and every one. Tourists beg for mercy and sometimes exchange harsh words with them," said Saleem, a visitor from Sialkot who was going to upper parts of Hazara including Naran and Shogran along with his family.

He alleged that he was harassed unnecessarily and fined heavily by traffic police. This situation is not only causing inconvenience to visitors but also adversely affecting tourism industry of Abbottabad.

Abbottabad is a scenic city and a large number of tourists visit it. The government has established special unit of police with the title of 'tourism police' to facilitate visitors but all such efforts to promote tourism are being ruined by traffic police.

SSP Traffic Tariq Khan, when contacted, acknowledged it and said that strict disciplinary action was already taken against such officials. He said that no one would be spared if found guilty of rude behaviour with tourists.

He said that Hazara police set unique example of professionalism and all the time gave priority to facilitate tourists as well as locals.

MEETING: A meeting regarding improvement of facilities in Shimla Hill Park and bird peasantry was held here on Monday with Deputy Commissioner Sanaullah Khan in the chair.

The meeting was meant to modernise facilities in the park, install new swings for children and improve quality of bird peasantry. The tehsil municipal officer, Shakeel Hayat, the divisional forest officer of Wildlife, assistant director of local government and other relevant officials attended the meeting.

The participants of the meeting presented suggestions for development of park and stressed the need for taking practical steps in that regard, keeping in mind needs of people.

ازدفتر کمانڈنٹ / میڈیکل سپرنٹنڈنٹ
شیخ خلیفہ بن زید النہیان ہسپتال (سی ایم ایچ) مظفرآباد

ٹینڈر نوٹس نیلامی

[illegible] AJK-PPRA رولز 2017 کے رول نمبر 36(A) [illegible]
[illegible] مورخہ 30 جنوری 2025 بوقت 10:00 بجے [illegible] 11:30 بجے [illegible]

شرائط:-

1- [illegible] -/100,000 [illegible]
2- [illegible]
3- [illegible] Quoted Amount [illegible] 03 [illegible] 07 [illegible]
4- [illegible] Quote [illegible] National & Local Taxes [illegible] (Active Taxpayer 5.5% Non Active Taxpayer 11%) [illegible]
5- [illegible] -/1630 [illegible]
6- [illegible]

بریگیڈیئر شاکر شریف
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شیخ خلیفہ بن زید النہیان ہسپتال (سی ایم ایچ) مظفرآباد

AJK 209-6/01/2025

Policy to end 'discrimination' against women sought

By Our Correspondent

KOHAT: Speakers at a function held here the other day criticised the 'discrimination' against women in the society and termed the 'silence' over the practice as equal to endorsing it.

The function was held at the Kohat University of Science and Technology (Kust) as part of the United Nations 'Women of Pakistan Rolling Resistance Theatre on Wheels'.

International stakeholders and local community members were brought together for raising voice against the 'inhuman' treatment of women.

On the occasion, UN women coordinator on rule of law for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Shagufta Gul stressed that through expeditions of 'rolling resistance', they wanted to promote an environment in which communities rejected the excesses on girls and women, provided them with equal opportunities of development, and respected the rights of humanity.

She emphasised that combating torture was not only the goal but also an important social and moral need.

Kust Vice-Chancellor Dr Naseeruddin, while welcoming the 'Theatre on Wheels' reiterated that education was the foundation of preparing the best brains for the development of society based on empathy, which not only produced responsible citizens but also rejected cruelty against women.

The 'Theatre on Wheels' also presented the social problems in raw, practical shapes, and their disastrous effects on women.

The speakers said that a multi-pronged policy was essential to end the discrimination against women and promote a just society by punishing the criminals.

