



Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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Japan provides grant assistance to Pak NGOs

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Pak, American Salman wins unopposed

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Ahsan Iqbal assures fast track IT park

Detailed News On Page-03



Vows to make America strong

Trump says he wants a world free from wars

Indebted to the American people for landslide victory; assures to shun differences and foster unity; Republicans gain majority in Senate for first time in four years

NEWS DESK / DNA

WASHINGTON: Republican former president Donald Trump closed in on a new term in the White House early Wednesday, needing just a handful of electoral votes to defeat Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris. US media have thus far projected that Trump has won in more than half of the 50 US states, including three key battlegrounds Georgia, North Carolina and Pennsylvania, two of which voted Democratic in the last election. That gives him 277 electoral votes, Harris has so far captured 226 electoral votes, including California and New York -- as well as the US capital Washington.



- TRUMP (277) -
Alabama (9)
Arkansas (6)
Florida (30)
Georgia (16)
Idaho (4)
Indiana (11)
Iowa (6)
Kansas (6)
Kentucky (8)
Louisiana (8)
Mississippi (6)
Missouri (10)
Montana (4)
Nebraska (4 - split)
North Carolina (16)
North Dakota (3)

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Kamala Harris skips election night speech

Democratic presidential candidate to speak tomorrow election as Republicans regain Senate control

DNA

WASHINGTON: Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris's campaign announced she would not address supporters on election night, as US media projections showed Donald Trump on the brink of a second term. The Republican candidate made a "victory" speech on Tuesday night, saying: "America has given us an unprecedented mandate, we are going to heal our country." However, the supporters of Harris hoped for an 11th-hour turnabout as the US VP said they still had votes to come. Economic Time reported that Democratic campaign co-chair Cedric Richmond informed a watch party at Howard University, stating: "You won't hear from the vice president tonight but you will hear from her tomorrow."

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VICTORY DAY OF AZERBAIJAN



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Housing and Works Riaz Hussain Pirzada, Governor Sindh Kamran Tesori, Prime Minister Adviser on Climate Change Romina Khurshid, Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov and others cutting cake to celebrate the Victory Day of Azerbaijan. - DNA

Pakistan, Azerbaijan pledge climate resilience

Azerbaijan Victory Day celebrated

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, Khazar Farhadov called on Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam at her office here on Wednesday. The meeting focused on preparations for the upcoming COP29 summit and emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts for effective climate action. During the meeting, Alam outlined Pakistan's ongoing efforts in preparing for COP29, highlighting the importance of building international consensus on key climate issues and enhancing the country's climate action plans. She stressed that Pakistan's participation in COP29 would be aimed at ensuring its national interests are represented and strengthening its position within the global climate discourse. "Pakistan's preparations for COP29 are part of a broader strategy to engage with international partners and bolster its stance on vital climate issues," she said. She emphasized that the country is actively working towards meeting its emission reduction targets as part of its nationally determined contributions while underscoring the need for international support in achieving sustainable development goals related to climate change. The Coordinator to the prime minister also highlighted the critical role of developed countries in fulfilling their financial commitments to assist developing nations in their climate mitigation

Continued on Page 06

Solidarity with flood-hit people PM inaugurates model village for Ghizer people

The model village has been built over 110 kanal of land. Every home in the village consists of two bedrooms and is equipped with a water supply, solar power, and road connectivity

BUREAU REPORT

GHIZER: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday inaugurated a model village to provide a housing facility to the people of the Bubar Village of Gilgit's Ghizer district, who had lost their homes consequent to the floods in 2022. The model village has been built over 110 kanal of land.

PICTURE ON PAGE 02

Every home in the village consists of two bedrooms and is equipped with a water supply, solar power, and road connectivity. The prime minister, who earlier distributed allotment certificates among a few of the entitled people, asked the authorities concerned to immediately build a school,

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan eyes 'Single B' credit rating

"We'll ensure that the benefit of the declining inflation rate," says Aurangzeb

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Vowing to secure a 'Single B' credit rating this fiscal year, Pakistan's Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb warned on Wednesday that the country's surging population was a "time bomb" that had already detonated, urging swift reforms to address the economic strain. Speaking at the

Continued on Page 06

Punjab govt orders schools' closure

This law allows the government to "provide for the maintenance and restoration of order in areas affected by certain calamities and for the prevention and control of and relief against such calamities

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: The Punjab government on Wednesday ordered the closure of all educational institutions from November 7 to 17 as the province grapples with deadly smog and an alarming Air Quality Index (AQI). On Thursday, the Punjab government declared smog a calamity as the provincial administration notified a host of measures, such as vacations for disabled children and a ban on all activities "causing

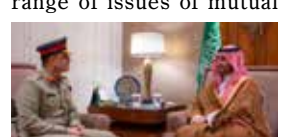
Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Army Chief meets Saudi Crown Prince

DNA

RAWALPINDI: General Asim Munir, NI(M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), is currently on an official visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. During this visit, the Chief of Army Staff met Crown Prince and Prime Minister His Royal Highness Mohammed bin Salman, who extended a warm welcome to General Asim Munir upon his arrival at the Royal Palace. The two dignitaries engaged in a comprehensive discussion on a range of issues of mutual



interest, including regional peace, defence and security cooperation, and strategies for enhancing bilateral relations. COAS expressed his gratitude to His Royal Highness for his steadfast support for Pakistan and acknowledged his significant role in fostering peace and stability across the region. COAS also separately met with Prince Khalid Bin Salman, Defence Minister of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Dignitaries vowed to further strengthen cooperation in the domain of defence and security. Meetings were also held with H.E Engineer Talal Abdullah Al-Otaibi, Assistant Minister of Defence; Air Chief Marshal Fayyadh Bin Hamed Bin Raqeeb' Al Ruwaili, Chief of General Staff of Royal Saudi Armed Forces and H.E Lieutenant General Fahad bin Saud Al-Johani, Chief of Royal Saudi Land Forces.

Imran Khan greets Trump Pakistan leaders greet Donald Trump

PM Shahbaz wants to work closely with the US, "It is hoped that this [Trump] team will foster better relations between the people of Pakistan," says PTI's Omar Ayub

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump claimed "magnificent victory" in speech addressing supporters, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday congratulated him on his return to the White House as the 47th president of the United States defeating Vice-President Kamala Harris. In his congratulatory message posted on X, formerly Twitter, the premier mentioned Trump as president-elect extending congratulations on his "historic victory for a second term". "I look forward to working closely with the incoming Administration to further strengthen and broaden the Pakistan-U.S. partnership @realDonaldTrump," wrote PM Shehbaz in his post. Pakistan congratulates Donald Trump for assuming second term as US president PM Shehbaz's wish for Trump, who will return to assume the president's office in Washington for the second time, came after his victory

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Londoners left 'anxious and fearful'

Trump's win shows need to build world where "racism and hatred is rejected", says London Mayor

NEWS DESK

LONDON: Donald Trump's win shows the need to build a world where "racism and hatred is rejected", London Mayor Sadiq Khan said. The mayor and the US president-elect have had a long-running feud dating back to before Trump's first term in the White House. After Trump claimed victory over Kamala Harris, Khan said he understands

Continued on Page 06

Expectations from Trump

For Pakistan, a second Trump administration presents both opportunities and challenges. While Trump's previous stance on Pakistan showed ambivalence, there remains hope that he might work toward a more constructive relationship this time around. In the past, Trump's administration held a hardline position on Pakistan's role in counterterrorism efforts, voicing concerns about security and support for regional stability

MUHAMMAD MOHSIN IQBAL
As the world watches the return of President Donald Trump to office, a range of expectations and cautious optimism emerge on the international stage, especially from Pakistan and its regional neighbors in the Middle East. President Trump's previous term showcased a distinctive approach to foreign policy—one marked by unpredictable decisions, a focus on "America First" policies, and a mixed legacy of both diplomatic breakthroughs and heightened tensions. In his new term, global actors anticipate that Trump will navigate regional challenges with renewed vigor, aiming to balance his national priorities with pressing international issues. Countries like Pakistan are especially interested in how his leadership might affect regional stability, security cooperation, and economic ties. For Pakistan, a second Trump administration presents both opportunities and challenges. While Trump's previous stance on Pakistan showed ambivalence, there remains hope that he might work toward a more constructive relationship this time around. In the past, Trump's administration held a hardline position on Pakistan's role in counterterrorism efforts, voicing concerns about security and support for regional stability. However, there were also positive signals, such as the 2020 United States-Taliban peace deal, which Pakistan facilitated, leading to the eventual U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. This role in fostering peace efforts could serve as a basis for improved diplomatic and security relations between

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NOVEMBER 2024

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

NOVEMBER

- Nov 01/Algeria National Day
- Nov 04/Italy Armed Forces Day
- Nov 07/Russian Federation Socialist Revolution
- Nov 09/Cambodia National Day
- Nov 11/Poland Independence Day
- Nov 14/Jordan Birthday of King Hussein
- Nov 15/Belgium Kings Day
- Nov 15/Brazil Republic Day
- Nov 15/Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus National Day
- Nov 18/Oman National Day
- Nov 18/Morocco Independence Day
- Nov 21/Bangladesh Armed Forces Day
- Nov 22/Lebanon Independence Day
- Nov 25/Suriname National Day
- Nov 28/Mauritania National Day
- Nov 28/Albania Flags Day

Hotels & Restaurants



Serena Hotel.....111 133 133
Marriott.....051- 2826121
Monal.....0334-5421812



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15
Bomb Disposal.....15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.....1122 & Rescue Services.4451122
Motorway Police.....9266044
Motorway Police.....9270601-20
Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596
Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange.....9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

CMH.....5611111
MH.....5611116
Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666



Departments

CDA.....9221334-43
CDA.....9208301-04
Met Office.....9250360-6
RDA.....5555864
TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Ahsan assures fast-track completion of IT Park

Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the Prime Minister's vision for the swift advancement of the project to transform Islamabad into a regional hub for IT innovation

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said the government was determined to complete the establishment of Information Technology (IT) Park in the Federal Capital on a fast-track basis. He expressed this resolve while chairing a progress-review meeting of the project, attended by Minister of State for Information Minister Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Ambassador of Korea to Pakistan Park Kijun besides senior officials from the Ministries of Planning and IT, a news release said. Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the Prime Minister's vision for

the swift advancement of the project to transform Islamabad into a regional hub for IT innovation. He stressed the importance of parallel development strategies to ensure the project's accelerated progress, setting the foundation for a sustainable digital economy in Pakistan. IT Park Islamabad is being developed in Islamabad, covering a substantial area of 66,893 square meters with two basements, a ground floor, and nine additional floors. It is being financed through a partnership between the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) of the Korean EXIM Bank and the Government of Pakistan's Public Sector Development Program (PSDP). The project, valued at \$88.384 million, includes



\$76.310 million from the Korean EXIM Bank as a loan, with the remaining \$12.476 million funded through the PSDP. This state-of-the-art facility will support IT companies and

start-ups comprehensively, driving innovation and enabling Pakistan to compete in the global IT sector. Key features of the IT Park Islamabad include: The Islamabad IT Park would have 120 Office Spaces for IT and IT-enabled service companies an Incubation Center with 15 offices dedicated to supporting startups, a Business Support Center providing legal, marketing, and financial services, Industry-Academia Linkage Center fostering collaboration between academia and the IT industry and Tier III Data Center with uninterrupted power supply. In addition, the IT Park would also have R&D IT Labs, Auditorium, and Virtual Classrooms supporting research and training. Ambassador Park Kijun re-

iterated Korea's commitment to collaborating closely with Pakistan on this landmark project. He noted Korea's focus on establishing partnerships to support Pakistan's IT sector and exploring avenues for IT product exports. Planning Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal proposed establishing Gandhara IT University in Taxila in line with the vision of promoting education and innovation. As part of this initiative, he said Pakistan was prepared to offer free land for the university's campus, welcoming one of Korea's top universities to establish a presence in Pakistan. This endeavor seeks to revive the ancient legacy of Gandhara and transform Taxila into a modern center of learning, marking a new era for educational excellence in the region.

