



# Islamabad POST

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**Israel has no reason to refuse a ceasefire with Lebanon: Borrell**

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**Donald Trump vows big tariffs on China**

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**Pakistan thrash Zimbabwe in 2nd ODI**

Detailed News On Page-06



**'Secret leadership' reining in PTI**

## No talks with PTI under any condition: Naqvi

Mohsin Naqvi further said, "They are armed with weapons and catapults, and the responsibility for any loss of life or property lies with one woman"

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi says the government has decided to hold no negotiations with the PTI protesters. Speaking to the media in Islamabad along with Information Minister Atta Tarar, Naqvi stated, "Everyone has witnessed the peaceful behavior of those protesting, and now there will be no negotiations with them." Mohsin Naqvi further said, "They are armed with weapons and catapults, and the responsibility for any loss of life or property lies with one woman. We are concerned about the citizens of Islamabad. Those arrested will not be granted bail, and anyone who reaches D-Chowk will be arrested." Earlier, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has claimed that the Imran Khan-founded party is being controlled by "a secret leadership" though some of its leaders are willing to hold talks. "Not the entire PTI leadership wants bloodshed and is willing to negotiate," said the security czar while talking to the media in Islamabad's D-Chowk on Tuesday. "Only a secret leadership is sitting there and controlling everything." The interior minister said that the "secret hand" won't be successful as "it is the root of chaos and has a different agenda". He urged the former ruling party not to go towards bloodshed. Naqvi also blamed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government for providing tear gas shells to the PTI protesters which are being used against the law enforcement agencies. The security czar said the police should tackle the current situation at their discretion. "IG has all the powers how to handle them. We had offered the protesters to go to Sangjani, however, they used dialogue to gain time and make

Continued on Page 06

**Bushra Bibi wants blood, bodies: Tarar says, Afghan miscreants had been placed at the forefront**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information Attaullah Tarar has castigated Bushra Bibi, the wife of PTI founder Imran Khan, over the violence during party's ongoing protest, saying that the former first lady wants blood and bodies. Information Minister Atta Tarar stated that PTI used poor children as a shield. He urged the opposition to not test the state's patience. He also said that Bushra Bibi should show courage and lead from the front, as firing a bullet is the easiest thing to do. Tarar further mentioned that Afghan miscreants had been placed at the forefront, and this was not a peaceful protest. "Shells have been fired at police officers. The state is not weak; we will maintain our authority." When asked about the ban on the party, Atta Tarar replied, "There is a procedure for banning a party, and it will be carried out when the time comes." Earlier, Federal Minister for Information,

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko exchanging joint communique in Islamabad. - DNA

**Kurram clashes' death toll rises to 99**

Overnight firing between rival tribes left 10 dead and 21 others wounded, say police

SHAMIM SHAHID

KURRAM: The death toll from the recent violence that has plagued the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Kurram district rose to 99 on Tuesday after the government-brokered seven-day truce was broken. The police, in a statement, said that overnight firing between rival tribes left 10 dead and 21 others wounded, taking the toll to 99 deaths, as violence escalated. An uptick in violence began last Thursday when two separate convoys travelling under police escort were ambushed, sparking two days of gun battles.

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**Capital schools, colleges to remain shut**

Notification extending closure of schools, colleges issued

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Educational institutions in the twin cities, Islamabad and Rawalpindi, will remain closed for a third consecutive day due to the ongoing protests by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), officials confirmed. A district administration official stated that the decision was made in light of the prevailing security situation. An official notification extending the closure of schools and colleges has been issued in this regard. The Private Schools

Continued on Page 06

**Pak, Belarus sign several MoUs**

**Pakistan, Belarus resolve for stronger trade, commerce ties**

The prime minister said that Pakistan greatly valued its relationship with Belarus

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and President of Republic of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko on Tuesday emphasized the importance of advancing political dialogue and strengthening inter-parliamentary relations. They also focused on expanding trade and economic cooperation, adopting a collaborative approach to regional economic integration and connectivity and enhancing the legal framework to facilitate bilateral collaboration, said a joint statement between the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Belarus. President of the Republic of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko had arrived on an official visit to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan at the invitation of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. During the visit, the two leaders comprehensively reviewed the full range of bilateral relations

Continued on Page 06

**Pak, China sign 13 MoUs on fostering joint ventures**

Pakistan Embassy Beijing, in collaboration with BOI, successfully hosted the third in a series of sector-specific B2B matchmaking meetings

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: Pakistani and Chinese companies on Tuesday signed 13 memorandums of understanding (MoUs) valued at US\$ 250 million on fostering joint ventures and investment partnerships in the animal fodder and fruits and vegetables processing sectors.

Continued on Page 06

### Briefs

**PTI protest Washington urges govt to respect HRs**

US State Department spokesperson calls on protesters to "demonstrate peacefully and refrain from violence"

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: Amid Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers' clashes with the law enforcement agencies (LEAs) personnel as the former press on towards Islamabad, the United States has called for restraint from both sides. The News reported on Tuesday. "We call on Pakistani authorities to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to ensure respect for Pakistan's laws and constitution as they work to maintain law and order," said US State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller while speaking during a press briefing on Tuesday.

**ATC grants six-day remand of Imran**

Judge Amjad Ali Shah directs authorities to present him before the court on Dec 2

COURT REPORTER

RAWALPINDI: An anti-terrorism court has extended physical remand of PTI founder Imran Khan by six days in the case related to inciting workers to violence. Judge Amjad Ali Shah directed the authorities to produce the former prime minister before the court on Dec 2. Public Prosecutor Zaheer Shah argued that Khan's lack of cooperation was hindering the investigation. The case was filed at the New Town police station, Rawalpindi, on Sept 28, accusing him of inciting workers for violent protests.

**Imran urges supporters to stand firm**

**Bushra pledges not to leave D-Chowk**

"I will be the last one to leave this place," Bushra Bibi vows to PTI supporters

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Bushra Bibi, wife of former prime minister Imran Khan, addressed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supporters who gathered at D-Chowk after crossing all government-imposed barriers on Tuesday. Speaking to the crowd, Bushra Bibi assured the attendees of her unwavering support for her husband's cause, stressing Khan's dedication to the people. She urged supporters to remain at D-Chowk until Khan joins them in person. "This is my promise to you," she stated firmly. "I will be the last one to leave this place, and I will not leave without Khan. If anyone tells you that I have left D-Chowk, know that it is untrue," she added. Meanwhile, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has lauded his party's supporters in Islamabad and D-Chowk, urging them to remain steadfast in their protests until their demands are met, reported Express News on Tuesday.

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**Miscreants want bloodshed, not revolution: PM**

PM said Pakistan cannot afford any form of chaos or bloodshed

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif condemned the recent attacks on law enforcement personnel, calling the actions of violent protesters a "clear attempt at bloodshed rather than revolution." He described the incidents as not part of a peaceful protest, but as an act of extremism. In a statement following the tragic deaths of four Rangers personnel, the PM Shehbaz expressed deep sorrow and

Continued on Page 06

**Funeral prayers of martyred 3 security personnel offered**

President, PM condemn as protestors' vehicles mow down security personnel



STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The funeral prayers of three security personnel, who embraced martyrdom during the ongoing protests in the capital, were offered at Chaklala Garrison, Rawalpindi. According to a statement issued by Inter Services Public Relation (ISPR), Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and COAS General Syed Asim Munir attended the funeral. The ISPR said three security personnel were martyred in a protest in Islamabad. The bodies of the martyred had been sent to their native areas where they would be buried with full military honour. Among the martyred included Naik Muhammad Ramzan Shaheed (age; 47 years, resident of District Karak), Sepoy Gul-fam Khan Shaheed (age; 29 years, resident of District Rawalpindi) and Sepoy Shah Nawaz Shaheed (age; 33 years, resident of District Sibi).

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# Fertilizer available at low prices across Punjab: CM

The CM said that 125 percent more stock of urea fertilizer than required is available, and 25 percent reduction in its price has been observed in the province. She said that the wheat cultivation target of 16.5 million acres across Punjab has been set and 82 percent of the target has been completed

DNA

LAHORE :Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said that for the first time, there is an abundance of fertilizer in Punjab in the Rabi season, and prices have also come down. Chairing a special meeting on agriculture here on Tuesday, she said 30 percent more stock of DAP fertilizer is available in Punjab, and 17 percent reduction in its price during the wheat season has been observed

for the first time.

The CM said that 125 percent more stock of urea fertilizer than required is available, and 25 percent reduction in its price has been observed in the province. She said that the wheat cultivation target of 16.5 million acres across Punjab has been set and 82 percent of the target has been completed. She added wheat cultivation target will be completed across the province by December 10. She highlighted wheat cultivation on 326,000 acres of government land across Punjab has been set.

The CM said 40,000 agriculture graduate interns are available to assist farmers in the field across the province, adding that applications have been invited for free grant of 1,000 green tractors and 1,000 land levelers for wheat farmers under Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's scheme.

CM Maryam Nawaz directed authorities concerned to improve wheat storage capacity across the province. She appreciated the Agriculture Minister and his team for their efforts in this regard.