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CORRIGENDUM

Reference to the Tender Notice published in this newspaper and on AJKPPRA website (reference # 5680) on 11-11-2024, last date for submission and opening of bids has been extended. Following amendment/correction in the terms and conditions (at Sr. # 7) may please be noted:

i. Last date of submission of the bid is **12th February, 2025** at the same address at 11:00 hrs and the bids will be opened in presence of the bidders or their authorized representatives on **12th February, 2025 at 11:30 hrs.**
ii. Other terms and conditions will remain same.
iii. This corrigendum is also available on AJ&K PPRA Website **(www.ppra.ajk.gov.pk).**

Director General
Tourism & Archaeology
GoAJK Muzaffarabad.

AJK-16-DC/01/25

Poor patients to get free medicines, says CM aide

By Our Correspondent

MARDAN: Special assistant to chief minister on health Ihtisham Khan has said that provision of health and education facilities are fundamental rights of everyone and no one could be deprived of them.

He stated this while addressing the participants of a programme held on the premises of Mardan Medical Complex Hospital here the other day.

He said that the health department was launching a project to provide free OPD medicines to underprivileged and needy individuals. "This project will commence at the Mardan Medical Complex," he said.

Provincial minister for food Zahir Shah Toru, MPA Iftikhar Mashwani and others were also present.

Mr Ihtisham emphasised that the development of health and education sectors was top priority of the provincial government. "Strict action will be taken against those doctors and paramedical staff who are found to be negligent in providing health services to people coming for treatment," he said.

The CM's aide said that Benazir Children's Hospital would be provided with all necessary financial assistance to complete its remaining projects within a short period of time.

Mr Ihtisham claimed that the provincial government was working to improve the quality of services and ensure staff attendance in hospitals at the tehsil and district headquarters levels, aiming to reduce the burden on major hospitals and provide patients with medical facilities at their doorstep.

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COURT NOTICE

CHAKWAL

IN the Court of Arif Mujahid Sb ASJ Chakwal Apeal Sajad Haider etc Vs Mohammad Nawaz etc To. Farukh Rabani S/o Ghulam Rabani R/o Thaneel Fatho Teh & Distt Chakwal Presently Saudi Arabia you are inform to attend the Court personal through counsel or attorney on 17-01-2025 at 9 am to avoid ex-parte proceedings. (37612777588)

IN the Court of Javed Ashraf ASJ Chakwal Appeal Ghazanfar Ali etc Vs Anwer Sultan etc To. Shahida W/o Sabir Hussain, Sana Daughter, Raza Sulaman S/o Sabir Hussain Kinza D/o Sajad Hussain S/o Ghulam sarwar R/o Mangan Teh & Distt Chakwal you are inform to attend the Court personal through counsel or attorney on 21-01-2025 at 9 am to avoid ex-parte proceedings. (37612777588)

IN the Court of Javed Ashraf ASJ Chakwal Appeal Maqbool Begham Vs Adnan Basheer etc To. Museret Shaheen W/o Jan Mohammad, Zeshan Hashim, Ali Shan Sons, Fouzman D/o Jan Mohammad R/o Pinwal Teh & Distt Chakwal Presently England. You are inform to attend the Court personal through counsel or attorney on 14-01-2025 at 9 am to avoid ex-parte proceedings. (37612777587)

HARIPUR

IN the Court of Asif Ali Sb Adj Haripur District Haripur. Case Title. Rahla Waheed vs Dr Mohammad Imran. Next Date of Hearing 18-01-2025 Notice to Mst Fozia Toriq, Mst Sadia Taj daughter of Taj Muhammad Resident of Village Khola Bala Haripur District Haripur Present Address Out of Country. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant cannot be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will / shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the Court at 8 am dated 18-01-2025 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court. (39042811869)

IN the Court of Asif Ali Sb Adj Haripur District Haripur. Case Title. Zahoor Ahmed vs Parveen Bibi. Next Date of Hearing 20-01-2025 Notice to Muhammad Farooq Yasir Arfat, Muhammad Zubair Sons Fajoon Resident of Kahal Haripur District Haripur Present Address Out of Country. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant cannot be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will / shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the Court at 8 am dated 20-01-2025 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court. (39042811870)