ANF seizes over 20 kg drugs in three operations

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting three operations recovered over 20 kg drugs worth Rs 1.8 million and arrested two accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday. He informed that in an operation, 1.2 kg hashish was recovered from an accused arrested near a university on Lalazar Road in Rawalpindi. The arrested accused confessed to selling drugs to the students of educational institutions. In another operation, 11.155 kg hashish was recovered from Kohat and 7.200 kg hashish and 1 kg ice were recovered from the possession of an accused rounded up near East Bypass in Karachi. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are under process.—APP

SUPARCO commences project to strengthen air quality

ISLAMABAD: In an effort to strengthen air quality initiatives, the national space agency Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) has commenced a project to investigate sources of fine particulate matter, a key contributor to urban smog. According to an official source, SUPARCO will leverage its satellite-based monitoring and modeling expertise, as well as its Air Quality Monitoring Mobile Lab equipped with air quality analyzers, for this project. These air monitoring mobile labs are stationed in Karachi, Lahore and Gilgit, the official said. About the scientific basis of smog, the official informed that smog, a type of ground-level air pollution, forms when Nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) react with sunlight and Particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10) from industrial, vehicular, and agricultural sources accumulates. Temperature inversions trap pollutants near the surface and worsen the condition. About the health and environmental impacts of smog, the official conveyed that smog exposure leads to respiratory issues (asthma, bronchitis), cardiovascular diseases, cancer risk, crop damage and reduced agricultural productivity and visibility reduction and aviation hazards.—APP

ECP sets Dec 31 deadline for asset disclosure by parliamentarians

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has set a deadline of December 31 for all members of parliament and provincial assemblies to submit their statements of assets and liabilities, including those of their spouses and dependents. The ECP requires all parliamentarians to submit their yearly statements of assets and liabilities, including similar details for their spouses and dependent children, as of the preceding June 30 on Form B for the 2023-2024 financial year - a mandatory requirement under Section 137 of the Elections Act, 2017. The Commission, on the first day of January each year will publish names of members, who fail to submit the requisite statement of assets and liabilities including assets and liabilities within the specified period. The commission will on January 16 by an order suspend the membership of a member of an Assembly or Senate, who fails to submit the statement of assets and liabilities by the fifteenth day of January and such Member shall cease to function till he files the statement of assets and liabilities. The ECP further said that any member submitting false statement of assets and liabilities under this section in material particulars may, within 120 days from the date submission of the statement, be proceeded against for committing the offence of corrupt practice. The ECP said that the prescribed form, along with instructions and guidelines prepared in this regard, can be obtained free of cost from the Election Commission of Pakistan Secretariat, Islamabad, offices of provincial election commissioners in each province, Senate Secretariat, National Assembly, and secretariats of provincial assemblies. Form B can also be downloaded from the ECP's website www.ecp.—DNA

Cellular subscribers reaches 193m

ISLAMABAD: The number of cellular subscribers in Pakistan reached 193 million, with a mobile teledensity of 79.40 percent, by the end of September 2024, according to data from the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA). The data also revealed that mobile broadband subscribers have grown to 139 million, achieving a mobile penetration rate of 56.96 percent.—APP

Rana hails Nestle's export achievements

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday hailed Nestle Pakistan for its remarkable export achievements, terming the company's success as a testament to the resilience of the country's private sector. Addressing an event organized by the Nestle Pakistan, the minister said that Nestle has successfully increased its exports to 26 countries, contributing significantly to Pakistan's foreign reserve and playing a key role in the government's plan to revitalize the economy. "Nestle's success underscores the critical role that businesses play in driving a nation's economic growth," the Minister said, encouraging the company to continue its commitment to quality and excellence. He noted that Nestle's iconic brands, such as Everyday, Vital, and Milkpack Cream, have successfully reached local consumers. The Minister also highlighted Nestle Pakistan's achievement as one of the top packaged food exporters in the country, earning valuable foreign exchange reserves. He emphasized the need to establish Pakistan as a key export hub, citing Nestle's success as a model for other businesses to follow. The minister recalled approving Nestle Pakistan's proposal for launching a small water bottle during his tenure as Minister for Science and Technology. The initiative became popular, and many companies followed suit. The Minister congratulated Nestle's CEO and team for their contributions to the national economy, expressing confidence that the company will achieve its \$100 million target by 2030.—APP

NA speaker pays tribute to Jammu martyrs

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, on Wednesday paid homage to the martyrs of Jammu, observing November 6, 1947, as a solemn reminder of the "dark day" in history. In his message, Ayaz Sadiq commemorated the sacrifice of over 200,000 unarmed Kashmiris, who were tragically killed by the forces of Maharaja Hari Singh while migrating to Pakistan. Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control and around the world are observing Jammu Martyrs' Day today to reaffirm their commitment to the martyrs' mission for self-determination. He lauded the courage of the martyrs in their struggle for self-determination and affirmed that their sacrifices would not be in vain.—APP

Trout winter recipe for food lovers

ISLAMABAD: Renowned for its historical significance and unparalleled hospitality, Peshawar is also a culinary hotspot that attracts foreign and domestic tourists alike with its diverse and delicious food offerings especially during winter. As winter sets in, the city's gastronomic scene shifts into overdrive, with the cold season bringing with it an array of sought-after varieties of food specialties—none more so than the delectable trout fish. A prized winter delicacy, trout fish has found its place in the hearts of food lovers in KP especially in Swat, Makakand, Hazara and Peshawar as these cities grow increasingly known for popular dishes like the iconic Chappli Kabab, Sri Paye, Rice-Polao, Beef Nehari and BBQs. However, it is the trout, often brought from the cool waters of Malakand and Hazara divisions, that truly

shines during winter in Peshawar. As the chill in the air heightens, locals and visitors alike find themselves drawn to the famed Qissa Khawani and Namak Mandi bazaars at Peshawar. The unmistakable scent of sizzling Chappli Kabab and deep-fried fish wafts through these bustling streets, attracting visitors in droves. "As special winter offer, we have received sufficient trout stock from Swat and Manshara districts keeping in view Peshawarties' pressing demands," said Barakat Shah, the owner of a famous fish outlet at Qissa Khwani bazaar while talking to APP. He said, "The recipe of trout fish is very simple and cost as well as time-efficient. We prepare trout in oil after its proper water wash and cutting. Later, varieties of spicy sauces, pomegranate seed powder, salt and other species ingredients are properly

mixed. Before making it fry on medium flame, the fish is properly marinated for about two hours to ensure that all sauces are intact and color is unchanged and later served to customers with chips, sauces (Chitnis), salad and naans." Barakat, who remained associated with the fish business for 20 years said that most people wanted deep-fried fish, some liked 'tawa machi' and wanted grilled and baked trout fish for eating at shops as well as taking the parcel for their loved ones. Vendors, with their expertise, also prepare trout in a variety of ways—grilled, fried, or simmered in rich, aromatic spices, making it an irresistible feast. Notably, the fish markets around Ghanta Ghar, Peshawar's central fish trading hub, play a pivotal role in supplying this winter delicacy. Here, both the rainbow and brown trout varieties are sought after, with fish-

mongers and restaurateurs offering an expansive selection that includes the rare Mushka, Raho, Simon, Pomfret, Mahsher, and even brown trout. "Trout is my favorite seafood as its meat is full of proteins and vitamins besides easily digestible," said Fayaz Khan, a retired teacher while talking to APP. He said, "Normally on every weekend, I visit Peshawar to enjoy trout fish with my family. But today, I rushed to the famous Qissa Khwani to enjoy my favorite food to beat the severe cold that gripped Peshawar Valley for the last few days." "When I was young, I frequently visited Swat with my father to enjoy the freshwater brown trout due to its aromatic taste and spiciness amid snowfall. This year, I did not go to Swat due to availability of the grilled and baked brown trout fish at Peshawar," he added.—APP

ISLAMABAD ELECTRIC SUPPLY COMPANY

اطلاع عام: بجلی بلوں کی بروقت ادائیگی یقینی بنانیں۔ اپنا اخلاقی اور قومی فرض ادا کریں

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

1. This Invitation for Bids follows the Procurement Notice IESCO/PMU/Goods/PN No.09/2024-25 for the following Procurement which will be circulated in National Newspapers.

Tender Identification	Item Description	Unit	Qty	Aggregate Rebate in Million Rs.	Amount of Bid Security in Million Rs.	Average Annual Turnover in Million Rs.	Financial Resources in Million Rs.
PMU/Goods/NCB-202	132KV Bus Isolator with SSS with allied accessories & Termination Connectors	Set	15	30	1.7	112	22
PMU/Goods/NCB-203	132KV Line Isolator with SSS with allied accessories & Termination Connectors	Set	7	14	1	53	10

- IESCO Project Management Unit (PMU) has reserved the funds for the procurement planned during financial year 2024-25. It is intended that part of the proceeds of the funds will be used to cover eligible payment under the contracts for the above procurements.
- The undersigned now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for supply of above material.
- Qualification & Experience**
 - Bidder/JV must demonstrate two (02) No. of contracts that have been successfully completed within last Five (05) years similar to the proposed work. The value of each Contract Agreements / Work Orders shall be equal to amount as mentioned in Para-1. For the purpose, the bidder/JV shall provide relevant Work Orders/Contract Agreements & Completion certificates etc. Bidder/JV must also demonstrate satisfactory performance of the completed works.
 - The Bidder/JV shall demonstrate financial soundness as mentioned above, however detailed terms and conditions are mentioned in Appendix-A of BD
 - Manufacturer will demonstrate at least five-year experience of designing and manufacturing of similar material/ equipment and three-year satisfactory operational performance from date of submission of bid.
- The bidding shall be conducted in line with the Single Stage Two Envelope procedure of the Public Procurement Rules 2004 (amended-to-date), Regulations, Regulatory Guides, Procurement Guidelines or Instructions issued by the Authority (from time to time), and is open to all potential bidders.
- All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in favor of Chief Engineer (Development) in an acceptable form mentioned in ITB in the amount fixed in PKR valid for 28 days beyond bid validity period and validity of bid is at least 75 days from date of submission of bid.
- The original bid along with one copy, properly filled in, and enclosed in sealed envelope(s) must be delivered through courier or physically to the Office of Chief Engineer (Development), IESCO Headquarters, Street # 40, Sector G-7/4, Islamabad on or before 25th November, 2024 at 11:00 Hrs. The Technical bids will be opened on same date at 1:30 Hrs there after in public and in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend during the opening at the address mentioned below. However, price bids shall be kept in custody of procuring agency until announcement of results of technical bid evaluation. Price proposal will be opened of those bidders (s) who are declared technically responsive bidder (s) and financial proposal of non-responsive bidder (s) shall be returned unopened to authorized representative of bidder (s).
- Interested bidder(s) / firm (s) may visit IESCO website for scrutiny of bidding documents, however bidder will submit their bid(s) after purchase of bidding document from office of the undersigned on request after payment of non-refundable fee of Rs.5,000/- for participation on any working day during office hours or may be sent through Courier if requested by the bidder with an additional fee of Rs. 1,500/- per document.
- Late submission of bid will not be entertained.
- IESCO reserves the right to reject the bids as per Rule-33 (1) of PPRA Rules-2004 (amended to date)
- Electronic bids are not acceptable.