## Weather change causes viral infections

SUKKUR :The number of patients with viral diseases like flu, chest infection and pneumonia has increased during the last one week. The government and private hospitals and clinics witnessed a rush of patients especially infants and children. According to the doctors, the current weather change is the cause of viral infections especially chest infection and fever in rural and urban parts of the interior of Sindh. Most of the patients especially children contracted viral diseases like influenza, bronchitis, nasal allergy, asthma, soar throat, chest infection, pneumonia, dry cough and scabies. Flu-related diseases have caught a large number of people particularly children and infants as patients with such diseases are seen in great numbers at the government as well as private hospitals. Additional Medical Superintendent, Khairpur Medical College Hospital (KMCH), Dr Syed Najaf Ali Shah while talking to state run news agency said that common cold and flu in children should not be taken lightly as these might lead to lower respiratory tract infections including pneumonia. He stressed the need to take additional care of the health of children in winter. He said that the parents should dress their children in warm clothes. "I also advise the parents not to overheat the children and just put sweaters and warm clothes as sometimes overheating is also not good for them. He said that one of the basic causes of various diseases is that people do not know how to safeguard the children. Dr Shah said if proper care was not taken, complications such as ear and sinus infections, pneumonia and high fever might occur. Dr Shabana Solangi when contacted said that most of the patients came here from the slum areas and complained that they could not keep their children warm because of electricity and gas load shedding. She said that severe cold and dry air may cause respiratory tract infections and as well trigger asthma among the people of all age groups. "It is a need of the time to create awareness among the public regarding protection from infections," she said. A prominent health expert, Dr Shazia Khan said that the people should use green tea, coffee and tea to avoid viral infections.—APP

## Daniyal condemns martyrdom of constable, attack on Rangers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, Barrister Daniyal Chaudhry, on Tuesday condemned the martyrdom of a Punjab Police constable and the attack on Rangers personnel on Srinagar Highway by PTI miscreants.

In a statement, Barrister Daniyal Chaudhry paid tribute to the martyrs and extended his condolences to the grieving families. Vowing to take strict action against the culprits, Chaudhry stated that the government would ensure the perpetrators of the attack are brought to justice. "The nation salutes the bravery of the martyrs who gave their lives in the recent attack, which was aimed at sabotaging the visit of the President of Belarus," Chaudhry said. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to preventing anti-state elements from succeeding in their malicious designs. "Those behind these attacks will be held accountable, and the sacrifices of the martyrs will not go in vain," he added.

## Belarus delegation visit to boost bilateral trade: Faisal

KARACHI : Faisal Moiz Khan, President of the North Karachi Association of Trade and Industry (NKATI), has welcomed the visit of the Belarusian delegation led by President Alexander Lukashenko, calling it a positive step for the economies of both countries. He stated that the visit of President Lukashenko and other members of the Belarusian delegation would enhance bilateral cooperation across various sectors, including trade. Faisal Moiz Khan expressed joy over the signing of eight trade agreements during the Pakistan-Belarus Business Forum and highlighted the vast opportunities for collaboration in sectors such as food,

pharmaceuticals, automotive, and tires. He further mentioned the demand for Belarusian tractors in Pakistan due to their durability and robustness. Agreements like the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the National Logistics Corporation and Belta-moz Service, as well as support from Biomedical Systems and Belmedpreparaty for collaboration in the pharmaceutical sector, are expected to yield positive outcomes. Faisal Moiz Khan expressed hope that these agreements would open new avenues for businesses in both countries, bring entrepreneurs closer, and support economic

growth. He also pointed out that a 2025-27 roadmap for enhancing trade between Pakistan and Belarus has been agreed upon, and both nations must take practical steps to ensure its success, leading to fruitful results and stronger trade ties. He added that whenever there are signs of improvement in the economy or other sectors, political crises emerge in the country. He urged the government and opposition parties to resolve issues at the table instead of engaging in confrontations on the streets. With the Belarusian delegation currently in Islamabad, any political turmoil could tarnish the country's reputation.—APP

## PRGMEA calls for enhanced focus on textile industry

LAHORE: The Pakistan Ready-made Garments Manufacturers & Exporters Association (PRGMEA) has emphasized the need for a collaborative approach in policymaking, uniting key stakeholders such as government ministries, academic institutions, and industrial bodies. These views were expressed by the PRGMEA North Zone Chairman Dr. Ayyaz Uddin, in a letter addressed to the Federal Minister for Commerce Mr. Jam Kamal Khan. The letters were also sent to the Standing Committees on Climate Change and Human Rights of the Senate and as

well as the National Assembly. He said that the textile industry, which contributes \$16.5 billion annually to Pakistan's exports and serves as a cornerstone for employment generation, faces increasing global pressure to align with Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles. Highlighting the importance of compliance with international frameworks like the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) and ILO conventions, Dr. Ayyaz called these evolving global standards both a challenge and an opportunity for

Pakistan's export sector. He pointed out that PRGMEA has taken a proactive step towards addressing the pressing challenges of social and environmental sustainability in Pakistan's textile sector. In his correspondence, Dr. Ayyaz recommended to engaging representatives from government, academia, and industry associations to develop actionable strategies for compliance and sustainability and Establishing two task forces under the National Compliance Center (NCC): one dedicated to textile export challenges and the other addressing non-textile



LAHORE: Commandant Pakistan Navy War College Rear Admiral Azhar Mahmood addressing inaugural session of 7th Maritime Security Workshop held under auspices of Pakistan Navy.

## Kundi condemns martyrdom of cops on Srinagar highway

PESHAWAR :Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Tuesday strongly condemned the martyrdom of Rangers and police personnel on the Srinagar Highway Islamabad, emphasizing that their sacrifices will never be in vain. In a statement, Governor Kundi expressed his deep sorrow and solidarity with the families and colleagues of the martyrs, sharing in their grief. "The sacrifices made by these brave personnel will never be forgotten," he said, stressing the importance of their service to the nation. Kundi further pointed out that the masterminds behind the May 9 incidents continue to pose a threat to the state, saying, "The masterminds behind May 9 attacks are still assaulting the state today." He labeled the recent attack on Rangers personnel, where a vehicle was driven into them, as part of a larger agenda of a hostile group. "Running over Rangers personnel with a vehicle is a mission of anti-state elements," he added. The Governor also accused certain political groups of fostering terrorism, particularly highlighting the role of a party that has been accused of supporting militants in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while engaging in terrorism activities in Islamabad.—APP

## 7th Maritime Security Workshop commences

The workshop is structured in two phases: the first phase comprises academic sessions at the War College, while the second phase includes a field tour to various naval commands and coastal installations along the Makran Coast

DNA

LAHORE: Seventh edition of the Maritime Security Workshop (MARSEW-7) commenced at Pakistan Navy War College, Lahore. The workshop was inaugurated by Commandant of Pakistan Navy War College, Rear Admiral Azhar Mahmood. MARSEW is a national-level forum organized under the auspices of the Pakistan Navy, with the theme "Secure Seas, Prosperous Pakistan." The workshop aims to enhance knowledge and understanding of maritime security, geopolitical dynamics in the broader Indian Ocean region, and the Blue Economy, while also exploring Pakistan's untapped maritime potential. It seeks to highlight the challenges and opportunities in Pakistan's maritime sector and its critical role in support-

ing the national economy. This forum provides a shared platform for participants from the public and private sectors, including senators, parliamentarians, senior bureaucrats, maritime industry professionals, business leaders, academia, think tanks, and media representatives, to deliberate on pressing national maritime issues. A total of 38 participants from the public, private, and military sectors are taking part in MARSEW-7. In his welcome address, Rear Admiral Azhar Mahmood outlined the purpose of the workshop, emphasizing the need for Pakistan's intelligentsia to shift its strategic focus towards the sea. He highlighted the developments in the broader Indian Ocean region and their implications for Pakistan's national security. The Commandant also addressed the

wide-ranging challenges faced by the Pakistan Navy and its unwavering commitment to safeguarding the nation's maritime interests. The workshop is structured in two phases: the first phase comprises academic sessions at the War College, while the second phase includes a field tour to various naval commands and coastal installations along the Makran Coast. Participants will also visit Gwadar Port to witness ongoing development projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Since its inception in 2017, the Maritime Security Workshop has been held annually at Pakistan Navy War College. It plays a vital role in fostering an integrated approach to developing Pakistan's maritime sector and advancing the Blue Economy.

## Special desks to increase women participation in governance

PESHAWAR: Deputy Director (Communication) KP Information Commission, Sayed Saadat Jahan has said that the establishment of women facilitation desks will increase the participation of women in governance. He expressed these views while imparting training on the Right to Information arranged for the newly appointed women staff of the facilitation desks on

Tuesday. The training was arranged in collaboration with GIZ & SRSP at the Human Resource Development Centre of SRSP Office for the women facilitators of the districts of Kohat, Swat, Mohmand and Khyber. He said that citizen engagement is considered to be a key feature to improving public service delivery which is one of the core objectives of RTI. For this

purpose, he said that open courts and the establishment of facilitation desks in the offices of the Deputy Commissioners is a platform being implemented as an offline redressal mechanism to forward complaints on governance. Saadat impressed upon the need for a complaint management system and increased visibility of women in government affairs.—APP.

## Progress on wheat cultivation campaign reviewed

Ashiq Hussain Kirmani also emphasized that due to the chief minister's policies to promote wheat production, agricultural inputs are abundantly available, significantly reducing farmers' production costs

DNA

LAHORE :Punjab Agriculture & Livestock Minister Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani presided over an important meeting at Agriculture House, Lahore, to review progress on the wheat cultivation campaign and other major projects, including the Chief Minister's Kissan Package. Secretary Agriculture, Punjab, Ifikhar Ali Sahoo, was also present. During the briefing, the minister was informed that wheat cultivation has been completed on 1 crore 20 lakhs acres across Punjab. All resources are being mobilized to meet the wheat cultivation target. Fertiliser, including DAP are available in ample quantity across the province and accessible to farmers at controlled rates.