SWAT

IN the Court of Civil Judge-I, Qazi Kabal, District Swat Case No. 3/3 Institution 09-01-2025 Date of Hearing 15-01-25 Case Title: (1) Mariya Bibi Widow of Hassan Rashid resident of Dari Totano Bandai Tehsil Kabal, Swat (2) Nadia Bibi (3) Bibi Dora Widow of Fazal Rehman Mother of Late Hassan Rashid resident of Bara Cham Shah Dara (4) Madiha Hassan (5) Farhan Rashid (6) Eman (7) Aliya Hassan (8) Hamad Rashid (Minors) Wilayat Mothers Mariya Bibi Vs. (1) Public at large etc. (2) Kingdom of Bahrain Military Pension Funds. (3) National Bank of Pakistan Totano Bandai Swat. Subject: Advertisement for the issuance of the Certificate of Succession concerning the estate of the deceased Hassan Rashid, and the receipt of the Succession Certificate. It is hereby notified to all concerned, through this advertisement, that the petitioner has submitted a request for the issuance of a Succession Certificate related to the inheritance of the deceased Hassan Rashid. If anyone has any objections, they are requested to appear before the Court on the scheduled date, at 08:00 am, either personally or through their authorized representative, and present their objection. In the absence of any objections, one-sided action will be taken. Court of Swat. (39042811874)

ATTOCK

IN the Court of Honourable Muhammad Asif Additional District Judge Attock Subject: Mushtaq Ahmed Vs Irum Shahzad etc Appeal Family in the subject case to inform the following through normal means its difficult Noman Khalid S/o Khalid Mehmood , Perveen (Widow) Khalid Mehmood Resident Mahsar Tehsil Hazro Present Resident Mohalla Mir Pur Shorgi Tehsil And District Attock . He is being informed through this publication to appear before this Court on 15/01/2025 at 0900 am failing which ex parte decision will be taken. (37612777584)

IN the Court of Honourable Saira Zia Civil Judge Attock Subject: Muhammad Tayyab Vs Bibi Khadija etc Suit for Specific Performance In The subject case to inform the following through normal means its difficult Bibi Khadija D/o Faqir Khan W/o Bashir Khan , Shakeel Ahmed S/o Faqir Khan Resident POF Sanjwal Khan Asghar Tehsil Hazro District Attock . You are inform to attend the Court personal through counsel or attorney on 14-01-2025 at 9 am to avoid ex-parte proceedings. (37612777585)

BANNU

IN the Court of Samina Sehar Civil Judge XIII Family Court-II, Bannu Suit No. 127/FC Institution 26-10-2024 Next date of hearing 14-01-2025. Case Title Mst. Rahima Vs Aziz Ullah etc. Notice to, Aziz Ullah son of Umer Khan R/o Rahmat Abad Dalail Shahbaz Azmat Khel Tehsil and District Bannu Presently in Malaysia. In the above case titled the service of above defendant (s) is not possible through ordinary means. Therefore, you defendant (s) is / are informed through this publication that on 14-01-2025 at 08:00 am you has / have to appear before this Court either personally or through attorney or through counsel to pursue the suit noted above. Otherwise ex-parte proceedings will be initiated against you seal of the Court. (39042811871)

GUJAR KHAN

IN the Court of Raja Afzaal Hussain Khanal Additional District and Session Judge Gujar Khan. Gulban Hussain etc versus Gul Bahar Khan. Civil Appeal. To, Gul Bahar Khan son of Muhammad Hussain resident of Post Office Khas Kangan Chokia Imam Din. Tehsil Gujar Khan, District Rawalpindi. Presently residing Abroad. You are directed to appear before the Court in person or through legal representative or through counsel on 14-01-2025 failing which an ex-parte will be initiated against you. (37612777590)