Chief Engineer (Development),

IESCO Head Quarter, Street No. 40, Sector G-7/4, Islamabad

Phone No. +92-51-2378045, Fax No. +92-51-9252345

Email Address iescopmu@iesco.com.pk



Briefs

2 liquor suppliers held, large quantity of liquor seized

RAWALPINDI: Police in Naserabad have arrested two liquor suppliers and seized a large quantity of liquor following a crackdown on Wednesday.

The arrested individuals, identified as Bilal and Niaz, were members of a local gang. During the operation, police recovered 240 tons of liquor along with 12 bottles from their possession. The suspects were apprehended when Naserabad police, on routine patrol, stopped and searched a suspicious vehicle.

Upon inspection, they found a significant amount of liquor hidden inside the vehicle. The police have registered separate cases against both suspects, and further investigation was in progress. SP Potohar Nasir Nawaz praised the efforts of the Naserabad police team, emphasizing that the crackdown on drug and liquor suppliers will continue.—APP

First CJP Mian Rashid death anniversary observed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The forty-third death anniversary of the first Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mian Abdul Rashid, is being observed on Wednesday.

He was born on 29 June 1889 in a well-known Arain family, namely the Mian family of Baghbanpura, Lahore. He received his early education at Central Model School in Lahore and got his B.A. from Forman Christian College, also in Lahore, and a Tripos and Masters from Christ's College, Cambridge University, in 1912. He started practicing law at Multan and later shifted to Lahore in 1913, where he joined the chambers of Mian Muhammad Shafi. He served as an acting judge at Lahore High Court, Advocate of the Government of Punjab, Judge of Lahore High Court, and Chief Justice of Pakistan. Mian Abdul Rashid took the oath from Muhammad Ali Jinnah as the first Governor-General of Pakistan on August 15, 1947.

Symposium explores women's rights through religion

RAWALPINDI: The Department of Islamic Studies, Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU) hosted an International Symposium titled "Impact of Religion, Family Dynamics, and Legal Frameworks on Women's Rights and provided a dynamic platform for discussing the intersections of women's rights, drawing attention to critical global issues affecting women. The event featured two renowned international scholars: Dr. Rehana Parveen, Associate Professor at Birmingham Law School, UK, and Prof. Dr. Afsar Rathor, UN Ambassador for Peace from Austria. Both speakers delivered insightful presentations, sharing their expertise on the influences of religious, familial, and legal frameworks on women's rights worldwide. Dr. Shahzadi Pakeeza, Chairperson of the Department of Islamic Studies, and Dr. Farhana Mehmood, the focal person for the symposium organized the event. Prof. Dr. Bushra Mirza, Vice Chancellor, FJWU, the chief guest, underscored the significant role of religion in fostering unity and global peace. In her remarks, she expressed gratitude to the speakers, stating, "Their shared insights are invaluable for enriching our understanding of women's rights in a diverse and interconnected world."—APP

Private sector drives green change for sustainable Pakistan

SIE is not just an expo, but a knowledge base," said Sherry Rehman. "This event is a vital platform for raising awareness and driving change. It is essential to empower the private sector, whose innovation and commitment will be key to addressing the climate challenges we face"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As the second edition of the Sustainability Investment Expo (SIE 2024) is underway here at Pak-China Friendship Centre, the event features a variety of eco-friendly initiatives from the private sector aimed at creating a greener Pakistan. With the theme "Pioneering Solutions for Climate Resilience," the expo was inaugurated by Chairperson Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Senator Sherry Rehman. "SIE is not just an expo, but a knowledge base," said Sherry Rehman. "This event is a vital platform for raising awareness and driving change. It is essential to empower the private sector, whose innovation and commitment will be key to addressing the climate challenges we face." The event featured a variety of stalls from the local and international

companies, along with startups and small businesses committed to sustainable technologies, renewable energy solutions, and environmentally friendly practices. One of the key highlights was the participation of green tech startups, which showcased cutting-edge products like biodegradable packaging and energy-efficient appliances. "We believe that the private sector holds the key to a sustainable future," said Hafsa Syed, a representative of ECO Gen., focusing on eco-friendly projects. "We have started a number of initiatives like EcoGen: recycling waste into fertilizer, and Evenger is a unique platform aimed at teaching children sustainable habits," Syed said. Sustainability was also at the forefront for companies like Roshan Packages Limited (RPL), which has been a pioneer in reducing paper waste. Waseem Mufti, Marketing Manager at RPL, stated, "We're committed to sustainability from day

one, reusing and recycling paper products for packaging. Events like this give us the opportunity to connect with like-minded investors who support our vision for a greener future." A Forest Officer from Ministry of Climate Change, Muhammad Hashim at expo said, "We are displaying various initiatives of the government under the 'Green Pakistan Programme' at our stall. "We are implementing a range of initiatives to increase biodiversity and promote conservation. These interventions include tree plantations and strategies for protecting various ecosystems." The expo highlighting the crucial role of private enterprises in achieving Pakistan's sustainability goals. Companies like Hutchison Ports Pakistan are also leading by example. Naveed Qureshi, Assistant General Manager (AGM) at Hutchison Ports, talking to APP said, "Our electric and hybrid cranes are part of our broader effort to reduce emis-

sions, and we are set to introduce e-trucks in Pakistan as well." "We are committed to the UN SDGs, delivering on our promise for a resilient and thriving Pakistan by planting 1 million mangroves in partnership with WWF by 2030", he said. Addressing the alarming issue of plastic waste, 'Green Plastic Private Limited' has developed an innovative solution by manufacturing plastic bags from potato peels. Maria Qayyum, the company's Chief Operational Officer, explained, "By using organic materials like potato peels, we are reducing single-use plastic pollution and organic waste at the same time. We currently produce 20 bags a day manually, and our aim is to scale this up to make a larger environmental impact." In a bid to combine technology and sustainability, Programme Manager at atomcamp Amina said, "Sustainability lab is new initiative by atomcamp under which we work at the intersection of

climate change, data and AI. "We are introducing evidence-based thinking for climate change in Pakistan and making contribution to tackle climate challenges with data driven strategies." "We have conducted 'Green Space' study in Rawalpindi which found that only 4.6% of Rawalpindi's area is green space, far below the UN's recommended 15%." The expo highlighted that the private sector is not only responding to global environmental challenges but also spearheading efforts to make eco-friendly innovations scalable and accessible. The visitors including students, environmental activists, and business leaders, lauded the private sector's contributions and said Pakistan stands at a crucial juncture in its journey towards sustainability. The 2nd edition of Sustainability Investment Expo will continue until November 7, besides 27th Sustainable Development Conference.

PTF hosts annual event to foster educational excellence

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Teachers Forum (PTF) is set to host its prestigious annual event on Friday on strengthening educational standards and supporting teachers nationwide. According to the details, the event will be held on Friday, 8th November 2024, from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM in Islamabad. This year's gathering will bring together esteemed figures in Pakistan's education and public service sectors, including prominent policymakers and international representatives. Senator Fawzia Arshad, Chairperson of the Pakistan Teachers Forum, will lead the event, focusing on PTF's commitment to empowering educators and enhancing the quality of education across the country. The forum will welcome Mr. Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, Federal Secretary of Education, as the Chief Guest. His attendance underscores the government's dedication to driving forward meaningful reforms in education. The event will also be honored by distinguished guests, including several Senators, the Ambassador of Japan, and Dr Zia Batool, Chairperson of the Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Authority (PEIRA).—APP

Health Authority issues smog advisory

RAWALPINDI: District Health Authority Rawalpindi on Wednesday has issued an advisory regarding anti-smog measures, and urged the people to take precautionary measures in this regard.

Dr. Asif Arbab Niazi, the District Health Authority chief advised the public to use face masks and goggles when leaving home, get the vehicles inspected to reduce smog pollution. He urged people to pay attention to construction sites and garbage areas so that dust, dirt, etc. does not mix in air. Also avoid burning garbage in streets. He also emphasized that factories should install air pollution control devices. He highlighted that the plantation has a pivotal role in controlling smog. Maximizing tree planting can contribute to smog reduction. He said that farmers should not burn crop residues. The advisory suggested that the use of wet cloth for floor cleaning in houses is better than that of the broom. Keep the windows and doors of the houses closed, drink as much water as possible. Dr. Asif informed that smog awareness counters have been activated in hospitals.—APP



ISLAMABAD: A women sanitary worker provide biometric verification for attendance at sector G-7, in the Federal Capital. Capital Development Authority (CDA) has decided to extend biometric attendance system outside for sanitary workers.

ICT admin bans wall chalking, arrests 16 violators

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration launched a city-wide crackdown against unauthorized wall chalking, leading to several arrests and charges. This swift action aims to enforce the recent ban on wall chalking in public spaces, targeting those who deface city walls for promotional campaigns, said the spokesman of ICT administration on Wednesday. In a recent operation, the Islamabad district administration intensified efforts against illegal wall chalking across the city. As many as eleven people were arrested for violating the ban. Of these, seven

were detained by the Assistant Commissioner (AC) of the Secretariat area in Barakahu, while four were taken into custody by the AC Saddar from Margalla Avenue. Authorities have registered cases against all accused individuals involved. The Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, has issued strict instructions to clamp down on wall chalking across the city. Memon emphasized that both the individuals creating the chalking and the businesses behind them will face consequences. This crackdown targets advertisements by various entities, including private clinics, flats, marriage halls, a wood

company, and a training institute, which had been promoting their services through wall chalking. Meanwhile, five more individuals were apprehended in connection with recent theft cases linked to this ongoing campaign. The AC Secretariat registered a case at the local police station against the latest group of individuals, reinforcing the administration's stance against defacing public property. DC Islamabad Irfan Memon has directed his team to identify all parties involved in running such ad campaigns on city walls and ensure compliance with the wall chalking ban throughout Islamabad.—APP

APHC-AJK pays rich tributes to victims of Jammu massacre

ISLAMABAD: A conference marking the martyrdom anniversary of the Jammu martyrs was held on Wednesday at the office of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-AJK) chapter in Islamabad. According to Kashmir Media Service, the conference was chaired by Muhammad Farooq Rehmani, leader of the APHC-AJK chapter. Speakers at the event included Mahmood Ahmed Saghar, Syed Faiz Naqashbandi, Muhammad Hussain Khateeb, Syed Yousuf Naseem, AJK leader Shaheen Kauser Dar, Syed Ali Raza Bukhari, Sardar Hassan Ibrahim, Farzana Yaqoob, Mirza Asif Jarral, Maryam Kashmiri, Abid Abbasi, and other Hurriyat leaders and activists. The speakers paid tributes to the Jammu martyrs and emphasized that the Kashmiri people are observing the day with a renewed resolve to continue the martyrs' mission until their inalienable right to self-determination is secured. They stated that the brutal actions of Indian army and the cruel soldiers of Dogra Maharaja Hari Singh had deprived the Kashmiri people of their rightful freedom. The Jammu martyrs sacrificed their lives for a noble cause, and their unparalleled sacrifices will never be forgotten. The speakers also noted that the ongoing Kashmir freedom movement continues to peacefully carry forward the martyrs' mission and will ultimately succeed. They expressed confidence that the day is near when the Kashmiri people will be freed from India's rule and will determine their own future. They reiterated that lasting peace in South Asia cannot be achieved unless the Kashmir dispute is resolved in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people and the relevant United Nations resolutions. The speakers appealed to the international community to intervene and prevent the genocide of Kashmiris by India, urging a just solution to the long-standing Kashmir dispute.—APP