Applications have been acquired from farmers sowing wheat on larger areas under the Chief Minister's "Grow More Wheat" Package, with an online application deadline of December 15, 2024. Additionally, strict monitoring is in place to ensure the availability of quality wheat seeds and fertilizers in markets. It was further briefed that 13 lakh 21 thousand applications have been received for the Chief Minister's Kissan Card, with verification completed for 500,000 farmers. Through this card, agricultural inputs worth Rs 24 billion have been purchased across the province, with 92 per cent used for fertiliser purchases. The minister praised the Chief Minister's Kissan Card as a historic, farmer-friendly project led by the chief minister of Punjab, which now

allows farmers to withdraw up to 30 per cent cash. Farmers in non-digitised areas can also apply for the Kissan Card, with the target number of cardholders increased from 500,000 to 750,000. Ashiq Hussain Kirmani also emphasized that due to the chief minister's policies to promote wheat production, agricultural inputs are abundantly available, significantly reducing farmers' production costs. The purchasing process through the Kissan Card is being monitored, with strict action against any dealer involved in overcharging. Farmers can contact Punjab Agriculture Department's Agricultural Helpline at 0800-17000 for any complaints related to the Kissan Card. During the meeting, the minister directed to closely monitor the purchases made via the Kissan






Card and stringent oversight against artificial shortages or price hikes of seeds, fertilizers, and agricultural pesticides. Strict action will be taken against non-compliant dealers. Under the Chief Minister's Green Tractor Program, allotment letters have been issued to 9,354 out of 9,500 successful farmers. Farmers have until December 5 to deposit their share of the payment for tractors at Bank of Punjab branches, with 3,363 farmers having already done so. Notably, 65 percent of successful applicants in the Green Tractor Program are small farmers. Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani was also informed that 8,000 electric and diesel-operated tube wells across Punjab will be converted to solar power under the Chief Minister's Solarization of Tube Wells Program. Farmers unable

to submit digital applications may apply through the Water Management offices. The CM has approved Rs 2.5 billion for this programme, with allocations and draws conducted at the district level. Under the Chief Minister's Smog Control Program, 1,000 Super Seeders have been provided to farmers. This year, over 75,000 acres of rice stubble have been scientifically managed with Super Seeder usage, preventing field burning. By July 2025, an additional 4,000 Super Seeders will be distributed to further reduce stubble burning. Under the Chief Minister's program to promote tomato and onion cultivation, the targets for seasonal cultivation have been achieved, with tomatoes exceeding the area target.

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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

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



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PIA Cargo.....9280979  
Railway Enquiry.....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 vows educational reforms to meet 21st-century needs

The minister said the government was pursuing a goal of equipping the country's youth with modern education, enabling them to compete internationally and contribute to national development

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal expressed a strong commitment on Tuesday to reform Pakistan's memorization-based education system and develop a world-class curriculum during the current tenure of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government. "With the support of all stakeholders and experts, we will develop a curriculum that aligns with 21st-century requirements," he said while addressing the National Curriculum Summit titled "Empowering the Future by Reviewing Existing Curricula to Integrate Skill and Technology," organized by the National Curriculum Council (NCC) and the Inter-Board Coordination Commission (IBCC). The minister said the government was pursuing a goal of equipping the country's youth with modern education, en-



abling them to compete internationally and contribute to national development. Ahsan Iqbal also expressed a desire to establish a state-of-the-art Teachers' Training Center to improve education quality and produce skilled professionals who meet contemporary needs. The Ministry of Education

has already been tasked with this initiative. He said the PML-N government had initiated this project during its previous tenure but was unable to complete it due to political instability. The center, in collaboration with provincial education departments, is expected to be the best in South Asia, providing students with high-quality education focused on enhancing critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving and teamwork. "It will be a paradigm shift from memorization-based education," Iqbal said, adding that the initiative would also reform the existing examination system. Ahsan Iqbal

stressed that memorization-based education was outdated in the modern era, where innovation and creativity were essential for development. He said the country could not achieve progress and prosperity without improving education standards and developing human resources. "Today's era is not about muscle power; it's about brain power. Nations with superior brain power will succeed. The first step toward national progress is improving the education system." Commenting on the debate about whether the medium of imparting education should be Urdu or English, the minister suggested a blend of both, which he termed "Urduish." He proposed using Urdu for the conceptual part of education and English for achieving global competence. "There should be blended learning. We need to transition from robotic learning to conceptual learning." "Educational power guarantees progress and prosperity for any nation and society," he remarked.

## Economic stability contingent upon political stability

The minister noted that multiple attempts were made in the past, including offering consultations on a proposed "charter of economy," but these initiatives faced resistance

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, emphasized on Tuesday that achieving economic stability is contingent upon political stability. Talking to a private news channel, the minister highlighted the government's repeated

efforts to resolve political issues through dialogue. He noted that multiple attempts were made in the past, including offering consultations on a proposed "charter of economy," but these initiatives faced resistance. "The founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

(PTI) opted for a path of disruption rather than peace," said Sheikh. Minister stressed the urgent need to attract foreign investors, pointing out that the current political and security situation has deterred investment and severely impacted local

businesses. Sheikh also criticized PTI for organizing protests during key economic and diplomatic activities. He reiterated the government's commitment to fostering stability and creating an environment conducive to investment and growth.—APP

## PTI's involvement in lawlessness puts its party status in doubt: Siddiqui

ISLAMABAD: Senator Irfan Siddiqui, the parliamentary party leader of PML-N in the Senate and chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, on Tuesday questioned PTI's status as a political party due to its involvement in terrorism, lawlessness, and anti-Pakistan actions. In a statement shared on his social media platform X, Siddiqui said the time has come for clear and decisive action regarding PTI, warning that any further delay could be very costly. Siddiqui stressed that PTI's actions, especially after May 9, 2023, have gone too far, and it is now time for a clear and decisive decision regarding the party's status. Soon, a decision must be made on whether a group that fosters insecurity, lawlessness, sedition, corruption, murder, destruction, and an anti-Pakistan agenda deserves to be recognized as a "political party." He emphasized that Pakistan has never seen a political party that has waged war against the federation using provincial power, resulting in the deaths of officials and injuries to hundreds. "In Pakistan's 77-year history, which political party has used provincial power to wage war against the federal government, open fire, deploy tear gas, kill several officials, and injure hundreds?" Siddiqui stated that PTI ceased to be a political party after May 9, 2023, yet it was granted an extended reprieve. As a result, a ruthless force carrying a political agenda has reached Islamabad, spilling blood and bringing with it a May 9 that far surpasses the original event. When the state, fulfilling its constitutional duty by handling funerals and collecting the bodies, responds, the riotous group cries out for "political rights" under the guise of persecution.—APP

## Power suspension schedule

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO)'s spokesman said that system maintenance/development work is in process. Therefore power supply of below mentioned feeders/areas will be temporarily suspended as per given schedule. On 28th November 2024, from 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Islamabad Circle, Bhara Kahu, I&II, Athal, Shahpur, Ghauri Garden, New Marvi, Tamir, Pindorian, UC Road, Marvi, Orchard Scheme, CDA Pump, Aabpara, F-10/2, G-9/M, Interna-

tional School, I-11/2, G-11/4, F-11 Tower, T&T, Sunny Bank, Cecil, Nimble, Upper Topa, TDCP, Treat Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Lakho Road, NRC, Golra, Pirwadhai, Katarian, Holy Family, F-Block, E-Block, Afandi Colony, Muzammil Town, Al Noor Colony, Service Road, Dhok Hakmdad, Committee Chowk, Major Masood, Jamia Masjid, Gowalmandi, Amin Town, Asghar Mall, MH, Ameer Hamza Colony, Benazir Bhutto Shaheed Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Topi Pump, Tipu Road,

Morgah, Fuji Foundation, Mehboob Shaheed, Mohra Nagyal, Wilayat Complex, X-Layer, AOWHS, Dhamial, UC Lakhani, Gulshan Saeed, Hyder Road, Tipu Road, Makka Chowk, CBRI, Askari 14, Kalyal, Dhamial, Qureshiabad, Cantt, Rajar, RCCHI, V, Kahota City, Dubiran, Ghazan Khan, Chowk Pindori, Pind Jatla, Karnab Kaswal, Nishan Haider, CB Khan, II, Mandra-II Feeders, Attock Circle, Mush-taq Hussain, Jalala, Behlot, Shahia, Rashid Minhas, AWC Housing, Munirabad, Shafi Chauhan, Pathar, Gar, Babar-

akhi, Kohsar Valley, Valley, Hameed Kamra Rural, Mansar, Ghor Ghashti, 3 Mela, Shadi Khan, PM Housing Colony, Chhaji Mar, Qutbal, Nara, Dharnal, Galial, Fateh Jang, Laniwala, Amanpur Feeders, Jhelum Circle, F-5 Jeddah, Zebar Shaheed, F-3 Gul Afshan, Mandi Bhalwal, Shamsabad, Akram Shaheed, F-8 Civil Line, Pakhwal, M Riaz Shaheed, Dinah.1 Bakrala, Bhagwal, New Chakiam, Chautala, Dinah.4 City, Gujjar Khan, Mitwa, Ghauri Dhamek, Kalia, Mal Awan, Kantrila, Islamabad Feeders, Chakwal Circle, Tharpal, Line Park, Megan, Khairpur, Islamia Chowk, Dera Muslim, Dhadiyal Rural, Malhal Mughal, Bhikri, Darya Jalap, Tuba, PD Khan, Sagarpur, Pipli, Dharnal, Sukho.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held a meeting with a delegation from the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB), led by its Chairman, Dr. Andreas, at the Finance Division.—DNA