DIR PAYAN

IN the Court of Liaquat Khan Civil Judge / Family Judge Khaas Qazi Lal Qila District Dir Payan. Suit No.20/9 Year 2023 Next date of hearing 16-01-2025. Case Title. Rohulla etc. Vs Iqbal Khan etc. (Case Istiqrar Haq etc.) Notice to No. (4) Mst. Ayaha wife of Umer Sardar Khan (8) Gohar S/o Bakht Beland R/o Mirgam Tehsil Lal Qila Maidan District Lower Dir (13) Mst. Shamim wife of Riaz R/o Mirgam (14) Mst. Bara bibi wife of Hamza Khan R/o Mirgam (15) Saeed Khan (16) Tahir Khan (17) Mst. Hayat Bibi wife Gul Badshah (18) Mst Chaman Deota wife of Abdul Hayat sons and daughters Mst. Salaha bibi (Late) R/o Mirgam (23) Mst Chaman Sultan wife of Ahmed Gul R/o Gul Shagai (24) Mst Barkeeza bibi R/o Mirgam (26) Mst. Farhat bibi wife of Alamgir R/o Gul Shagai (27) Zachagum wife of Sultan R/o Gul Kher Shah (28) Mst. Mumtaz bibi wife to Saeed R/o Tehsil Lal Qila Maidan District Dir Lower (29) Mst. Rama bibi wife of Unknown R/o Daru Midan Tehsil Lal Qila District Dir Payan. (30) Mst. Firas Bibi wife of Zahir Shah R/o Gal (31) Mst. Timar Bibi wife of Dastagir R/o Mirgam (33) Mst. Orta Bibi widow of Saifarud Khan (Late) (36) Mst. Kafiya Bibi wife of Majeed D/o Anwar Khan (Late) R/o Gal (39) Mst. Safiya bibi wife of Akbar Ali R/o Mirgam (40) Mst. Salma bibi wife of Imdad Ullah D/o Anwar Khan (Late) R/o Chinar Kot Tehsil Lal Qila Maidan District Dir Payan. In the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the Court at 8:00 am dated 16-01-2025 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court. (39042811875)

NOWSHERA

IN the Court of Noreen Farooq Civil Judge-III Nowshera Suit No.: 274/1 Dated: 15.07.2024 Next hearing 24.01.2025 Titled: Inam Ullah vs Mst Basra Bibi etc. Publication against Shafqat Ullah Khan son of Hidayat Ullah Khan Resident of Armor Colony Manki Road Nowshera Cantt, Tehsil & District Nowshera. Currently living in England. In the above titled suit, the service of above mentioned person is not possible through ordinary means, therefore, you defendants is/are informed through this publication that on 24/01/2025 at 08:30 am. You have / has to appear before this Court either personally or through attorney or through Counsel to pursue the suit noted above, otherwise ex-parte proceedings will be initiated against you seal of Court. Noreen Farooq Civil Judge-III Nowshera. (39042811872)

IN the Court of Sonia Jamez Civil Judge-VIII, Nowshera. Case No. 232/1 institution 24-07-2024 Next date of hearing 14-01-2025. Case title. Mehmood Alam Vs Noor Zadin. Notice to, Noor Zadin R/o Italy, Muhammad Zadin R/o Malaysia, Ahmad Zadin R/o Portugal. Asghar Din R/o Sweden Sons of Gulzar Din (Late) All Resident of Kotli Kalan Saleh Khana Tehsil Pabbi District Nowshera. In the above titled suit the service of above defendants are not possible through ordinary means. Therefore, you defendants are informed through this publication that on 14-01-2025 at 8:00 am you has / have to appear before this Court either personally or through attorney or through counsel to pursue the suit noted above. otherwise ex-parte proceedings will be initiated against you. Given under my hand and seal of this Court. (39042811873)

UNITED KIGDOM

IN the Court of Qamar Abbas Tarar Civil Judge Rawalpindi. Suit for Declaration etc. Muhammad Umer Farooq versus Shahida Firdous etc. To, Malik Muhammad Babar son of Malik Muhammad Sattar R/o 127 Rochester Street Bradford BD3 8SA England. Zainab Babar W/o Usama R/o House No.3, St.03, Defence Road near Mosque Faizan Akbar Adyala Road Rawalpindi. You are informed to attend the Court on 16-01-2025 at 8 am to avoid ex-parte proceedings. (37612777591)