Govt to setup 10,000 EV charging stations: Rana

With growing private sector interest and government-backed incentives, this push toward electric mobility is poised to significantly benefit both the economy and the environment

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday unveiled the government plan to transform the transportation landscape by setting up 10,000 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations by 2030. Addressing an "exhibition of electric bike models" organized by the Engineering Development Board (EDB), he emphasized the government's commitment to reducing fuel dependency, cutting carbon emissions, and promoting cleaner, sustainable transportation. With growing private sector interest and government-backed incentives, this push toward electric mobility is poised to significantly benefit both the economy and the environment. The ministers said around 31 companies have expressed interest in investing in electric vehicles in Pakistan while 2 companies were granted permission to manufacture electric vehicles. He said "Pakistan is now in a position to export three-wheelers". The minister highlighted some key initiatives to promote electric vehicles across the country. He said that manufacturing activities will soon begin by private companies, boosting the industry. He said that the government would launch the second electric vehicle policy by November 30 to promote eco-friendly transportation. He said, Punjab government was also working on two and three-wheeler electric vehicles. The minister also announced that 100 students will receive electric bikes based on merit through a bidding process conducted in a transparent and fair manner. The government has earmarked Rs 4 billion for electric motorcycles. He said, the private sector plays a vital role in Pakistan's economic development, with the country's economy moving towards improvement, he remarked. This shift towards eco-friendly transportation is expected to have a positive impact on Pakistan's environment and economy. With the government's support and private sector investment, the country is poised for a greener future.—DNA

55 vehicles fined in anti-pollution sweep

ISLAMABAD: In response to rising air pollution, Islamabad's district administration has introduced tough new regulations, implementing Section 144 to control toxic emissions and curb smog levels in the Federal Capital. According to a notification, Islamabad's district administration has imposed Section 144 to limit the release of harmful gases in an effort to combat air pollution. The restrictions apply to emissions from vehicles, factories, kilns, and the burning of garbage and crops. Additional District Magistrate Islamabad, issued these orders for two months, during which violators will face legal consequences. As part of this crackdown, the Islamabad Transport Authority (ITA) is actively inspecting vehicles for compliance. In this connection, the ITA Secretary recently conducted an inspection at the vegetable market and checked 75 vehicles. During the checking, as many as 55 vehicles were fined for violating emission standards. One heavily polluting vehicle was impounded and moved to the police station. According to Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, Irfan Memon, these daily inspections are part of the city's broader effort to manage air pollution and reduce smog. Warning letters have been issued to non-compliant vehicles, with fines imposed where necessary. The administration's preemptive measures aim to keep pollution under control as winter approaches, bringing with it heightened risks of smog. The district's intensified approach reflects a commitment to cleaner air and public health protection, as enforcement continues against sources of pollution citywide.—APP

Meezan Bank inks agreement to join ITFC

ISLAMABAD: Meezan Bank, Pakistan's leading Islamic bank has signed a new strategic partnership with the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), a member of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group, under the ITFC Letter of Credit (LC) Confirmation product. This product facilitates trade flow by allowing exporters and issuing banks to gain assurance from ITFC to secure payment and thus eliminate credit risks, said a news release. It will support private sector clients, including SMEs, by working with local banks in Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member countries to facilitate various import transactions. The agreement

was signed by Nazeem Noordali, Chief Operating Officer of ITFC, and Syed Amir Ali, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Meezan Bank, in the presence of executives from both sides. Meezan Bank is the first bank in Pakistan to partner with ITFC for the LC Confirmation facility. This Islamic trade facility will enable Meezan Bank to extend geographical coverage by leveraging the ITFC network, both in member and non-member countries. It will also enable the Bank to handle longer term LC Confirmation transactions (6 to 12 months). Syed Amir Ali, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Meezan Bank, highlighted the impact of this cooperation saying: "Today marks a significant

milestone in our business relationship with ITFC as we solidify our partnership. This arrangement reinforces our Bank's commitment to reliability, stability, and financial excellence. The Letter of Credit Confirmation Agreement strengthens our position in the market, enabling us to capitalize on new opportunities and facilitate international Islamic trade." Nazeem Noordali, Chief Operating Officer of ITFC, expressed his views on the partnership: "We are proud to strengthen our partnership with Meezan Bank through this Letter of Credit Confirmation Agreement, which reflects our commitment and support to private sector clients.

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Polio needs to be eradicated

POLIO protection efforts in Pakistan have reached a critical low. What was once a manageable yet persistent issue, already a source of national embarrassment, has now escalated into a full-blown crisis demanding urgent government action. Pakistan remains one of only two countries in the world unable to eliminate polio. The resurgence of polio in Gaza, even amidst severe humanitarian crises and medical shortages, highlights the level of governmental neglect required for the disease to persist today. Pakistan reported just six cases of polio in 2023. In 2021, that figure was down to one. This year, however, the number has soared to 45 cases—a staggering tenfold increase compared to previous years, with the year not yet concluded. Immediate government intervention is essential. The issues to address are straightforward but urgent. First, comprehensive and consistent security must be provided to polio vaccination teams operating in rural and vulnerable areas. Imran Khan's Toshakhana case bail petition scheduled for hearing in IHC Second, authorities must hold accountable anyone spreading misinformation about polio vaccines. It is no longer enough to prosecute only those who directly attack polio teams. The focus must also extend to community leaders, religious figures, and clerics who propagate anti-vaccine rhetoric, as their influence significantly undermines public health efforts. Third, the government should initiate an effective, positive campaign to promote polio vaccination. Reports from workers on the ground indicate that some communities use polio vaccination as leverage, withholding participation to negotiate for better infrastructure or resources. This practice sets a dangerous precedent that, if left unchecked, could lead to similar tactics in other areas and further stall eradication efforts. It is time to put an end to such compromises. The state must enforce strict compliance with polio vaccination and consider legal measures against those who refuse it.



In Middle East, EU is an economic giant but a political dwarf

THE EU has seen its geopolitical influence decline throughout the world in recent years, but no more so than in the Middle East, a region historically, economically and culturally closer to it than the US. The Europeans have been losing political influence for decades, especially after endorsing the US-sponsored peace accords between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel. Exclusive US oversight of the Oslo process sidelined the EU as a block, as well as the UN and Russia, although these three entities remain members of the Quartet—in addition to the US. But Washington has made it clear that it will neutralize any meaningful role of the Quartet to avoid laying any serious pressure on its ally and proxy, Israel. But the EU's political influence on parties to the Israel-Palestine conflict has also declined in recent years. In this case, it suffered a fatal blow following the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israel and the ensuing brutal Israeli war on Gaza, which is ongoing and has now stretched to Lebanon. The Europeans, including the British after leaving the union, are divided when it comes to exerting meaningful pressure on Israel to cease its assault on Gaza. Following the Oct. 7 attacks, European leaders flocked to embrace Benjamin Netanyahu and to declare that Israel had the absolute right to defend itself against the aggressor, meaning Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Yes, the EU and its members remain the biggest donor to UNRWA and other UN agencies working for the welfare of the Palestinians. Brussels is also the biggest financial supporter of the Palestinian Authority. However, such financial support is undercut by its inability to produce a decisive political stand that would influence the trajectory of events in the Occupied Territories. The EU and individual member states have imposed sanctions on Jewish settler groups in the West Bank, as has the US. But that has not prevented Netanyahu's far-right government from unleashing a settler-led wave of terror and mayhem against West Bank Palestinians.

Trump Trumped Harris

Qamar Bashir



Trump skillfully dismantled the Democrats' election agenda, which had centered on promises to reduce food prices, support working families, provide \$25,000 to first-time homebuyers, and cut tax rates for middle-class households. However, public sentiment leaned heavily toward skepticism. Many questioned how the Biden administration, with Kamala Harris as Vice President, could fulfill these promises now when they had struggled to deliver on similar commitments while in power. This perception further strengthened...

THE Working America organization deployed a force of 400 trained canvassers over a month, traveling in more than 60 vans with seven canvassers per vehicle, going door-to-door to campaign for Kamala Harris in the entire Michigan. Despite this substantial investment and effort, the results fell short of expectations, with Trump leading significantly in Michigan, capturing 51.9% of the vote compared to Harris's 46.3%. The likely victory by Trump also contradicted many national surveys that had consistently projected Harris as the frontrunner. This trend extended beyond Michigan, as Republicans were enjoying a comfortable lead across much of the country, leaving Democrats anxious as the midnight hour approached. The unexpected shift also sent shockwaves to Democratic supporters and international allies in Europe and beyond. As of now, Harris has secured 194 electoral votes, trailing Trump's 246, leaving him only 24 votes shy of the 270 needed to win the White House as the clock passes midnight in the U.S. This created an atmosphere of global uncertainty and concern. While absentee and mail-in ballots are still being counted, a reversal appears almost impossible. Importantly, the election process has been deemed fair by 83% of surveyed voters, minimizing any doubts about potential manipulation. Overall, Harris's campaign appears to have underperformed across multiple states, highlighting the effects of a perceived lack of effective campaigning. Notably, her projected support among women and Black voters did not meet expectations, reflecting a broader struggle to resonate with key voter demographics. Trump was successful in swaying male voters, securing 54% of their support by focusing on issues like abortion rights, economic challenges, inflation, and job losses. In contrast, Harris garnered 44% of the male vote. Among new and younger voters, many of whom recently entered the job market, discontent with the Democrats' economic performance led to a shift toward Trump, with 55% favoring him compared to 44% for Harris. White voters heavily supported Trump, with 72% aligning with him on issues related to immigration, white identity concerns, and opposition to legalized abortion. Although Harris won 66% of the female

vote—driven by strong support for abortion rights—this was insufficient to swing the election in her favor. There was a notable alignment among white men aiming to prevent a Black and South Asian woman from ascending to the presidency and becoming the commander-in-chief of the U.S. Armed Forces, one of the world's most powerful positions. Confidence in Trump's crisis-management abilities was also higher, with 50% of voters believing he could handle crises better than Harris, who received 48% in this regard. In Washington, D.C., a large crowd of Democratic supporters had gathered outside the party's headquarters, hoping for a decisive win. However, as the night wore on, disappointment set in as they watched the election slip away. Meanwhile, a jubilant crowd at the Republican headquarters in New York celebrated noisily, ready to welcome Trump's expected victory. Disappointed, Harris postponed her planned address to supporters. In contrast, Trump prepared to give a victory speech, laying out his vision for the next four years for one of the world's most powerful nations. Trump skillfully dismantled the Democrats' election agenda, which had centered on promises to reduce food prices, support working families, provide \$25,000 to first-time homebuyers, and cut tax rates for middle-class households. However, public sentiment leaned heavily toward skepticism. Many questioned how the Biden administration, with Kamala Harris as Vice President, could fulfill these promises now when they had struggled to deliver on similar commitments while in power. This perception further strengthened Trump's position, as voters viewed the Democrats' pledges as hollow, given their track record over the past term. The post-midnight results stunned Democrats. In Arizona, Trump led Harris narrowly at 49.7% to 49.5%, with abortion rights proving pivotal. Harris won her home state of California with a strong 61.2%, securing 59 electoral votes. However, Trump claimed Florida with 56.2% over Harris's 42.9% and took Georgia (50.7%) and Iowa (55.1%) due to strong rural support. In Idaho, Trump led with 59.1%, while North Carolina also went to him with 50.7% over Harris's 47.8%. Harris won Oregon comfortably at 59.2%, yet underper-

formed in Pennsylvania, a critical swing state, where Trump led 50.8%. Trump also led in Wisconsin, 51% to 47.3%, cementing his edge in key battlegrounds. Now it is not rocket science that Donald Trump has won the 2024 U.S. presidential election and the situation is not going to change even if all votes are counted, which might take a few more days. With Trump the world is now unscrambling itself to face sweeping changes in the USA's approach to the Middle East, the Russia-Ukraine war, NATO, and China could significantly. Trump has traditionally favored a "peace through strength" doctrine, potentially leading to an assertive stance in supporting Israel while promoting diplomatic engagements to avoid direct U.S. involvement in new conflicts. Trump's previous skepticism of NATO could resurface, with calls for greater burden-sharing among member countries, potentially affecting NATO's united front against Russia. In the case of Russia-Ukraine, Trump has shown interest in swiftly negotiating an end to the conflict, which may lead to a pressured peace deal that could favor Russia or at least reduce U.S. military aid, drawing criticism domestically and internationally. On the domestic front, Trump's economic policies have historically included tax cuts, deregulation, and tariffs—especially against China, which he views as a critical economic rival. A more protectionist stance on China could lead to heightened trade tensions, potentially impacting global supply chains and increasing U.S. manufacturing costs, though it may boost certain U.S.-based industries. Trump's past emphasis on limiting immigration to protect American jobs could lead to stricter immigration policies, which may face opposition from businesses reliant on immigrant labor, particularly in tech and agriculture. Economically, Trump is likely to prioritize policies aimed at GDP growth, possibly including tax cuts and reducing regulations on fossil fuels to spur energy independence. However, these moves could risk higher inflation if not carefully balanced with monetary policy. The overall impact on inflation, jobs, and GDP growth would depend heavily on his administration's ability to navigate international uncertainties while managing domestic economic pressures effectively.