## Muqam condemns attack on Rangers, police personnel

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON Engineer Amir Muqam strongly condemned the attack on Rangers and police personnel on Srinagar Highway by miscreants. Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs paid tribute to four martyred Rangers personnel and police constable Mubashir, said a press release. Amir Muqam expressed heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the families of the martyrs. Engineer Amir Muqam prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured personnel. Nation salutes the martyred personnel, Amir Muqam. Federal Minister paid tribute to police constable Mubashir, who was martyred in the violence of protesters near Hakla. Protesters who resorted to violence will be brought to justice, Engineer Amir Muqam.—APP

## Solidarity expressed with families of slain personnel

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Tuesday expressed his deep sorrow and heartfelt condolences over the tragic incident on the Srinagar Highway that claimed the lives of Rangers and police personnel by the violent protesters. Condemning the unfortunate event, he extended his sympathies to the families of the martyrs, assuring them of the nation's unwavering support during this difficult time. "I stand in solidarity with the grieving families of the martyrs," he said. Recognizing the immense sacrifice of the Shaheed personnel, the Speaker praised their professionalism and dedication to duty, highlighting their ultimate sacrifice in the service of the nation. "The brave martyrs laid down their lives while fulfilling their responsibilities, and their sacrifices will always be remembered," he added. The speaker also directed authorities to ensure that the injured personnel receive the best medical care possible, emphasizing the importance of their swift recovery. He prayed for the elevation of the ranks of the martyrs and for their families to find patience and solace in this time of immense grief.—APP

## Suthra Punjab programme functional in Pindi's 4 UCs

RAWALPINDI: The outsourcing of the cleanliness and sanitation system under the 'Suthra' Punjab programme is in progress in four Union Councils (UCs) and zero waste would be ensured in cities and villages through, the 'Suthra' Punjab programme. According to a district administration spokesman, the 'Suthra' Punjab programme was launched on the directives of Chief Minister Punjab and it is a gift for the people. Rawalpindi Waste Management Company is taking solid steps regarding 'Suthra' Punjab programme, he added. The environmental friendly sustainable measures are being taken under 'Suthra' Punjab programme, he informed. All the required resources are being provided by the Punjab Government, after which there should be no problem in ensuring 100 percent cleanliness. He said that outsourcing cleanliness and sanitation systems in rural areas would ensure manual, and mechanical sweeping, waste collection, drain cleaning and waste disposal. Local government departments would monitor the outsourcing system digitally, he said. The monitoring would include biometric attendance, vehicle tracking management system, vehicle weighing at dumping site, digital monitoring of the fleet and container clearance through geo-tagging and prompt resolution of the complaints, he informed. At the district level, a control room under the supervision of Assistant Commissioners is being built in the Deputy Commissioners' Office and in each Tehsil, he said adding, to ensure full participation of the public in the sanitation system, an App 'Saaf Rawalpindi' and a toll-free number 1139 have been launched. The citizens could register their complaints for which the contractor would be given two to three hours to resolve them, he added. So far, 17 Union Councils (UCs) across the division have been outsourced for the 'Suthra' Punjab programme. Under the outsourcing of the sanitation system in four UCs pre-qualification has been completed. The UCs which have completed the outsourcing process would enter the first operational phase before December 1, he informed.—APP

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## Briefs

## NUST showcases innovative technologies

ISLAMABAD: The National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) made its mark at the 12th edition of the International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS 2024), held recently at the Karachi Expo Centre. As a leading institution in technological research and development, NUST's participation was a highlight, with its pavilion featuring three specialized booths: Defence Technologies, NUST Technologies and Emerging Technologies. According to the NUST, the Defence Technologies booth showcased NUST's advanced research in defense solutions, while the NUST Technologies booth highlighted the university's contributions to advancements in various technological fields. The Emerging Technologies booth featured innovative projects that reflect the university's commitment to pushing the boundaries of innovation, from AI-driven solutions to sustainable tech applications. IDEAS 2024 saw a diverse array of local and international delegates from over 70 countries, alongside representatives from national and global organizations. This year's event set the stage for meaningful collaborations in research and innovation. NUST's active participation underlined its role in fostering global partnerships and contributing to the growth of defence and technology sectors worldwide. With the event drawing high-level representatives and industry leaders, NUST's involvement promises to strengthen its position as a key player in the global technological landscape, emphasizing the importance of research-driven innovation for defence and beyond.—APP

## Bukhari grieves over Srinagar Highway tragedy

ISLAMABAD: Syed Nayyar Bukhari, Secretary General of Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP), on Tuesday expressed deep sorrow and regret over the tragic martyrdom of Rangers and Police personnel on Srinagar Highway. In a statement from the party secretariat, Bukhari expressed solidarity with the families and colleagues of the martyred soldiers, highlighting that their sacrifice in protecting citizens' lives and property will always be remembered. Nayyar Bukhari condemned the attack on the Rangers, terming it an unforgivable act of terrorism. He urged the authorities to track down the perpetrators who drove their vehicle into the Rangers and bring them to justice without delay. Nayyar Bukhari demanded the immediate arrest and prosecution of the criminals behind this heinous act. He urged strict measures to prevent such attacks in the future. He criticized the misuse of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's resources and authority, stating that the province's resources are being recklessly exploited to spread unrest and chaos.—APP

## Naqvi review security at D chowk

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday visited D-Chowk to review the security arrangements upto Shaheed Millat Chowk. Despite the ongoing shelling by miscreants, Mohsin Naqvi reached Shaheed Millat Chowk and met with the personnel on duty. The Interior Minister stood by the personnel during the shelling, boosting their morale, urging them to bravely counter the miscreants. He individually met with the personnel of Rangers, FC, Police, and Sindh Police, appreciating their enthusiasm. The personnel on duty chanted slogans of "Pakistan Zindabad". Talking to the personnel, Interior Minister said: "You are all soldiers of Pakistan, and you have to deal with the miscreants according to the law." IG Islamabad



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko witnessing the MOUs and agreements exchange ceremony held in Prime Minister's House.

## Govt urged to withdraw gas disconnection notices

PHMA North Zone Chairman Abdul Hameed, in a letter to Commerce and Textile Minister Jam Kamal, has argued that at a time when the exports data have showed some growth the government agencies, instead of taking business-friendly measures, are creating hurdles for the exporters

DNA

ISLAMABAD: While expressing serious concerns over the threats of gas supply termination and notices of additional security payment by the SNGPL the Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers & Exporters Association (PHMA) on Tuesday urged the government to withdraw these notices and ensure smooth gas supply to the export-oriented value-added textile industry so that the exports could not be suffered, which have just started to show a positive trend after a long time. PHMA North Zone Chairman Abdul Hameed, in a letter to Commerce and Textile Minister Jam Kamal, has argued that at a time when the exports data have showed some growth the government agencies, in-

stead of taking business-friendly measures, are creating hurdles for the exporters. He quoted the latest exports data and said the exports of readymade garments rose 23.17pc by value in the first quarter and 16.16pc by quantity, while knitwear rose 14.13pc by value and 2.17pc by quantity while bedwear posted a growth of 13.31pc in value and a growth of 14.55pc in quantity, which is an encouraging sign. The government should extend its full support to continue this positive trend of exports growth through uninterrupted gas supply to the captive power plants at affordable and competitive rates. It is PHMA Chairman Abdul Hameed, in a letter to Commerce and Textile Minister Jam Kamal, has argued that at a time when the exports data have showed some growth the government agencies, in-

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## PEC to launch free 'Generative AI Training' for engineers

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) is set to launch a free online training program on Generative Artificial Intelligence to equip engineers with cutting-edge skills in artificial intelligence. The program, developed in collaboration with PakAngels Silicon Valley USA, iCode Guru, and Aspire Pakistan, will commence on December 1, 2024, with registrations already underway. According to the PEC, the six-week training course offers participants an opportunity to gain international certification with a traceable QR code. The program focuses on introducing engineers to generative AI technology, its applications, and practical model-building techniques. The training is tailored for engineers registered with PEC, engineering managers, university engineering faculty and students, and

corporate sponsorship partners. The course covers topics such as an introduction to generative AI, an overview of generative models, and hands-on model-building exercises. The program emphasizes the significance of early adoption of AI technologies, offering participants several advantages, including automating time-consuming tasks, expanding capabilities beyond traditional engineering methods, developing complex software without requiring programming knowledge, staying competitive in a rapidly evolving job market, and gaining leadership skills in the AI domain. The training is being organized considering that the global market for generative AI is expected to reach \$1.3 trillion by 2032. By 2030, 40 percent of tasks are predicted to be automated through AI-powered solutions, and AI could contribute \$4.4 trillion

annually to global productivity. By 2028, 70 percent of companies will adopt AI models to stay competitive. Engineers participating in the course will learn to solve complex problems using AI models to analyze data and run simulations, generate creative designs and innovative solutions, access AI-powered insights across various disciplines, and develop sophisticated engineering software without writing code. The interested participants can register through the official PEC website at [www.pec.org.pk/ai-training](http://www.pec.org.pk/ai-training), scan the QR code provided on the flyer, or contact [ai.training@pec.org.pk](mailto:ai.training@pec.org.pk) for assistance. This initiative underscores PEC's commitment to fostering technological advancements in Pakistan's engineering sector and preparing professionals for a future driven by AI.—APP