USA

IN the Court of Javed Iqbal Sipra Sb Additional and District Judge Islamabad. Civil Appeal, Naveed Khursheed etc vs Public and Large etc ad against defendant no 4 Saira at permanent residing USA If Defendant will / shall not appear personally or by Pleader in Court on 12 February 25 proceedings will be taken ex-parte against the defendant. given under my hands and seal of this Court. (37672777586)

ISLAMABAD

IN The Lahore High Court, Lahore. Notice Under Order V Rule XX CPC. Writ Petition No. 23630 of 2023. Abdul Qayyum Vs Mahdi Zulqarnain etc. 1) Mahdi Zulqarnain. 2) Muhammad Shahzad Mahdi. 3) Muhammad Shahbaz Mahdi. 4) Abdul Razzaq Mahdi sons of Muhammad Zaman Mahdi Caste Jutt Gondal R/o Hassan Tehsil & District Mandi Bahauddin. Whereas the above-named petitioner has filed Writ Petition No. 23630 of 2023 and the case has now been fixed for hearing on 25-02-25 (Fixed by Court) before the Hon'ble Court. As your service could not be affected through ordinary mode, the Hon'ble Court has directed for your substituted service through publication of notice in the press. 2. Now, therefore, you are hereby informed to appear before the Hon'ble Court in person, through an attorney or advocate on the date fixed for plead your cause. 3. If you or your counsel fails to appear before the Hon'ble Court on the given date, the case will be heard and decided in your absence and no excuse thereof shall be acceptable on this court. Given under my hand and seal of the Lahore High Court, Lahore this 2nd January, 2025. Deputy Registrar (Writ) Lahore High Court Lahore. (25763234140)

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Six regional labs to ensure timely detection of diseases

Health dept has sent request to finance dept for release of funds

By Ashfaq Yusufzai

PESHAWAR: Health department has decided to establish six regional laboratories to ensure timely detection of diseases and make quick response to put brakes on spread of ailments in the province.

The department has sent a request for release of funds to finance department after which these new laboratories will be notified, according to officials. They said that as per plan, those laboratories would have a total of 57 staffers, including 53 from health department and four from Khyber Medical University (KMU).

Initially, four laboratories will be established, one each in Peshawar, Swat, Hazara and Dera Ismail Khan. These regional laboratories will perform testing at district and divisional level for local hospitals while Public Health Reference Laboratory (PHRL) at KMU will act as a provincial lab.

PHRL was established in 2016 as part of World Health Organisation's International Health Regulations by health department at KMU to ensure prompt testing of epidemics and ensure prevention of outbreaks.

It will impart training to staffers of regional laboratories to enable them to perform investigations and help the public health section at health department to take steps for prevention of outbreaks of ailments.

Officials said that four people would also be taken on board to work in microbiology and molecular sides. The planned laboratories will conduct all tests, except highly specialised ones, which will be sent to PHRL. Currently, PHRL receives specimens from all districts and send the results accordingly.

PHRL, under a memorandum of understanding, has been sending samples for testing to National Institute of Health (NIH), Islamabad, in case the required facilities are not available in it. The results of such tests, received from NIH, are shared by it with respective hospitals in districts.

"PHRL will take care of proficiency and quality control besides compilation of data and will share the same at national forums. It will also do advance level and rare testing. For instance, some cases such as that for Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever (CCHF), which is not happening in all districts, and the cost of its kit is Rs400,00," official told this scribe.

As per five-year, plan, the regional laboratories will be equipped with modern items to perform district level testing including that for malaria, dengue and typhoid etc.

Officials said that PHRL completed eight years of its existence during which it performed tests for more than 40 modifiable diseases, especially its eight million PCRs for Covid-19 at a cost of Rs150 million. Those tests would have cost more than Rs5 billion in private laboratories. PHRL not only saved more than Rs4.5 billion for health department but also played crucial role in prevention of the pandemic.