Board of Directors: The Guardians of compliance and corporate governance

Imran Ghaznavi



In an era where a single misstep can cascade into a crisis, having a senior leader with expertise in communication and reputation management on the board is indispensable. Corporate scandals, once limited to traditional media, can now go viral globally within minutes, accelerating the risk to an organization's reputation and financial health. A director with experience in communications...

THE corporate sector, with its labyrinthine structures and far-reaching impacts, often operates like a well-oiled machine on the surface. But behind the polished conference tables and gloss of quarterly reports, a less visible group operates with quiet intensity: the Board of Directors. In the intricate world of corporate governance, the board is not merely an overseer; it is the nerve center that steers a company through the murky waters of compliance and reputational risk. Across industries, the board plays an indispensable role in aligning a company's operational framework with regulatory requirements and best practices, establishing a blueprint for ethical standards and risk mitigation strategies. It isn't a matter of checking boxes; it's about foresight, vigilance, and leadership. But what makes a board truly effective in navigating these challenges? What structure, skill set, and insights are needed to protect and drive the organization?

Ideal Structure of the Board

An effective board is not merely a collection of individuals but a coalition built on diversity, independence, and expertise. The ideal structure should embody a balance that reflects not only shareholder interests but also the company's broader social and regulatory responsibilities. A well-structured board is composed of a majority of independent directors—those who bring objectivity and a willingness to challenge assumptions without being constrained by direct ties to management. Their impartiality is crucial for holding the CEO and senior executives accountable. An independent board chair or lead director can also add a layer of separation that enhances oversight and allows for candid discussions on sensitive matters. Specialized committees—particularly in audit, risk, and compliance—are also critical to the board's effectiveness. The audit committee, for instance, should be composed of individuals with a deep understanding of finance and accounting. Similarly, a risk and compliance committee is essential to anticipate and manage potential threats, ranging from regulatory breaches to reputational fallout. **Skills that Directors Should Bring to the Table** Directors today are more than custodians of financial

prudence. They must possess a robust combination of technical knowledge, sector-specific insights, and broader competencies that can help the company navigate an increasingly complex corporate landscape.

First and foremost, directors should have an intimate understanding of the industry and a grasp of the strategic challenges their organization faces. Those with deep expertise in finance, legal, and regulatory frameworks are particularly valuable, as these areas form the backbone of compliance and corporate governance. However, knowledge of emerging fields—such as cybersecurity, data privacy, and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors—is equally important. Directors who can anticipate and advise on these issues help protect the organization's reputation and long-term viability. Increasingly, directors with diverse backgrounds in strategy, technology, and even behavioral psychology are being sought to enhance the board's collective judgment and decision-making capabilities. This diversity in skills is not merely a progressive ideal; it is a strategic necessity.

The Case for Communication and Reputation Management Expertise

In an era where a single misstep can cascade into a crisis, having a senior leader with expertise in communication and reputation management on the board is indispensable. Corporate scandals, once limited to traditional media, can now go viral globally within minutes, accelerating the risk to an organization's reputation and financial health. A director with experience in communications and reputation management can serve as the company's early warning system, identifying and mitigating risks before they evolve into full-blown crises. This individual can provide critical insight into stakeholder perceptions, helping the board preempt issues that could damage the company's standing. Beyond crisis management, directors with a communications background can play a strategic role in shaping the company's public narrative. By understanding the nuances of media dynamics and public sentiment, they can advise on transparency, corporate social responsibility, and other proactive measures that bolster trust among shareholders,

customers, and regulators alike. Furthermore, as the board's internal "conscience," a communications expert ensures that the company's actions align with its stated values. In a world where reputational capital is as valuable as financial capital, this guidance can be crucial in fostering long-term resilience and trust.

Risk Mitigation: Preparing for the Unknown

Boards are no longer reactive entities. They must anticipate risks, build crisis response frameworks, and establish safeguards well before a crisis emerges. Directors, therefore, need to understand that the responsibility for compliance and governance is inseparable from risk mitigation. In this respect, the inclusion of risk-oriented roles—such as a Chief Risk Officer or a compliance expert—is becoming increasingly common. These directors work closely with the audit and compliance committees to anticipate regulatory shifts, monitor industry trends, and prepare contingency plans that insulate the company from volatile economic or reputational threats. But it is not enough to have isolated risk management functions. Risk mitigation must be a shared ethos across the board, with every director recognizing their role in preserving the company's integrity and reputation.

A New Standard for Corporate Boards

Today's boards face mounting pressures to act as both protectors and architects of the future. As corporations navigate an environment that prizes accountability as much as profitability, the role of the board must evolve accordingly. An ideal board is not just a steward of governance and compliance; it is a forward-looking body, armed with the diversity of skills, independence, and insight needed to steer an organization through its most perilous challenges. Inclusion of communications and reputation management professionals on boards is not merely a trend; it is an acknowledgment of the realities of modern risk. This infusion of expertise brings a deeper, more proactive approach to protecting what lies at the heart of any corporation: its reputation, its people, and the trust of those it serves.

— Author is a senior regularly professional and can be reached at ighaznavi@gmail.com

Briefs

Trump says he wants...

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Washington (12)

Meanwhile, Republicans gained control of the US Senate again on Tuesday night by sweeping up seats in West Virginia and Ohio with the help of an unexpected battleground win from Nebraska. It is worth noting that it is the first time in four years for the Republican party to win a majority in the Senate. Incumbent GOP Sen Deb Fischer brushed back a surprisingly strong challenge from independent newcomer Dan Osborn. As tallies rolled in across a map that favoured Republicans, Democrats watched their efforts to salvage their slim majority slip out of reach. In Ohio, multiple US media outlets projected that Republican Bernie Moreno would defeat incumbent Democrat Sherrod Brown.

Kamala skips election...

FROM PAGE 01

At the election watch party hosted by Howard University students in Washington, DC, a mix of emotions filled the room as early projections placed Trump ahead. Disheartened by the numbers, some attendees left early. By Wednesday morning, CNN showed Trump with 266 electoral votes to Harris's 195, with the required 270 to win. Republican Donald Trump later claimed victory in the 2024 presidential race after Fox News projected he had defeated Democrat Kamala Harris, marking a significant political comeback four years after leaving office. The projections from other media outlets in the US also started coming in for Trump as held leads in key battleground states, including Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Georgia, with projections from Edison Research pointing to a likely win.

Pakistan leaders...

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speech was broadcast live for viewers around the world. While complete results of the US presidential polls are yet to be announced, Trump — based on several US media reports including those of Fox News — has claimed victory in the historic race that saw a Black-South Asian woman Harris compete against a former white president. The Democratic candidate is way behind in the race with 226 and Trump leading with 277 votes, as per the aforementioned American media. On the other hand, Omar Ayub Khan — the Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lawmaker — also extended congratulations to Trump and his VP-elect JD Vance on winning the polls.

Londoners left 'anxious and fearful'

FROM PAGE 01

"many Londoners will be anxious" and "fearful about what it will mean for democracy and for women's rights". He said they may also have concerns about what a Trump victory means for "the situation in the Middle East or the fate of Ukraine", while "others will be worried about the future of Nato or tackling the climate crisis".



KABIRWALA: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani offering Fateha over the sad demise of Mr. Khizar Hayat Hiraj late father of member National Assembly, Raza Hayat Hiraj. — DNA

Babar, Rizwan, Shaheen rise in ICC ODI, test rankings

On the contrary, Pakistan's Test captain Shan Masood and his deputy Saud Shakeel suffered sharp declines, both dropping two spots, to 59th and ninth respectively

STAFF REPORT

DUBAI: Pakistan's star trio of Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan and Shaheen Shah Afridi experienced significant strides in the latest update of the International Cricket Council (ICC) ODI and Test Rankings. As per the latest ODI Batting Rankings, ace Pakistan batter Babar extended his stay at the summit with 822 rating points, while opening batter Imam-ul-Haq suffered a slight dip, slipping from 11th to 12th with 666 rating points. Meanwhile, Fakhar Zaman maintained his position in the Top 10, sitting at ninth spot with 675 rating points. On the other hand, Shaheen Shah Afridi jumped three places to secure fourth position in the ODI Bowling Rankings. His brilliant outing with the ball in the first ODI against Australia, where he returned brilliant bowl-



ing figures of 2/43 in his 10 overs, earned him 655 rating points. However, despite leading Pakistan's strong show in the aforementioned fixture with three wickets, Haris Rauf suffered a decline, dropping

four places to 27th. Whereas, Naseem Shah remained firm at 69th spot with 436 rating points. In Test Batting Rankings, star batter Babar, despite missing Pakistan's remaining two Tests of the three-match series against England, climbed up to the 17th place. Besides him, wicketkeeper batter Rizwan and all-rounder Salman Ali Agha made notable strides. Rizwan's ranking improved by two places to 20th, while Agha moved up to 19th. On the contrary, Pakistan's Test captain Shan Masood and his deputy Saud Shakeel suffered sharp declines, both dropping two spots, to 59th and ninth respectively. Proving his mettle as an all-format bowler, Shaheen clung to his 15th spot in the Test Bowling Rankings, while the spin duo of Noman Ali and Sajid Khan also maintained their spots. Whereas, right-arm pacer Hasan Ali, who last played a Test earlier this year, moved up by one place to 35th.

Diaz hits hat-trick as Liverpool spoil Alonso's Return to Anfield

WEB DESK

LIVERPOOL: Xabi Alonso said his return to Anfield was bittersweet after Liverpool thrashed Bayer Leverkusen 4-0 on Tuesday, thanks to a Luis Diaz hat-trick, to go top of the Champions League table. Cody Gakpo was also on target as the Reds maintained their 100 percent record in Europe after four games. Alonso, a Champions League winner during his playing days in the Liverpool midfield, turned his back on succeeding Jurgen Klopp to remain at Leverkusen after leading them to an unbeaten German league and cup double last season. The Spaniard's name was chanted by the home support in the closing stages. Liverpool, though, are not left wondering what might have been as Arne Slot continued his stunning start as manager with a 14th win in 16 games in all competitions.