## IRSA releases 94,400 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 94,400 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 46,200 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1499.89 feet and was 101.89 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 21,900 cusecs and 49,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1161.05 feet, which was 111.05 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 5,900 cusecs and 27,000 cusecs respectively.—APP

## Political instability to hit economic revival efforts

ISLAMABAD: Business leader and former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Tuesday that local and foreign investment would become impossible in the country and efforts to revive the economy will go in vain if there is no political stability in the country. Terrorism has also become a problem which should be controlled. Otherwise, the investors will feel unsafe, he added. Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that the military and political leadership have taken many steps to revive the economy, the results of which are coming out. Similarly, he said that the public and taxpayers have also paid a heavy price to save the country from default. However, the positive results of all these efforts will be possible only when the law and order situation is entirely satisfactory and local and foreign investors can work without fear. Shahid Rashid Butt said that, on the one hand, incidents of terrorism are increasing, while on the other hand, political temperatures are rising, which is worrying every Pakistani. He noted that the political chaos that has been going on for many years is increasing instead of decreasing, causing a loss of billions of rupees while the country's reputation is deteriorating. Political chaos is increased when foreign personalities come to the country, which is regrettable. Shahid Rashid Butt said that according to the government, there is a threat of terrorism in Islamabad, and many attackers have crossed the Pak-Afghan border. He observed that due to the arrival of an 80-member delegation from Belarus to Pakistan, the government and the opposition could have taken the path of mutual understanding and cancelled or postponed the protest. Still, no wisdom was shown in this regard, which is unfortunate. He stated that internet restrictions would be counterproductive if the government's insecurities led foreign companies to withdraw and relocate their operations.—APP

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## Displaced under the winter

THE rain swept away our tents, ruined our clothes and bedding, the cold is killing us, and on top of that, hunger is ravaging us." With these words, displaced Maysa Radwan describes the excruciatingly harsh reality faced by two million displaced people crammed into areas in central and southern Gaza Strip. Radwan lives in a worn-out tent that cannot withstand the wind, heavy rains, and rising seawater during winter. She says the conditions she and her neighbors endure are "painful and bleak, while the unjust world remains silent about what is happening to us." In November 2023, the 40-year-old Radwan fled her home in Al-Shati Refugee Camp with her family to the Mawasi area in Khan Yunis. She questions the crime her children have committed to live under such conditions, with no sufficient clothing to keep them warm or proper shelter to shield them from the rain. "We adults can't bear the cold—imagine the children!" Radwan appeals to the free world to intervene and save thousands of people from the flames of war and the indescribable suffering that worsens by the day. She adds that every rainfall brings additional tragedy due to a severe shortage of food and medicine. "Flour and vegetables are missing from the markets. We barely provide enough to keep the children from starving, and many nights, they cry themselves to sleep from hunger." A severe humanitarian and living crisis grips central and southern Gaza Strip due to Israel's blockade on aid and goods, compounded by looting and gangs attacking the few trucks allowed through the Kerem Shalom crossing. Meanwhile, the Rafah crossing has remained closed for over six months, deepening the crisis and sparking signs of a genuine famine as essential supplies vanish from markets. The Palestinian territories are experiencing a cold front with rain and winds, and meteorological authorities have warned of sharp temperature drops and strong winds expected to persist for several days. Displaced people's tents have suffered extensive damage from the rain, with many flooding. Videos and images shared by displaced persons and activists show the dire conditions children, women, and the elderly endure as rainwater and seawater seep into tents. Although winter officially begins in Gaza on December 21, early signs have sparked widespread fear among hundreds of thousands of displaced people living in flimsy tents that offer no protection against the summer heat or winter cold. Mouhammed Al-Baz, a father of five living in a tent in the Al-Masha'ala area in Deir al-Balah, says the rain has worsened his family's plight as they lack even a mat to cover the tent's floor. He explains that the summer heat has torn the fabric of their tent, allowing rainwater to seep into their belongings. "Life here is extremely harsh—no peace, no rest, just constant fear and bombardment." Hareb Abu Odeh, displaced from Beit Hanoun in northern Gaza to the central region, shares Al-Baz and Radwan's suffering, expressing doubt about his tent's ability to withstand the winds. "This tent won't last... The storm has just started, and we don't know what to do." He adds, "We try to secure the tent, but we have no resources. We haven't received any aid to reinforce the tents.



## Bismarck and Western imperialist

GERMANY'S first chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, has a much cleaner record when it comes to the West's murderous imperialism during the heyday of colonial conquest in the half-century before the first world war. Compared with the other great European powers and perhaps even the United States, the Iron Chancellor showed remarkable restraint. The atrocities and mass murders associated with Germany's colonisation were committed after he was kicked out of office in 1890 by the new young emperor who wanted "a place in the sun" for his country, and to join the other great European powers in their insatiable hunger for foreign possessions. So it's ironic that last week, far-left protesters toppled a 125-year-old bronze statue of Bismarck in Frankfurt to mark the 140th anniversary of the Berlin Conference, which has been seen as emblematic of imperialist Europe's "scramble for Africa". It was part of an ongoing far-left revisionism of Bismarck as a colonialist. "Coloniser" and "anti-colonial action" were painted over the toppled statue. Sadly, ignorant people often associate Bismarck as some kind of proto-Hitler. But while Bismarck presided over the Berlin Conference, it was the conference's instigator, Leopold II of Belgium, who showed he was positively Hitlerian by taking over the Congo as his private domain, rather than under Belgium, and torturing and murdering millions of the population there over the next two decades. That was the background to Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness. The reason Leopold isn't as infamous as Hitler today is surely because the skin colour of his countless victims was black, whereas that of Hitler's victims was much paler. Although Europe accounts for only 8 per cent of the world's total land mass, between 1492 to 1914, its inhabitants conquered or colonised more than 80 per cent of it. And from 1876 to 1915, a handful of Western imperialist powers plus Japan distributed or redistributed about 25 per cent of the land mass directly as colonies. However, Germany's overseas possessions were actually subpar compared with the true global colonisers. During this late 19th- to early 20th-century period, Great Britain acquired an astonishing 4 million square miles (10.4 million sq km), followed by France at 3.5 million sq miles. Germany took 1 million sq miles, which was about the same size of possessions as those seized by far humbler colonisers Italy and Belgium. I am quoting all these figures from Eric Hobsbawm's The Age of Empire: 1875-1914. The United States is usually considered an anti-colonial power, but after its victory over Spain, it took over many of its colonial possessions, including the Philippines, which, historian Gabriel Kolko wrote, endured a "protracted conquest ... from 1898 until well into the next decade, when anywhere from 200,000 to 600,000 Filipinos were killed in an orgy of racist slaughter that evoked much congratulation and approval from the eminent journals and men of the era". In his Main Currents in Modern American History, Kolko calls it one of the "great unacknowledged crimes" of the 20th century. Bismarck thought colonialism offered few benefits but many burdens. Overseas possessions required large expenditures to maintain, delivered meagre profits, but frequently provoked diplomatic conflicts, even wars.

## A grim diagnosis

Amal Kamal

Behind the dingy numbers lie tragic stories of lives ruined and cut short due to the unavailability of affordable and quality healthcare. An unhealthy population with numerous condensed capabilities cannot considerably contribute to the economy. Health indicators suggest that it is the lack of accessible healthcare. And although healthcare is certainly linked to problems of corruption and security, there is no reason why healthcare should not be made an immediate priority rather than placed on the back burner of policy discourse. Furthermore, the governance of the healthcare system is equally troubling. Corruption, mismanagement, and a lack of accountability have impeded progress for decades. Funds allocated to healthcare are often exploited, and projects fail to deliver due to bureaucratic...

IMAGINE a ship caught in a storm—its sail tattered as waves crash relentlessly against its hull. This is Pakistan's healthcare system, steering a sea of crises, only to find itself sinking under the weight of long-term neglect, inadequate resources, and systemic inefficiencies. For a country of over 240 million people, the condition of healthcare reflects a disturbing tale of mismanagement, where millions are left without access to necessary medical services, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remain an outlying dream. According to the World Bank, Pakistan spends merely 2.9% of its GDP on healthcare, one of the lowest in South Asia. This distinct underinvestment has resulted in glaring disparities, which include a lack of well-equipped hospitals, deficient healthcare workers, and a scarcity of basic medicines. Almost 70% of the Pakistani population lives in underserved rural areas, where healthcare services are hindered by the lack of medical personnel, sparse facilities, and the high cost of treatments. According to UNDP, (The three Ps of inequality: Power, People and Policy) access to basic health services is similarly limited and highly unequal. Low-income families have little or no access to the health care they need; if they face a serious illness, they are often compelled to take out loans to pay for health care. Ill-health can cause heads of households to lose their jobs or suffer a permanent loss of income, with catastrophic consequences for themselves and their dependants. Despite being a signatory to the United Nations' Sustainable Developmental Goals, particularly SDG 3, which emphasises good health and well-being, unfortunately we remain woefully behind in achieving its targets. The challenges confronting Pakistan's healthcare system are countless and deeply embedded. With just one doctor for every 1,000 people and fewer than one hospital bed per 1,600 individuals, as noted by the World Bank, the system is stretched beyond its capacity. The situation is compounded by a lack of financial accessibility; over 70% of

healthcare expenses in Pakistan are out-of-pocket, according to the World Bank Data Indicators (WDI). This burden leaves millions of citizens unable to afford quality health care and pushes countless households into poverty each year.