"Finance department is likely to release funds to PHRL; the employees of which have been without salaries for the past five months," officials said. They said that PHRL sought Rs17 million and Finance Minister Muzammil Aslam assured them of provision of funds to keep PHRL afloat as it would play basic role in setting up regional laboratories in addition to performing advance level testing for all hospitals in the province.

They said that PHRL, as per plan, would provide full support to regional laboratories through trainings and commodities.

They said that health department accorded priority to PHRL because it was playing vital role in identification of epidemics.

"The recent example is the detection of six mpox cases at Bacha Khan International Airport last year. The patients were then isolated and spread of the virus was prevented in a timely manner. Even a single mpox case could have infected more people if it was not detected," said officials.

PA forms committee to discuss bill returned by governor

Continued from Page 13

Constitution.

JUI-F member Maulana Lutfur Rehman said that the 26 Constitutional Amendment was passed after consultation with the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf.

In response, law minister Afrab Alam Afridi told the house that the main objective of the amendment bill was to provide legal cover to the advisers and special assistance as they held several departments and chaired meetings.

He said that there were 34 departments and the advisers and special assistance helped the chief minister adding that the advisers were covered under the Constitution, while the special assistants were covered under Rule 53(A) of Rules of Business.

"I suggest the formation of a special select committee for discussing the bill before the next session and the seeking of the advocate general's opinion to satisfy us. The entire house could be taken on board," he said.

Mr Afridi said according to Article 16 of the Constitution, any matter for reconsideration could be returned with or without amendment by the provincial assembly.

"As far as the 26th Constitutional Amendment is concerned, an advocate general could speak on the floor of the house that covered advisers and special assistance," he said.

The minister said under Article 131 (11), five advisers could become part of the cabinet and there was no mention of elected or unelected persons.

Former speaker of the assembly Mushtaq Ahmad Ghani also supported the opposition's objections to the bill and asked the law minister if he would sit in a meeting chaired by unelected persons.

He said the bill should be sent to the select committee for a detailed discussion.

The house also unanimously passed a resolution, which demanded of the provincial government to recommend to the federal government to fulfil the promises made regarding the development of merged tribal districts. It also called for the provision of funds promised by the federal government and other provinces.

The resolution, moved by MPA Ajmal Khan, read that the new National Finance Commission Award be announced and the payments regarding the war on terrorism be made.

It also said that the federal and provincial governments should provide three of the federal divisible pool funding to the provincial government for development of the merged tribal districts, bringing them on par with developed areas.

Minister Afridi, however, said that the federal government would never announce a new NFC Award as it increased KP's share in national funds from 14 per cent to 19 per cent.

A CUSTOMER purchases dates from a shop in Pipal Mandi, Peshawar. — White Star

PHC moved against use of mercury in gold mining in Kohat

Petitioners term the practice environmental hazard

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: The residents of Khudial Garh, Kohat, on Monday moved Peshawar High Court against use of mercury in gold mining in the area, terming it an environmental hazard resulting in contamination of air, polluting the Indus River and also affecting agricultural land adjacent to the mines.

A petition was jointly filed by former provincial minister Amjad Khan Afridi and 13 others as public interest litigation in the green bench of the high court through Advocate Noman Mehdi Kakakhel.

They contended that using and dumping mercury was poisonous to humans, animals, flora and fauna and aquatic life and was also having a negative impact on agricultural lands.

They said that use of mercury and other environment polluting activities of miners should be declared unconstitutional as a healthy environment was fundamental right of everyone after the passage of Constitution (Twenty Sixth) Amendment Act.

Petitioners said that the practice was also violative of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environmental Protection Act and Minamata Convention on Mercury, a multilateral environmental agreement that addressed specific human activities that were contributing to widespread mercury pollution.

They requested the court to restrain the official respondents and private contractor from polluting the environment by burning mercury into open air, dumping the same in agricultural and other properties and throwing the wastes into the Indus River in the interest of justice.