Expectations from Trump return

FROM PAGE 01

Pakistan and the U.S., where mutual interests in counterterrorism and stability may once again come into focus. Furthermore, economic cooperation is an area that Pakistan hopes to expand under Trump's new term. Although Trump's previous administration did not prioritize economic engagements with Pakistan, his policies often leaned toward bilateral deals that could offer opportunities for countries willing to engage. Pakistan may seek more favorable terms in trade and investment, especially in sectors such as agriculture, technology, and renewable energy. With Pakistan facing economic challenges, a focus on strengthening trade ties with the U.S. could be crucial. Additionally, Pakistan hopes that Trump's administration will acknowledge Pakistan's importance as a strategic partner in South Asia, a region becoming increasingly vital to global geopolitics. The Middle East remains a region of particular interest to Trump and his foreign policy team. The previous Trump administration recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital, brokered the Abraham Accords, and imposed heavy sanctions on Iran, decisions that polarized opinion across the region. Expectations are high regarding how Trump will now approach key Middle Eastern issues, particularly the Palestinian cause, Lebanon's stability, and Iran's regional influence. For Palestinians, there remains hope that the U.S. will play a more balanced role in fostering peace with Israel. Trump's earlier stance was clearly in favor of Israel, but his legacy includes the Abraham Accords, which, despite their controversies, showed that new forms of engagement were possible. Palestinians are hopeful that Trump might reconsider policies that previously appeared one-sided, encouraging a more just approach that acknowledges Palestinian sovereignty and rights.

In Lebanon, the hope is for greater American involvement in the country's recovery from years of economic instability, political gridlock, and social upheaval. Trump's administration previously placed pressure on Hezbollah and took a firm stance on limiting Iranian influence in Lebanon, moves that polarized local opinion. Moving forward, there is an expectation that the U.S. will offer more comprehensive support to help Lebanon stabilize without exacerbating sectarian tensions. By adopting a more balanced approach, Trump's administration could help mitigate internal divisions within Lebanon, supporting a recovery that respects the country's complex social fabric. The re-election of Trump brings with it concerns in Iran, as Trump's previous term saw the U.S. withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and a series of escalating sanctions that crippled Iran's economy. It remains uncertain whether Trump will pursue a renewed deal or maintain pressure on Tehran, a policy that often-strained relations across the region. Many hope that Trump will opt for dialogue over confrontation, potentially re-engaging Iran in discussions that prioritize regional stability over rivalry. Should Trump shift towards a more diplomatic approach, this could contribute significantly to easing tensions not only between the U.S. and Iran but also among other regional powers. Perhaps one of the most pressing areas for Pakistan and South Asia is the long-standing issue of Kashmir. During his last administration, Trump offered to mediate between India and Pakistan, a move that drew both criticism and support. For Pakistan, there is hope that Trump will leverage his influence to promote a just and peaceful solution to the Kashmir conflict, which has been a major source of tension between the two nuclear-armed neighbors. The Trump administration previously aligned closely with India, viewing it as a strategic partner

ner in countering Chinese influence in the region. However, if Trump seeks a more balanced approach, his administration could play a role in fostering dialogue on Kashmir, recognizing the aspirations of the Kashmiri people while encouraging diplomatic engagement between India and Pakistan. This would be a significant shift that could not only ease tensions in South Asia but also reinforce America's role as a mediator in global conflict resolution. Trump's party, the Republican Party, has generally championed strong military alliances and economic self-interest. However, the party's conservative principles also emphasize respect for national sovereignty and bilateral relations, two elements that may shape Trump's foreign policy this term. By focusing on bilateral ties rather than extensive multilateral engagements, Trump might prioritize individual relationships, enabling Pakistan and other nations to negotiate on equal terms. This emphasis on direct engagements could allow countries like Pakistan to advocate for their unique strategic interests and seek a more balanced partnership with the U.S. In sum, the world approaches Trump's return with mixed expectations, hopeful yet cautious. For Pakistan, there is the potential for stronger economic and security ties, a more balanced approach to regional conflicts, and support for diplomatic solutions in South Asia. In the Middle East, hopes revolve around a fairer approach to the Palestinian issue, constructive involvement in Lebanon, and potentially renewed talks with Iran. If Trump's administration takes a pragmatic approach, it could open new avenues for cooperation and understanding, fostering a legacy of stability and mutual respect that would benefit not only America but its global partners as well. As Trump prepares to navigate these complex issues, the world watches with anticipation, hoping his leadership will prioritize lasting peace and cooperation.

Pakistan, Azerbaijan pledge climate...

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and adaptation efforts. Pakistan, she noted, has been making significant strides in transitioning to renewable energy, particularly solar and wind, and aims to showcase its renewable energy initiatives at COP29. The ambassador expressed Azerbaijan's strong commitment to enhancing cooperation with Pakistan, particularly in the context of climate action. He emphasized the importance of closer bilateral ties between Azerbaijan and Pakistan in the areas of sustainable development, climate change, and regional cooperation, noting that the upcoming COP29 summit presents a significant opportunity for both countries to collaborate and advance their mutual interests in these critical areas. The meeting concluded with both sides reaffirming their commitment to working together to address the challenges posed by climate change and to strengthen global climate action efforts.

PM inaugurates model...

FROM PAGE 01

dispensary and playground for the village. The dispensary should be equipped with first aid, ultrasound, X-ray and maternity care facilities, he added. He also called for the third-party validation of the project to address the shortcomings and asked to add chimneys in all the newly constructed houses to avert any untoward incident, particularly during the winter. Wearing a traditional Gilgit cap Pakul and robe, he instructed Federal Education Minister Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui to supervise the construction of the school at the village. Prime Minister Shehbaz, who had also visited the flood-hit village in 2022 after it was completely destroyed, recalled teenage girl Qandeel and her father were among the only survivors of their family. He said that he had announced Rs5 million endowment fund for Qandeel that had increased to Rs6.7 million to support her expenditures and make her pursue her dreams. The prime minister appreciated GB Chief Minister Haji Gulbar Khan and other senior officers for supervising the project. Earlier, the prime minister also unveiled the plaque for the 216-kilometer Gilgit Shandur Road that would be completed by November 2025 and reduce the inter-city travel duration from eight hours to three hours. In his address, GB Chief Minister Gulbar Khan thanked the prime minister for supporting the GB people in distress.

Pakistan eyes 'Single B' credit...

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8th Edition of The Future Summit in Karachi, he outlined a comprehensive agenda, covering key economic challenges, fiscal policies, and necessary reforms to stimulate growth. He said that the credit ratings were upgraded during the first quarter of the fiscal year, indicating that the economic trajectory was right. "It is hoped that we will move towards a 'Single B' during this fiscal year so that we can rejoin the comity of nations," the FinMin said adding, "Our fiscal and current account deficits have turned into surpluses." According to a brokerage report, Pakistan's credit ratings are expected to improve further due to rising foreign exchange reserves, aiding future bond issuance in global capital markets.

Punjab govt orders schools'...

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Act, 1958. This law allows the government to "provide for the maintenance and restoration of order in areas affected by certain calamities and for the prevention and control of and relief against such calamities". On Tuesday, residents of Lahore struggled with hazardous air quality as the AQI hit 609, making it the most polluted city globally.

Muhammad Asif wins IBSF World Championship title

Asif dominated the opening frame with a score of 70-25, though Gharahgozlu levelled the contest by taking the second frame 94-7

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's ace cueist Muhammad Asif beat his Iranian opponent to claim the IBSF World Snooker Championship 2024 title for the third time. Asif, 42, entered the championship as a qualifier, he got a wild card nomination to the event through the Pakistan Billiards and Snooker Association (PBSA). After advancing through the qualification round, he showcased masterclass performances in both the main and

knockout stages to win the title. In the final, Asif faced Iran's Ali Gharahgozlu in a best-of-nine frames match. Asif dominated the opening frame with a score of 70-25, though Gharahgozlu levelled the contest by taking the second frame 94-7. Asif then regained control, winning the third frame 62-8 and excelling in the fourth frame with a flawless 106 clearance break - his sixth century break of the tournament - taking a 3-1 lead. He continued his strong performance in the fifth frame,

winning it 82-12 to solidify his lead with 4-1. Although Gharahgozlu mounted a brief comeback by winning the sixth and seventh frames, Asif secured victory in the eighth with a commanding 93-point break. This marks Asif's third individual world title, following his championships in 2012 and 2019, equalling India's Pankaj Advani's record of three individual world titles. Including his two team titles, Asif now holds five world titles, establishing himself as Pakistan's most decorated cueist.



Briefs

Gold prices decrease by Rs.1,000 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold decreased by Rs.1,000 and was sold at Rs.282,200 on Wednesday compared to its sale at Rs. 283,200 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.857 to Rs.241,941 from Rs. 242,798 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs. 221,780 from Rs. 222,565, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs. 3,430 and Rs. 2,940.67, respectively. The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$10 to \$2,727 from \$2,727 last day, the Association reported.—APP

PSX witnesses bearish trend, loses 282 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bearish trend on Wednesday, losing 282.88 points, a negative change of 0.31 percent, closing at 92,021.44 points as compared to 92,304.32 points on the last trading day. A total of 889,166,479 shares were traded during the day as compared to 752,664,527 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 30.474 billion against Rs. 32.827 billion on the last trading day. As many as 452 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 201 of them recorded gains and 200 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 51 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were Bank of Punjab with 88,684,180 shares at Rs 6.21 per share, Cnergyco PK with 71,639,690 shares at Rs 4.11 per share and Power Cement with 39,151,188 shares at Rs.7.20 per share. Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.233.34 per share price, closing at Rs 18,900.67, whereas the runner-up was Hoechst Pakistan Limited with Rs 93.00 rise in its per share price to Rs 2,353.00.—APP

Swiss 'burqa ban' to take effect from 2025

ZURICH: A contentious Swiss prohibition on facial coverings in public spaces widely known as the "burqa ban" will take effect on Jan. 1, the government said on Wednesday. Narrowly passed in a 2021 referendum in neutral Switzerland, and condemned by Muslim associations, the measure was launched by the same group that organized a 2009 ban on new minarets. The governing Federal Council said in a statement it had fixed the start of the ban, and that anyone who unlawfully flouts it faces a fine of up to 1,000 Swiss francs (\$1,144). The ban does not apply to planes or in diplomatic and consular premises, and faces may also be covered in places of worship and other sacred sites, the government said.—APP

Turkiye, Kyrgyzstan sign strategic partnership on Erdogan visit

Kyrgyzstan's President Sadyr Japarov said in a statement: "We have taken an important decision to raise the level of strategic partnership between Kyrgyzstan and Turkiye to that of a 'comprehensive strategic partnership'"

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan: Turkiye and Kyrgyzstan on Tuesday agreed to a "comprehensive strategic partnership," boosting defense ties, during an official visit to the Central Asian state by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Ankara is strengthening its presence across the region,

as it seeks to compete with the likes of Russia and China for influence. Erdogan regularly visits Central Asia and will on Wednesday take part in a summit of the Organization of Turkic States, a Turkish-led initiative to promote its culture and ties across several former Soviet republics. Kyrgyzstan's

President Sadyr Japarov said in a statement: "We have taken an important decision to raise the level of strategic partnership between Kyrgyzstan and Turkiye to that of a 'comprehensive strategic partnership.'" The two sides signed 19 agreements in areas including energy, defense and

the fight against terrorism. Japarov hailed "Kyrgyz-Turkish cooperation in the field of defense and the potential for further development." Amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Turkiye has stepped up military cooperation with Central Asian states, a challenge to Moscow's historic suprema-

cy in the region. Turkiye was the third-biggest investor in Kyrgyzstan in the first half of 2024, behind Russia and China. But it lags in terms of trade, accounting for 3.8 percent of Kyrgyzstan's imports and exports, against 34.2 percent for China and 19.5 percent for Russia.—Agencies



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb addresses the 8th Edition of The Future Summit in Karachi, discussing Pakistan's economic prospects and future financial strategies.