Behind the dingy numbers lie tragic stories of lives ruined and cut short due to the unavailability of affordable and quality healthcare. An unhealthy population with numerous condensed capabilities cannot considerably contribute to the economy. Health indicators suggest that it is the lack of accessible healthcare. And although healthcare is certainly linked to problems of corruption and security, there is no reason why healthcare should not be made an immediate priority rather than placed on the back burner of policy discourse. Furthermore, the governance of the healthcare system is equally troubling. Corruption, mismanagement, and a lack of accountability have impeded progress for decades. Funds allocated to healthcare are often exploited, and projects fail to deliver due to bureaucratic inefficiency. Moreover, preventive healthcare is largely ignored, as evidenced by the WHO and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s report showing that only 66% of children in Pakistan receive essential vaccinations. This neglect leaves the population vulnerable to outbreaks of preventable diseases such as measles, polio, and hepatitis, while emerging threats like dengue fever further strain an already crumbling system.

Mexico and Thailand are two developing countries that have made political dedications towards universal healthcare with very promising results. In 2002, the government of Thailand introduced a "30-baht universal coverage scheme" that covered the entire population, guaranteeing that the concerned patient would not have to pay more than 30 baht per visit for medical care. In addition to this, Thailand's 'Health Assembly' entitles citizens to actively participate in shaping their healthcare system. Similarly, Mexico's 'System of Social Protection in Health' has

made substantial strides in improving access to healthcare for millions of Mexicans, demonstrating the positive impact of well-designed health policies.

In order to achieve SDG 3 and provide equitable healthcare for its citizens, Pakistan must undertake comprehensive and sustained reforms. The government must seriously increase healthcare expenditure to at least 5% of GDP, as recommended by the WHO, with a focus on building modern infrastructure and expanding services to underserved rural areas. Universal Health Coverage initiatives like the Sehat Sahulat Program need to be strengthened and expanded to ensure that all citizens have access to affordable healthcare. Moreover, addressing workforce shortages is critical; this can be achieved by incentivizing rural postings for doctors and nurses and by collaborating with institutions like Aga Khan University to train healthcare professionals. Sustainable development is indeed achievable if devolution is involved. If implemented effectively, the SDGs will serve the citizens by bringing accountability and decision-making within provincial jurisdiction. The reality is that poverty will not be eradicated by 2030, and the state may not be able to feed around 215 million children or ensure healthy living for all, but what can be achieved is chiselling programs to the demographics of different regions by keeping in view the contextual formulas for efficient delivery. Although the storm is fierce, there is hope that Pakistan's healthcare system can steer toward calmer waters. Strategic reforms, political will, and a commitment to prioritizing health as a fundamental right can realign the system with the needs of its people and the aspirations of the SDGs. The journey will undoubtedly be arduous, but the lives at stake demand urgent action. As Amartya Sen and Jean Dreze rightly urge in their book, An Uncertain Glory: India and Its Contradictions, that issues of healthcare should be brought closer to democratic politics.

## World must pressure Israel over Netanyahu arrest warrant

Chris Doyle

Britain led the pack of those that gave equivocal responses. Ministers said they would respect the decision and abide by their legal obligations, but they would not be caught on camera saying the UK would arrest Netanyahu. Back in May 2023, when the court issued an arrest warrant for President Vladimir Putin of Russia, British ministers fell over themselves to welcome the historic decision, including Keir Starmer when he was opposition leader. Starmer has not personally commented on the new warrants

SOME 185 days after they were requested by prosecutor Karim Khan, the International Criminal Court last week issued warrants for the arrest of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, ex-Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and Mohammed Deif, a Hamas commander. Many ask, will this make any difference? Will Israel end its genocide in Gaza? The answer is almost certainly "no." Netanyahu, now a war crimes suspect at large, is very unlikely to adopt a course correction and neither are his Cabinet colleagues. Israeli officials will conjure up fresh excuses and lines of attack for public relations purposes. Already, Netanyahu has abused the fight against antisemitism by referring to a "modern Dreyfus trial," in reference to an infamous incident from the 1890s, in which a Jewish French officer was falsely accused and convicted of treason before eventually being acquitted. At best, one or two around the Israeli Cabinet table might twitch at the thought they could be next. But many other Israelis in politics, the armed forces and security services should fear further warrants. No doubt, many would like to be able to travel freely, to see loved ones in other countries. Netanyahu is now 75, but younger military commanders may have years to endure any sanction. Undoubtedly, a failure by the International Criminal Court to agree to the arrest warrants would have been catastrophic for international law and the rules-based order. At least the court can now say that it does go after the friends of the big powers. It is not only for African leaders. This matters. It sends a message to wannabe war criminals. However powerful your friends may be, they cannot protect you from the international judicial system. State members of the court must honor their obligations and with gusto. This is a legal obligation, not a request.

If any of the accused land in one of the 124 member states, they must be arrested and dispatched to The Hague. Some states have made clear they would do this. These include Italy and the Netherlands. On the flip side, there are states prepared to trash international law and the rules-based system led by the US. Some American politicians even threatened sanctions against historic allies like the UK and France if they were to help the International Criminal Court. Others referred to America's so-called Hague Invasion Act, which permits the US to use all means necessary to free Americans or its allies detained on the court's orders.

Britain led the pack of those that gave equivocal responses. Ministers said they would respect the decision and abide by their legal obligations, but they would not be caught on camera saying the UK would arrest Netanyahu. Back in May 2023, when the court issued an arrest warrant for President Vladimir Putin of Russia, British ministers fell over themselves to welcome the historic decision, including Keir Starmer when he was opposition leader. Starmer has not personally commented on the new warrants. And who was shocked that the far-right Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban invited Netanyahu to come and visit his country? What was also startling was that much of the media coverage focused on the Israeli reaction and those of its allies, not the crimes themselves. Those states that welcomed the court's decision were rarely mentioned. Absent from most coverage were the victims. Typically, they were not even cited as Palestinians. Readers and viewers might have been left wondering exactly what these war crimes and crimes against humanity were. The voice of the Palestinians, those who have lost loved ones and are at this moment being starved to death, were missing.

Many in the media ignored the human rights community's near-universal condemnation of Israel. It is hard to find a single human rights group that has not detailed and condemned the war crimes of which Netanyahu and Gallant are accused.

What should happen now? International Criminal Court member states should be reviewing their entire relationship with Israel. Those with any moral integrity should, if they have not done so already, introduce a full arms ban and cease any military and security cooperation with Israel. All states should demand that Israel hands the accused over to the court. It should be a condition of future relations with Israel that this happens.

But there are still questions for the court. Why have there been no warrants over the building of illegal Israeli settlements, which are clear violations of the Rome Statute? This should have been addressed years ago and, particularly following the July advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, which made the authoritative determination that the occupation was unlawful and the settlements had to go, the International Criminal Court should be questioned as to why action has not been taken. There is no dispute of fact. The settlements exist, are being expanded and are in occupied territory. Khan made it clear back in May that these warrants would almost certainly not be the last. Is he considering requesting arrest warrants for other Israeli and Hamas leaders? Israel has assassinated most Hamas leaders. But given the scale of atrocities that Palestinians are suffering every day, it is inconceivable that more Israeli figures will not be charged.

— Chris Doyle is director of the Council for Arab-British Understanding in London. X: @Doylech

## Briefs

## Bushra Bibi wants blood, bodies: Tarar

FROM PAGE 01

Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attallah Tarar on Tuesday said that the state was showing great restraint against the protesters from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. Talking to media, the minister said that the spouse of founder of PTI Bushra Bibi had come with a plan to fuel violence and get the protesters killed in clashes with the law enforcement agencies so that they could take advantage of the situation. "Mercenaries have been brought to the front and they want to use children of the poor people", he remarked. He said that it seemed the PTI leadership wanted to achieve the objectives of May 9 arson again. He asked who should be held responsible for the blood of martyrs of police and rangers.

## Funeral prayers of martyred...

FROM PAGE 01

"Pakistan cannot afford any chaos and bloodshed for achieving vested political purposes. The entire nation pays homage to the martyred Rangers soldiers and all those police officials who have embraced shahadat and those who are injured during these riots", PM said. Meanwhile, President, Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday strongly condemned as the vehicles of the PTI protestors mowed down the Rangers and police personnel at Srinagar Highway. Expressing their deep grief over the martyrdom of Rangers personnel in the incident, they prayed for the elevation of the martyrs' ranks in the hereafter and strength for the bereaved families to bear the loss.

## Bushra pledges not to...

FROM PAGE 01

In a statement shared via his official X account, Khan expressed his gratitude to the Pakistani nation and PTI activists for standing up for their rights and engaging in peaceful protests against what he described as a "mafia" that has taken control of the country. "I salute the Pakistani nation and PTI workers who are standing for their rights, protesting peacefully, and demanding real freedom in the face of the mafia imposed on this country," Khan wrote. The PTI founder stated that his message to his team was clear: "Fight until the last ball, and we will not back down until our demands are fulfilled." He reiterated the party's resolve to push forward with their protests, regardless of the opposition.