Petitioners requested the court to declare the inaction of relevant government officials as violative of fundamental rights, illegal and without lawful authority.

They prayed the court to declare that a healthy environment was a fundamental right by virtue of Constitution 26th Amendment and the respondents were bound to obey, protect and enforce laws, policies and SOPs governing the subject matter.

The respondents in the petition are KP government through chief secretary, secretary of mines and minerals, KP Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), director general mines and minerals, Kohat deputy commissioner, its district police officer (DPO) and a private company Himalayan Earth Exploration.

Petitioners claimed that land in Khudial Garh was one of the fittest for agriculture in the area. They stated that of late Gold Placer Mines were discovered in the area, which were advertised and auctioned by the government. They said that the lease of the mines spread over 35 square kilometres was allotted to the private respondent on Nov 8, 2024.

They said that in the lease granting order it was mandatory for the private company to ensure that the mining should be environment-friendly. They alleged that the contractor started mining in the rented area without following SOPs and state of the art placer gold mining.

They said that it had been damaging the environment through water and soil as well as air making it an area unfit for the inhabitants to survive in due to use of mercury while separating gold from by-products it came with.

Citing several side effects of mercury, petitioners stated that its exposure to humans could cause neurological damage, skin infections, impaired immune function and reproductive harms, etc.

They said that mercury exposure in plants could inhibit seed germination and growth, damage root systems and disrupt photosynthesis. They claimed that they had approached the relevant officials time and again about the use of mercury in gold mining, but in vain.

Petitioners claimed that there were many best suited and environment-friendly procedures available for mining of placer gold, but the contractor was not utilising the same and instead relying on mercury burning.

Corruption rampant in KP, alleges JI Hazara chief

BATTAGRAM: Jamaat-i-Islami Hazara region chief Abdul Razaq Abbasi has alleged that some local and international players are opposing his party's entry to power corridors.

Talking to mediapersons at the Battagram Press Club here on Sunday night, he added that these powers employed a multifaceted approach to exert influence over elections, utilising tactics such as vote manipulation, propaganda and rigging. He alleged that these powers exploited various tools, including electable families, media and social media, to spread propaganda and pave way for their preferred candidates.

Mr Abbasi criticised the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf government in the province for failing to provide jobs, housing, and quality education to citizens. He alleged that corruption was rampant in the PTI government, with politicians and officials embezzling funds meant for public welfare. This, he claimed had led to widespread disillusionment among the people.

Mr Abbasi expressed deep concern over 'bad governance' in KP where every next day teachers, clerks and doctors were staging protest for their rights. He alleged that the provincial government, MNAs and MPAs were involved in kickbacks, with a significant portion of government funds being misappropriated for personal gains. This, he said had led to a breakdown in the delivery of public services, causing immense hardship for the masses.

The JI Hazara chief emphasised that his party was committed to providing a viable alternative to the existing political order. He argued that his party's vision for a just and equitable society was based on Islamic principles and Quaid's vision for Pakistan. — Correspondent

Tank women protest 'irregularities' in distribution of ration

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Women wearing veils took to the streets on Monday against alleged irregularities in distribution of rations meant for the poor by a non-government organisation in Tank district.

The protesters gathered outside the deputy commissioner's office and blocked the Tank-South Waziristan Road for several hours.

The women said that though they had been issued tokens to collect their rations, they were denied the aid. They alleged that the rations were unfairly distributed to other individuals chosen by the organisers, leaving them desperate and angry.

Speaking to media representatives, the protesting women accused the NGO and its local partners of favouritism, claiming that the rations were distributed among workers of a political party and their relatives, bypassing deserving individuals. The ration distribution programme supported by the Sindh government and executed by NGO Peace and Development Organisation has faced widespread criticism for mismanagement.

The protesting women said they had travelled long distances, leaving behind their families and spending money on transportation, only to be treated disrespectfully. They reported being pushed out of the distribution point and humiliated.