Philippines says joint maritime exercises rein in China

MANILA: Joint naval exercises held frequently by the Philippines, United States and other Western powers are helping rein in "aggressive" Chinese actions in the South China Sea, a Filipino military official said Wednesday. Beijing has for years sought to expand its presence in the disputed waterway, brushing aside an international ruling that its claim to most of the sea has no legal basis. In recent months, China has deployed navy, coast guard and so-called maritime militia forces - allegedly Chinese fishing vessels - in a bid to bar the Philippines from a trio of strategically important reefs and islands in the South China Sea. But those efforts were absent during the 10 instances this year when the Philippines, United States and others were conducting joint patrols dubbed Multilateral Maritime Cooperative Activity (MMCA), the Philippine Navy said Wednesday. "During the conduct of MMCAs, there have been no observed coercive and aggressive actions by the (People's Liberation Army) Navy, Coast Guard or the maritime militia," Rear Admiral Roy Vincent Trinidad, spokesman for South China Sea issues, told reporters on the sidelines of a Manila security forum. The lull was observed for "a few days before and during, and a few days after" the exercises, he said, adding more joint naval drills could be expected in 2025. Violent encounters with Chinese vessels typically occur during Philippine resupply missions to its remote garrisons in the area. In Beijing, foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning stressed "China has sovereignty over the South China Sea islands and their adjacent waters" and "we safeguard our sovereign rights and interests in accordance with domestic and international law". She added: "Making a show of force and provoking confrontation in the South China Sea will only escalate tensions and undermine regional stability." While Washington and its allies have avoided taking sides in the territorial dispute, they say Chinese actions threaten freedom of navigation essential for trade, with trillions of dollars passing through the waterway each year.—APP

Bangladesh records rise in skilled migration with KSA

DHAKA: The migration of skilled Bangladeshi workers abroad has been on the rise since the beginning of the year, with most seeking employment in Saudi Arabia's giga-projects. Out of almost 700,000 who sought employment abroad this year, more than 374,000 went to Saudi Arabia, which since 2017 has been the preferred destination among Bangladeshi expats. The Kingdom was followed by Malaysia and Qatar, according to the latest data from the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training. "Due to several ongoing giga-projects, Saudi Arabia is in high demand for migrant workers," BMET additional secretary Shah Abdul Tarique told Arab News. "Recently, we noticed an increase in the export of skilled migrants. Many of our construction workers go to Saudi Arabia under skilled categories. There are many drivers and electricians also employed as skilled workers." Saudi Arabia has launched a number of giga-projects under its Vision 2030 transformation plan, including the multi-billion-dollar NEOM smart city that is overseen by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Saudi officials launched the Workers' Recruitment and Skill Verification Program in Bangladesh last February, aimed at advancing the professional competence of employees in the Saudi labor market. It focuses on several professions, including plumbers, electricians and construction workers. BMET had set up at least 150 technical centers upon the program's launch, offering free training to support prospective Bangladeshi migrant workers seeking employment in the Kingdom. "We are also focusing on preparing the training centers more with market-driven equipment and logistics," Tarique said.—APP

OICCI leads pre-COP29 dialogue on private sector climate action

The dialogue included keynotes from prominent figures like Samuel Rizk, Resident Representative of UNDP Pakistan, who shared insights on innovative financial instruments to attract climate capital

ISLAMABAD: As Pakistan confronts the pressing challenges of climate change, the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) organized a high-level dialogue at the 27th Sustainable Development Conference to foster private sector-led solutions for green financing and climate resilience. The Pre-COP29 Policy Dialogue brought together leaders from the private sector, government, and international organizations to address the role of corporate investment in advancing Pakistan's climate goals said a news release. Highlighting the private sector's role in climate action, OICCI Senior Vice President & Nestlé Pakistan CEO Jason Avance called for a strategic response from the business community. "Climate change is a reality we cannot ignore," Avance said addressing the session. "As we prepare for COP29, the private sector has a critical role to play, and OICCI remains committed to mobilizing the investments and technologies necessary to make Pakistan more climate-resilient. Our goal is to bridge the \$152 billion adaptation financing gap by making green finance and sustainability a core focus. The devastating 2022 floods, which displaced nearly eight million people and caused \$15 billion in damages, underscore the urgency of investing in sustainable solutions. OICCI Secretary General M Abdul Aleem reinforced the need for private investment in these areas. "Climate change is not just an environmental issue but an economic and social challenge that threatens our stability," he said. He said "OICCI has a longstanding commitment to sustainability, and through green financing, our members can be part of a solution that benefits both the planet and our economy." Dr Abid Suleri, Executive Director of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), emphasized the value of public-private partnerships in achieving Pakistan's climate objectives. "Our shared goals can only be realized through a concerted effort," Suleri remarked. "By creating policies that incentivize investment and enable the private sector, we can close critical financing gaps and strengthen Pakistan's climate resilience." The dialogue included keynotes from prominent figures like Samuel Rizk, Resident Representative of UNDP Pakistan, who shared insights on innovative financial instruments to attract climate capital. Panelists from leading corporations such as Unilever Pakistan, Coca-Cola Company, HBL, and Engro Foundation discussed their sustainability initiatives and explored ways to enhance public-private collaboration in green finance. The event underscored OICCI's significant contributions toward climate action, including its role at COP28 and its commitment to advocating for sustainable practices. OICCI members collectively contributed over Rs13 billion to corporate social responsibility in 2023, with Rs1.5 billion specifically earmarked for environmental protection. As Pakistan heads toward COP29, the OICCI remains committed to supporting national climate goals through actionable steps. With plans to continue advocating for sustainable business practices, the organization aims to leverage this platform to drive meaningful change.—APP

Modi greets Trump on historic election victory

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Donald Trump for a "historic election victory" Wednesday, adding that he was looking forward to working with the vote frontrunner. "Heartiest congratulations my friend @realDonaldTrump on your historic election victory," Modi wrote on social media platform X. "As you build on the successes of your previous term, I look forward to renewing our collaboration," he added. "Together, let's work for the betterment of our people and to promote global peace, stability and prosperity." Trump and Hindu-nationalist Modi enjoy warm relations, and Trump also has a sizable following among right-wing groups in India, who see him as a kindred spirit aligned with their hostility towards Muslims. The pair heaped praise on each other in a joint appearance at a stadium in Houston in 2019, touting a close, personal alliance in front of tens of thousands of Indian-Americans.—APP

Iranian Revolutionary Court sentences 4 to death over spying for Israel

DUBAI: Four people were sentenced to death by a revolutionary court in northwestern Iran over charges of spying for Israel, the semi-official Fars news agency reported on Wednesday. Fars said three of the defendants - whose nationalities it did not give - were accused of helping Israel's spy agency Mossad move equipment used in the 2020 assassination of Iranian nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh. Fakhrizadeh was viewed by Western intelligence services as the mastermind of a covert Iranian program to develop nuclear weapons capability. The Islamic Republic has long denied any such ambition. The Jewish Chronicle newspaper reported in February 2021, citing intelligence sources, that Fakhrizadeh was killed by a one-ton gun smuggled into Iran in pieces by Mossad agents, both Israeli and Iranian nationals.—APP

Russia's grain policies help Ukraine secure sales

HAMBURG/CAIRO: Russia's curbs on wheat exports have inadvertently helped Ukraine secure lucrative sales to Egypt this week while also inflating prices for the world's top importer, traders said. Egypt's state grains buyer GASC bought 290,000 metric tons of wheat in an international tender on Monday. The purchase included 120,000 tons from Ukraine as well as 120,000 tons from Romania and 50,000 tons from Bulgaria. Russia, the world's top wheat exporter and Egypt's most important supplier, was kept out of the sale due to unofficial policies to prevent a price spike at home as the country seeks to combat inflation partly fueled by military spending.—APP

SDGs in Pakistan is great initiative of the United Nations

The SDGs address 17 core areas, each targeting specific issues such as poverty eradication, health, education, gender equality, and environmental sustainability

MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI



ISLAMABAD: The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), an initiative led by the United Nations, aim to address key global challenges such as poverty, inequality, health, education, and environmental sustainability. For a country like Pakistan, these goals are not only

aspirational but also crucial for its overall development and well-being. In 2016, Pakistan committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by adopting the SDGs as part of its national development agenda. This commitment was solidified through a unanimous resolution in the National Assembly, signifying the nation's dedication to these goals. The SDGs address 17 core areas, each targeting specific issues such as poverty eradication, health, education, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. Pakistan's prioritization of these goals reflects the recognition that sustainable development is essential for addressing socio-economic disparities and promoting long-term national prosperity. To support these objectives, the government established SDG Support Units at

the federal and provincial levels to oversee the planning, implementation, and monitoring of SDG initiatives. The Ministry of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, alongside Provincial Planning and Development Departments, has been instrumental in directing efforts towards achieving the SDGs. The SDG Framework, designed in 2018, offers a cohesive approach to integrating SDG-related priorities into policy-making at both national and provincial levels. In 2018, the Government of Pakistan and the UN signed the UN Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDP), also known as the Pakistan One United Nations Programme III (OP III) 2018-2022. This strategic document was the result of extensive consultations with various stakeholders and aligns closely with Pakistan's devel-

opmental priorities. The OP III serves as a guiding framework, targeting ten key outcomes across thematic areas such as poverty reduction, health, education, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. Through this framework, UN agencies in Pakistan have been collaborating closely with the government to address some of the country's most pressing issues, contributing directly to the progress of the SDGs. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is critical in assessing Pakistan's progress toward achieving the SDGs. Effective M&E mechanisms ensure that initiatives are not only implemented but also measured for their real impact on the ground. In Pakistan, there are concerns about whether monitoring efforts rely too heavily on progress reports and lack rigorous on-site eval-

uations. For instance, while many government reports highlight successes, discrepancies often arise between reported achievements and on-the-ground realities. To bridge this gap, stronger M&E frameworks and independent assessments are needed to ensure that data is accurate and that resources are being used efficiently. The establishment of SDG Support Units has been a positive step, providing a systematic approach to tracking progress. However, challenges remain in ensuring that data collected reflects true progress and is used effectively for decision-making. Greater transparency in M&E processes and public access to progress data are crucial for building trust and accountability. Misinformation and negative perceptions about the SDGs are prevalent in Pakistan. Some cit-

izens question whether SDG-related efforts genuinely improve lives or if progress is merely exaggerated in official reports. It is essential to address these concerns by ensuring transparency in reporting and disseminating accurate information about SDG achievements and challenges. Public awareness campaigns, media engagement, and community outreach can help clarify misconceptions, foster trust, and encourage active participation in SDG initiatives. Developing robust, transparent, and participatory M&E systems will enable Pakistan to monitor progress effectively, identify areas for improvement, and ensure accountability. The Sustainable Development Goals offer a framework for a more equitable, prosperous, and sustainable Pakistan. While progress has been made in various areas, significant

challenges persist. Achieving the SDGs by 2030 will require sustained efforts, and commitment to transparency and accountability. The UN's support, along with Pakistan's dedication to these goals, provides a strong foundation for continued progress. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a global commitment to improving quality of life. In Pakistan, these goals are increasingly impacting communities, with progress being made across multiple fronts. The journey to sustainable development is complex and requires the collective efforts of government, civil society, the private sector, and citizens to ensure that no one is left behind. By embracing these values and working collaboratively, Pakistan can make significant strides towards realizing the SDGs and securing a brighter future for its people.