## Miscreants want bloodshed...

FROM PAGE 01

grief, reiterating that Pakistan cannot tolerate any form of violence or bloodshed for political gain. He emphasised that the attacks on police and Rangers officers under the guise of a peaceful protest are completely reprehensible. He said Pakistan cannot afford any form of chaos or bloodshed. He said bloodshed for nefarious political agenda is unacceptable and highly condemnable. The PM further remarked that law enforcement agencies, tasked with maintaining peace and order, have been deliberately targeted by the disruptive group. He condemned the attack on security forces, particularly on the Rangers and police officers, noting that these personnel are essential in maintaining law and order in the city. PM Shahbaz stated that the violent actions of the protesters have devastated the families of the slain officers. "The innocent children and families of the martyred Rangers and police officers deserve justice," he said, adding that both he and the entire nation offer their condolences and tribute to the fallen officers. The PM also condemned the incident on Srinagar Highway, where protesters attacked Rangers and police with a vehicle.

## Saim, Abrar give Pakistan series-levelling victory over Zimbabwe

Saim amasses his maiden ODI ton in just 53 balls

## SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: BULAWAYO: Abrar Ahmed's four-wicket haul, followed by a quickfire century by Saim Ayub, propelled Pakistan to a crushing 10-wicket victory in the second ODI of the three-match series here at Queens Sports Club on Tuesday. Set to chase a modest 146, Pakistan comfortably amassed the total without losing a wicket and 190 balls to spare, thanks to Saim's blistering century. The left-handed batter dominated the match-winning partnership with sensational hitting, which saw him scoring his maiden ODI century in just 53 balls. His brisk century was the third-fastest by a Pakistan batter in men's ODIs, only behind legendary all-rounder Shahid Afridi. Saim top-scored for Pakistan with an unbeaten 113 off just 62 balls, studded with 20 boundaries including three sixes, while Abdullah Shafique made 32 not out.



Opting to bat first, Zimbabwe only managed 145 runs before getting bundled out in the 33rd over. The home side had a shaky start

to their innings as their openers Tadiwanashe Marumani (4) and Joylord Gumbie (5) perished after making meagre contributions.

Following the slump, top-order batter Dion Myers and skipper Craig Ervine briefly anchored the innings with a 38-run partnership.

Myers, who was the core aggressor of the crucial stand, fell victim to Salman Ali Agha in the 13th over. He remained the top-scorer for the hosts with a 30-ball 33, laced with six boundaries.

Agha inflicted a middle-order collapse by dismissing Ervine and Sikandar Raza in quick succession, reducing the hosts to 97/5 in 20.2 overs. Experienced all-rounder Sean Williams offered a notable fight with a cautious 31 off 39 deliveries. However, following his departure in the 26th over with 121 runs on the board, Zimbabwe could add 24 runs for the loss of their remaining wickets despite Blessing Muzarabani's 11-run cameo. Abrar was the standout bowler for Pakistan, taking four wickets, followed by Agha with three scalps, while Faisal Akram and Saim Ayub struck out one batter apiece. The 10-wicket victory lifted Pakistan to level the three-match series 1-1, with the final ODI scheduled to take place on Thursday at the same venue.

## No talks with PTI under any condition...

FROM PAGE 01

further advancement," he said. He emphasised that the government does not want to see any loss of life and also urged the former ruling party not to go towards bloodshed.

## Capital schools, colleges to...

FROM PAGE 01

Association had earlier announced a suspension of academic activities, citing safety concerns, and advised parents to withhold their children from sending schools until the situation normalises.

## Kurram clashes' death toll...

FROM PAGE 01

At least 82 people were killed and 156 more wounded before the provincial government delegation — led by Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif — brokered the ceasefire on Sunday night. But late Monday Kurram deputy commissioner Javedullah Mehsud told media "reports of tribal clashes and gunfire continue to emerge from several areas". A security official stationed in Kurram who asked not to be named confirmed "clashes are ongoing" in at least three areas. "There are significant disagreements over the exchange of prisoners and bodies," he said. "According to my information, both communities are currently holding over 18 individuals hostage, including eight women."

## Pak, China sign 13 MoUs on...

FROM PAGE 01

Pakistan Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi witnessed the signing ceremony held at the conclusion of a day-long B2B Match-making Meeting on Animal Fodder and Fruits and Vegetable here. Pakistan Embassy Beijing, in collaboration with the Board of Investment (BOI), successfully hosted the third in a series of sector-specific B2B matchmaking meetings. This event, focused on fostering joint ventures and investment partnerships in the animal fodder and fruits and vegetables processing sectors. The event featured insightful presentations, individual B2B meetings, networking opportunities, and the signing of 13 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) valued at approximately USD 250 million. Over 150 productive B2B meetings, including 30 virtual engagements, took place, providing a robust platform for Pakistani and Chinese companies to explore partnerships and expand trade in these priority sectors. In his remarks, Ambassador Khalil Hashmi highlighted the strong trade ties between Pakistan and China and emphasized the strategic importance of agriculture and food processing sectors.

## Pakistan, Belarus resolve for...

FROM PAGE 01

and reaffirmed their mutual commitment to deepening friendly ties between the two countries across political, trade, economic, cultural, social, and other areas. This year marked the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Belarus. Both sides acknowledged that their relationship had grown into a durable, broad-based, and comprehensive partnership of increasing significance. Pakistan congratulated Belarus on its full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), with Belarus noting Pakistan's early support for its accession. The prime minister appreciated the active participation of the prime minister of Belarus in the SCO Council of Heads of Governments meeting, hosted by Pakistan in October 2024. The two sides agreed to work closely within this important forum to further strengthen their cooperation.

## Salah selfish for contract Comments: Carragher



LONDON: Mohamed Salah is "selfish" for publicly expressing his disappointment at Liverpool's failure to offer him a new contract, says former Reds defender Jamie Carragher. Salah, whose current deal expires at the end of the season, told reporters after Sunday's win at Southampton that he is "probably more out than in" and has yet to be offered fresh terms. The 32-year-old is Liverpool's top scorer this season with 12 goals in all competitions and

scored twice against the Saints to move the club eight points clear at the top of the Premier League. "I must say I am very disappointed with Mo Salah," Carragher told Sky Sports' Monday Night Football. "Liverpool have Real Madrid midweek [in the Champions League] and Man City at the weekend. That's the story right now." He added: "If he keeps putting comments out, his agent puts out cryptic messages, that is selfish.

That is thinking about themselves and not the football club." Liverpool have not publicly commented on Salah's remarks, but a club source told BBC Sport that contact between Liverpool and Salah's agent, Rami Abbas Issa, is ongoing and has been positive. Speaking on media Chris Sutton said Salah's decision to approach reporters in the mixed zone to talk about his future suggests he wants to stay at Anfield. "It wasn't one of those where Mo Salah was asked to talk, he actually made an approach and wanted to speak to a couple of press guys to get things off his chest," said the former Blackburn and Chelsea striker. "So in that respect it says to me that he wants to stay." The Athletic's Rory Smith added: "It strikes me that he is making it very clear to the Liverpool fans that he wants to stay and that if he doesn't end up staying that it's not really a lack of intent on his part. "The problem will be his age. Liverpool will be looking at the vast data set you have of footballers over the last 20, 30 years, which suggests that at some point in your mid-30s your performances do dip. They will wonder whether it is worth committing £300,000 a week or so to a player who might only have another year at this level. "Or maybe he will have another two years at this level? Or another five or six? That's the gamble Liverpool have to take." As well as Salah, defender Trent Alexander-Arnold and club captain Virgil van Dijk are also out of contract at the end of the season. — Agencies

## Australia retain squad for second Test

McDonald also addresses the decline in Labuschagne's form

## WEB DESK

PERTH: Australia have decided to stick to their 13-member squad for the second Test against India despite an agonizing defeat in the series opener, coach and selector Andrew McDonald confirmed. Australia on Monday, succumbed to their first-ever Test defeat at Optus Stadium here. Their 295-run defeat was also India's biggest Test victory in terms of runs in Australia. The home side's coach McDonald, however, showed faith in the current 13-member squad to stage a comeback in the second Test — a day-night fixture, scheduled to commence on December 6 at the Adelaide Oval. "The same people in that changeroom are the same people that will be in Adelaide. It is always a consideration, wherever you go in the world in terms of the personnel you pick for conditions," stated McDonald. McDonald also addressed Marnus Labuschagne's rough patch with the bat and offered his backing for the latter, highlighting he is the player they need. "I mean, we look at the way he plays and when he's at his best, and when we've seen him at his best, he's shown great intent at the crease," McDonald said. "That's an ongoing discussion and that ebbs and flows in players' careers, so at the moment he's in one of those patches and no doubt he'll be getting critiqued externally. But internally we're really confident that, at his best, he's the player that we need," McDonald added. When probed about the root cause of Labuschagne's declining form, Andrew McDonald stressed there were few factors before expressing his confidence that the right-handed batter "can turn that around". "It's always a combination of factors, isn't it, with the mindset?" he said. "There's some technical aspects to that also within the mindset play. So as I said, we're really confident that he can turn that around." Australia's squad for Adelaide Test: Pat Cummins (c), Scott Boland, Alex Carey, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Usman Khawaja, Marnus Labuschagne, Nathan Lyon, Mitch Marsh, Nathan McSweeney, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc.