The women called upon the provincial authorities to take notice of the alleged mismanagement and inhuman treatment of deserving recipients. They vowed to continue their protest till justice was served.

RELIEF FOR KURRAM FAMILIES: Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) for merged districts Imran Wazir on Monday said following directives of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, the society was making all-out efforts to provide essential medicines and non-food items to the residents of the restive Kurram district.

Talking to mediapersons, he said that next consignment of relief goods would be dispatched as soon as the routes were cleared.

Mr Wazir further said that the PRCS teams were the first to provide aid to the affected families in Kurram.

He praised dedication of Red Crescent volunteers for carrying out humanitarian duties even in difficult circumstances. — Correspondent

Govt asked to revisit Chitral's master plan draft

CHITRAL: The political parties and civil society organisations here the other day unanimously demanded of the provincial government to revisit the draft master plan of Chitral town to make it consistent with the aspirations and needs of the people and ground realities of the area.

In a joint meeting convened and presided over by the amir of Jamaat-i-Islami Lower Chitral Wajahat Din, the meeting was participated by former district nazim Maghfirat Shah, Qari Jamal Abdul Nasir (JUI-F), Nisar Wali Shah (PPP), Shahid Ahmed (PTI), Mohammad Kausar advocate (PML-N), Ali Khan Sarbadi (ANP), Faisal Kamal advocate (district bar), Noor Ahmad Khan (traders) and Sajjad Ahmad Khan (local bodies).

The participants expressed their strong reservations about the draft master plan and termed it totally inconsistent with the topography of the town and aspirations and needs of the people.

They said the Lahore-based consultant did not bother to sit with the stakeholders to ascertain their sentiments views regarding the document of urban planning for their town and did it on the basis of 'google map' only.

They said the unveiling of the draft master plan had sent shock waves across the town filling the people with apprehensions and anger, who are determined to resist its notification to any extent if their reservations were not removed.

They vowed that the activists of political parties of all shades and civil society will be united under one banner to get the master plan 'corrected' by opposing the present one tooth and nail. — Correspondent

Funds demanded for salaries of school employees

Mansehra LG members fear closure of educational institutions

By Our Correspondent

MANSEHRA: Local government representatives and residents on Monday demanded of the government to release funds for the salaries of teachers and other staff members of schools and colleges functioning under the Elementary Education Foundation Khyber Pakhtunkhwa across the province.

"Five out of 88 schools and colleges functioning in our district are on the brink of closure as the government hasn't paid salaries to teachers and other staff since Feb last year," chairman of Safada village council Barbaroz Ali Swati told reporters here.

Accompanied by his council's representatives and residents, Mr Swati said that poverty-hit girls and boys attending five of 88 schools and colleges across the province had been facing the risk of losing their education due to a lack of funds.

"A girls' college has been functioning in Safada village council where underprivileged girls have received education. Now, it might be closed as teachers and other staff members can't continue to work without salary," he said.

The council chairman said the government had failed to release funds for teachers and other staff working under the Elementary Education Foundation's education support programme and new school initiatives in 88 schools and colleges throughout the province.

"If the schools and colleges functioning under the Elementary Education Foundation Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are closed, the future of thousands of male and female students will be at risk," he said.

Mr Swati said parents of girls attending the only female college in his village council frequently visited his office, urging him to raise the issue with the provincial government to immediately release salaries.

"We want to make it clear to the provincial government that if the salaries are not released within a week, we will take to the streets in protest," he said.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Peoples Party provincial general secretary Shujah Salim Khan on Monday said his party believed in people's prosperity through development projects.

"Our party believes in empowering common people, which is why we created districts and tehsils in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during our coalition government with the Awami National Party in the province," Mr Khan told a party function here.

PPP divisional president Malik Farooq, former MPA Sajida Tabassum and district president Malik Mumtaz were also in attendance.

The PPP general secretary said his party had created most of the districts in the Hazara division.

"If we come into power in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, our government will follow suit, and Tanawal will be granted the status of another district in the Hazara division," he said.

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