Briefs

Spain unveils \$11 bln aid plan after catastrophic floods

VALENCIA: Spain on Tuesday announced an aid package worth 10.6 billion euros (\$11.5 billion) to rebuild regions devastated by its worst floods in a generation that have killed 219 people. The exceptional Mediterranean storm that lashed eastern Spain a week ago triggered surging torrents of muddy water that have left a trail of destruction and an unknown number of missing. Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez announced a series of measures including aid to small and midsize businesses, self-employed workers and households that have suffered deaths, incapacity and damage to homes and belongings. Tax relief and a three-month postponement to repaying mortgages and loans were also among the announcements, which Sanchez likened to the state's intervention during the Covid-19 pandemic to protect the economy and livelihoods. - Agencies

Senate body concerned over fraud cases in HEC

ISLAMABAD: Tuesday, while chairing the Senate Standing Committee on Federal Education and Professional Training, Senator Bushra Anjum Butt emphasized the need for timely allocations for the HEC's International Research Support Initiative Program (IRSIIP), noting that a final decision is anticipated by the end of December. Currently, 266 out of 315 candidate reviews have been completed, and the Chair stressed the importance of documenting this timeline to ensure results are released as scheduled. During the meeting, Senator Syed Masroor Ahsan also highlighted the issue of retired college teachers from FUUU University Karachi who are not receiving their due pensions and other allowances. It was directed that the matter be discussed in detail at the next meeting, and the Ministry will provide detailed information on the matter. The issue of derogatory remarks about Pashuns in an O-Level Urdu book, raised by Senator Bilal Ahmed Khan during the Senate sitting on October 18, 2024, was thoroughly discussed. It was reported that actions have been taken to ban the book, and the author has submitted a written apology. The Secretary of Education noted that while language is regulated, content varies by province.

Atif urges govt to announce comprehensive winter package

DNA
ISLAMABAD: President Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industries Atif Ikram Shaikh has appealed to the government to announce a comprehensive winter package for export-oriented industries to mitigate the challenges faced by the sector. However, FPCCI cautioned that any conditional eligibility criteria tied to incremental gas consumption last year would unfairly exclude many industries. "Several units did not have gas supply connections, making it impossible for them to meet this condition," Atif Ikram Shaikh explained. Therefore, he said, FPCCI demands that the government offer the winter package without conditions, ensuring equal access to all export-oriented industries. This inclusive approach will boost exports, employment, and economic stability. "We urge the government to prioritize the well-being of the entire export sector, rather than creating unnecessary distinctions," Atif Ikram Shaikh emphasized.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meeting with the Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E Jiang Zaidong during his visit of the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad. The Chinese ambassador, a few days ago had issued a statement raising concerns about the security of the Chinese nationals in Pakistan. - DNA

NATO chief congratulates Trump

BRUSSELS: NATO chief Mark Rutte on Wednesday congratulated Donald Trump, who has claimed victory in the US presidential election, and said his return to power would help keep the alliance "strong". Trump, who sealed a dramatic comeback to power after sweeping to victory against Democrat Kamala Harris, rattled NATO during the electoral campaign, threatening not to protect members who do not spend enough on defence. "His leadership will again be key to keeping our Alliance strong. I look forward to working with him again to advance peace through strength through NATO," Rutte said on social media. X. Trump's first term in power was a rollercoaster for NATO as the bulldozing president lambasted European allies such as Germany for weak defence spending and reportedly even mullied pulling Washington out. Some NATO members fear his second stint in office could see reduced US commitment to European security and an end to military support for Ukraine, as Trump has promised a quick deal with Russian President Vladimir Putin to end the war. - Agencies

Lahore's AQI soars past 1,000 to register worst air quality

ABID RAZA
LAHORE: Residents of Lahore continue to reel under thick smog which pushed the city's air quality index (AQI) beyond the 1,000-mark once again, placing the metropolis on top of the global charts for highest air pollution level Wednesday. Data from Swiss air quality monitor IQAir showed that Lahore's AQI, which measures a range of pollutants, was at "hazardous" 1,165 early morning. Meanwhile, the (PM2.5) pollutants - the fine particulate matter in the air that causes the most damage to health - reached 125.2 times higher than the World Health Organisation's (WHO) annual air quality guideline value. The AQI later dropped to 1,099, but still within "hazardous" zone with fluctuating figures. The city has been witnessing severe smog for days and had witnessed the AQI exceeding the three-figure mark to stand at 1,194 earlier in the week.

On Ukraine's front In Kyiv, hope and pragmatism compete after Trump's election

It was under Trump that the United States first sent weapons to Ukraine in its fight against Russia, in 2017. Those Javelin anti-tank missiles were crucial to Ukraine's ability to fend off the full-scale invasion in 2022. But Trump overall is wary of US involvement in foreign conflicts

NEWS DESK

KYIV: Soldiers in a Ukrainian artillery battery on the front lines of the country's east were only vaguely aware of American election results pointing to Donald Trump's victory Wednesday - but firm in their hopes for the next president of the United States. Their entrenched artillery battery fires on Russian forces daily - and takes fire nearly as often. Just the other day, one of their overhead nets snared a Russian drone. "I hope that the quantity of weapons, the quantity of guns for our victory will increase," the unit's 39-year-old commander, who goes by the name Mozart, said in the hours before Trump's win was confirmed. "We don't care who is the president, as long as they don't cut us off from help, because we need it." Mozart - who other soldiers Wednesday did not give his name in keeping with Ukrainian military protocol and has given musical monikers to the battlefield positions - is among many Ukrainians who hope that Trump will hold the line on American support for their country. Russian forces have recently made gains in the east, although the commander described the front-line situation as "static."

It was under Trump that the United States first sent weapons to Ukraine in its fight against Russia, in 2017. Those Javelin anti-tank missiles were crucial to Ukraine's ability to fend off the full-scale invasion in 2022. But Trump overall is wary of US involvement in foreign conflicts. Trump, who has touted his good relationship with President Vladimir Putin and called the Russian leader "pretty smart" for invading Ukraine, has repeatedly criticized American backing of Ukraine. He characterized Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky as "the greatest salesman on Earth" for winning US aid. Zelensky was among the first world leaders to publicly congratulate Trump and said the two discussed how to end "Russian aggression against Ukraine" when they met in September. "I appreciate President Trump's commitment to the 'peace through strength' approach in global affairs. This is exactly the principle that can practically bring just peace in Ukraine closer. I am hopeful that we will put it into action together," he wrote on a message on the social platform X. Trump has said repeatedly he would have a peace deal done between Ukraine and Russia within a day if elected, although he has not said how. During his debate with Vice

President Kamala Harris, he twice refused to directly answer a question about whether he wanted Ukraine to win - raising concerns that Kyiv would be forced to accept unfavorable terms in any negotiations he oversaw. In Kyiv, which comes under attack from Russian drones near daily, 18-year-old Viktoriia Zubrytska was pragmatic about her expectations for the next American president. She thinks Ukraine will be forced to give up territory in exchange for peace under a Trump presidency. But she said she preferred that to what she called the false hope that the Biden administration offered. "We will live in a world of facts where we will be certain on what awaits us," said the law student. "Certainty and objective truth is much better than lies and life in illusions." According to VoteCast, 74 percent of voters who supported Harris favored continuing aid to Ukraine, while only 36 percent of Trump's voters did. AP VoteCast is a survey of the American electorate conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago. On the front lines in Ukraine's eastern Kharkiv region, Andriy, who goes by "Rodych" or "Relative," was resigned to the fact that he has no power to influence the American vote. "We will come up with

something" whatever happens, he said. "We are a shield between Europe and Russia," he added. "Other countries do not understand what is happening here, they see it on TV and for them it is far away." America's NATO allies were also closely watching the election. France and Germany arranged a last-minute, top-level defense meeting Wednesday in Paris to discuss the results, and Ukraine is likely to be central to the meeting. The two leading powers in the European Union provide significant support to Ukraine to defend it against Russia's war. NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte, citing a "more aggressive Russia," also invoked Trump's motto of "peace through strength." Rutte praised Trump for his work during his first term to persuade countries in the alliance to ramp up defense spending. In Moscow, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said he had no information on whether Putin plans to congratulate Trump but emphasized that Moscow views the US as an "unfriendly" country. Peskov reaffirmed the Kremlin's claim that the US support for Ukraine amounted to its involvement in the conflict, telling reporters: "Let's not forget that we are talking about, the unfriendly country that is both directly and indirectly involved in a war against our state."

Pakistani-American Salman Bhojani wins Texas assembly election unopposed

No Republican ran against him, allowing Bhojani to win unopposed

TAXAS: Pakistani-American Salman Bhojani has secured a second term in the Texas State Assembly, winning unopposed. Representing District 92 as a Democrat, Bhojani hails from Karachi. He first assumed office on January 10, 2023. In the 2022 election, Bhojani defeated Republican opponent Joe Livingston, securing 20,182 votes to Livingston's 14,610. This year, he ran unopposed within his party, potentially due to his prior successful performance. A graduate of the University of Texas in Dallas with a law degree from Southern Methodist University, Bhojani's career includes roles as an attorney and city council member. - DNA

TAPI gas project not sustainable for Pakistan

"Without India, Pakistan would have to give a transit fee of \$500 million per annum apart from gas price"

MONITORING REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's top functionaries are pondering on quitting \$10 billion 1,849km Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas line project if India does not want to become a part of it, officials said. The transnational project without India would become TAP, which will not be sustainable for Pakistan anymore. Officials said, "One of the top men of Petroleum Division sensitised the [General Headquarters] GHQ some days back, informing them India's response is extremely lukewarm towards the project. Without India, Pakistan would have to give a transit fee of \$500 million per annum apart from gas price of \$7.5 per mmbtu."

Japan provides grant assistance to three NGOs

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has decided to provide grant assistance up to USD 194,493 (equivalent to around PKR 54 million) in total to three local NGOs for development projects in Pakistan. The grant contracts were signed between His Excellency, Mr. WADA Mitsuhiro, Ambassador of Japan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and representa-



tives of the three NGOs at the Embassy of Japan in Islamabad on November 6, 2024. The three NGOs that will implement the projects are (1) Friends Welfare Association (2) Al Khidmat Foundation Pakistan and (3) Al Mezan Islamic Model Secondary School. Friends Welfare Association will receive a USD 59,764 grant (equivalent to around PKR 16.64 million) to build a new water scheme in one of the most underdeveloped areas of Mansehra District. The project will benefit 6,000 people or around 895 households of the area. The project is related to the provision of clean drinking water to the people of that area by constructing water tanks and establishing water supply lines. This is expected to free women and children from the labor of fetching water. Al Mezan Islamic Model Secondary School will receive a USD 64,528 grant (equivalent to around PKR 17.87 million) to build a road with its supporting bridges over a big water channel which will provide a safe way to the school children to reach their schools. The project will benefit 2,540 people or around 300 households of the area by providing them a safe access to travel main city, markets and hospitals. Al Khidmat Foundation Pakistan will receive a USD 70,201 grant (equivalent to around PKR 19.5 million) to implement a project related to the provision of clean drinking water to the people of an industrial area, Faisalabad.

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