## De Jong and Lang doubts for Shakhtar

EINDHOVEN: PSV Eindhoven strikers Luuk de Jong and Noa Lang could miss the Champions League clash at home to Shakhtar Donetsk on Wednesday with a decision over their fitness to be made after training on Tuesday, coach Peter Bosz said. Captain De Jong and Dutch international Lang missed Saturday's 5-0 home win over Groningen in the Dutch league but the 34-year-old De Jong did return to training on Monday. PSV will aim to move up the Champions League standings with a victory as they sit 24th on five points, just inside the playoff places and a point above Shakhtar who are 28th. "We have to win at home, but that doesn't just happen. You don't just grab the points. They (Shakhtar) have very good footballers in the team and, for example, lost very unluckily and narrowly at Arsenal (1-0)," Bosz told a press conference. "It is a team that wants to play football and wants to build up, with a goalkeeper (Dmytro Riznyk) who plays along. They want to play with short combinations from the back. "And they dared to do that in London, with a rather daring build-up. With that they also pushed Arsenal back at times, which was impressive. And they have players with individual qualities up front. We will have to work hard." PSV follow the clash against the Ukraine side with a trip to Brest next month and are then at home in January to Red Star Belgrade, who have lost their opening four games, prompting expectations of securing a place in the playoffs in February. — Agencies

## Amir catches limelight for bowling splendid in T10

## WEB DESK

ABU DHABI: Pakistan's experienced left-arm pacer Mohammad Amir on Monday, turned heads with sensational bowling performance for New York Strikers in the ongoing Abu Dhabi T10 league here. Amir, who has been out of the national side since leading their bowling unit in this year's ICC Men's T20 World Cup, is consistently delivering stellar performances in the ongoing tournament. The left-arm pacer is currently the joint-second leading wicket-taker in the tournament with a brilliant economy of just 7.62. His best performance thus far came in a must-win game for Strikers against the home side, where he dismissed three batters, including Phil Salt, for just seven runs in his quota of two overs. Amir's brilliant bowling performance was backed by Sri Lankan opener Kusal Perera, who steered the Strikers to a commanding 10-wicket victory with a quickfire half-century. For his sensational bowling spell, Amir was adjudged the Player of the Match. Speaking at the post-match presentation, the left-arm pacer highlighted the importance of the victory before stressing



that the Strikers are still in contention to progress in the 10-team tournament. "This was a must-win game for us, and we're still in contention now. We need to carry this momentum forward as it's a short format with little margin for error. We performed as a team today, which is crucial with three important games ahead of us," said Amir.

## ICC summons meeting to mull Champions Trophy future

Board members will discuss various options including adopting hybrid model, say sources

## NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday called a board meeting on November 29 to deliberate on the future of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, scheduled to be hosted in Pakistan in February-March next year. The meeting will be held online, and all board members have been provided with the agenda, an ICC spokesperson confirmed. According to sources, the meeting will discuss the future of the tournament following India's refusal to tour Pakistan for the tournament. The ICC board members will be discussing various options including adopting a hybrid model, relocating the event entirely, or postponing the tournament. Sources further revealed that the ICC board is inclined toward implementing a hybrid model as a primary solution. However, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has already voiced its opposition to this approach. The ICC Board is expected to make a final decision after considering feedback and recommendations from its members during the meeting. The board comprises 12 full members, three associate members, and one independent director. Earlier on November

20, it was reported that the ambiguity surrounding the tournament was expected to linger on due to the likelihood of a delay in the announcement of the schedule.

The ICC had officially demanded a written explanation from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) over its refusal after the PCB requested the ICC to provide a copy of India's written response regarding the decision against attending the me-

ga-event. Apart from the PCB's stance, the refusal of broadcasters and commercial partners to accept a schedule that does not feature a Pakistan-India match — which brings significant eyes and therefore generates valuable revenue — has also added to the ICC's woes. Furthermore, they also had warned of legal action if the tournament does not include a contest between the arch-rivals. The sources had said that

the announcement of the schedule will be possible in a couple of days if the stakeholders show flexibility. Stakeholders are in favour of holding the event with mutual consensus, they had added. Meanwhile, the international cricketing body is striving to come up with a solution before BCCI Secretary Jay Shah takes charge as ICC Chairman on December 1. It is pertinent to mention that in recent years, the ICC has made sure that India play Pakistan at least once in each of the global cricketing events, ensuring a major chunk of revenue from this game.

The match between arch-rivals at the 2023 World Cup drew unprecedented interest, with 173 million viewers on Indian TV and 225 million digital viewers. The ICC, which secured \$3.2 billion from broadcast rights for the 2024-2027 cycle and anticipates \$1 billion more in other revenue, relies heavily on marquee events featuring Pakistan and India. It is to be noted that India have not played an international match in Pakistan since 2008. Last year, the BCCI declined to send a team to Pakistan for the Asia Cup, leading to a hybrid format with later stages held in Sri Lanka. However, Pakistan did visit India soon after for the 2023 ODI World Cup.



## Briefs

## Rupee sheds 9 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani rupee on Tuesday depreciated by 09 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.84 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.75. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.30 and Rs 278.90 respectively. The price of Euro increased by 85 paise to close at Rs 291.12 against the last day's closing of Rs 290.27, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen went up by 01 paise and closed at Rs 1.80, whereas a decrease of 19 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 348.62 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 348.81.—APP

## PSX turns bearish, loses 3,505 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bearish trend on Tuesday, losing 3,505.62 points more points, a negative change of 3.57 per cent, closing at 94,574.16 points as compared to 98,079.78 points on the last trading day. A total of 1,116,324,649 shares were traded during the day as compared to 640,258,528 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 43.291 billion against Rs.25.623 billion on the last trading day. As many as 456 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 53 of them recorded gains and 355 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 48 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were K-Electric Limited with 101,636,133 shares at Rs 4.65 per share, Bank of Punjab with 92,023,190 shares at Rs 6.85 per share and Hascol Petrol with 73,320,431 shares at Rs.13.59 per share. Sapphire Textile Mills Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs. 40.88 per share price, closing at Rs 1,177.99, whereas the runner-up was Mehmood Textile Mills Limited with Rs 35.02 rise in its per share price to Rs 535.40.—APP

## Gold price decreases Rs 4,100 per tola

KARACHI: Gold prices in Pakistan registered losses for the second consecutive session on Tuesday in line with their decrease in the international rate. In the local market, gold price per tola stood at Rs274,300 after a single-day fall of Rs4,100. The 10-gram gold was sold at Rs235,168 after it registered a decrease of Rs3,515, according to rates shared by the All-Pakistan Gems and Jewellers Sarafa Association (APGJSA). On Monday, gold price per tola decreased by Rs4,300 in Pakistan. The international rate of gold decreased on Tuesday. As per APGJSA, the rate was at \$2,631 per ounce (with a premium of \$20) after it lost \$41 during the day. On the other hand, silver rates remained unchanged at Rs3,400 per tola.—APP

## Four bodies recovered from capsized tourist boat

CAIRO: Four bodies were recovered on Tuesday from a tourist boat which capsized off Egypt's Red Sea coast, and rescue teams were still searching for nine missing people, the Red Sea Governorate said in a statement. Provincial governor Amr Hanafi said rescue teams had found three people alive, two Belgian tourists and an Egyptian, bringing the total number of survivors to 31. The boat, the Sea Story, capsized on Monday near the Sataya Reef, carrying 31 tourists and 13 crew on a multi-day diving trip. It was struck by high waves and sank in 5-7 minutes. Sixteen passengers were believed to have been trapped inside, according to a Red Sea Governorate statement on Monday.—APP



Islamabad : President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in delegation level talks between Belarus and Pakistan.

## Pak Embassy hosts B2B matchmaking meeting

This event, focused on fostering joint ventures and investment partnerships in the animal fodder and fruits and vegetables processing sectors

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan Embassy Beijing, in collaboration with the Board of Investment (BOI), successfully hosted the third in a series of sector-specific B2B matchmaking meetings. This event, focused on fostering joint ventures and investment partnerships in the animal fodder and fruits and vegetables processing sectors. The event featured insightful presentations, individual B2B meetings, networking opportunities, and the signing of 13 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) valued at approximately USD 250 million. Over 150 productive B2B meetings, including 30 virtual engage-

ments, took place, providing a robust platform for Pakistani and Chinese companies to explore partnerships and expand trade in these priority sectors. In his remarks, Ambassador Khalil Hashmi highlighted the strong trade ties between Pakistan and China and emphasized the strategic importance of agriculture and food processing sectors. He noted that the event underscored Pakistan's ongoing efforts to bolster its trade relationship with China, focusing on creating opportunities for direct connections and long-term partnerships. Ambassador Hashmi also underscored Pakistan's position as a leading producer of a variety of fruits, vegetables, and animal products, pointing out

the country's vast agricultural resources. He highlighted Pakistan's investor-friendly policies, such as 100% foreign equity ownership, zero tariffs on plant and machinery imports, and profit repatriation, as compelling incentives for Chinese companies to explore joint ventures. Reflecting on the agriculture sector's immense potential, the Ambassador emphasized the growth of Pakistan's animal fodder industry, including a 12 percent surge in maize production from 2017 to 2022, and the expansion of its poultry feed market, now valued at USD 2 billion. Similarly, he praised the fruits and vegetables processing sector for its contribution to value-added manufacturing, noting a sub-

stantial vegetable yield and a vibrant export portfolio including processed juices, jams, and pickled foods. The presence of Mayor Liu Jianjun of Weifang, Shandong Province, added further significance to the occasion. Mayor Liu underlined the growing agricultural cooperation between Pakistan and Weifang, especially in the aftermath of Ambassador Hashmi's earlier visit to the city. Mayor Liu lauded the Embassy of Pakistan for their efforts in facilitating such impactful engagements and emphasized the importance of fostering deeper ties in agriculture and food processing. Mr. Wang Qihui, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Asian Affairs at MOFCOM,

also commended the initiative and expressed confidence in the outcomes of the B2B meetings. He highlighted the event's role in building trust and providing a meaningful platform for Pakistani and Chinese entrepreneurs to develop their businesses further. The B2B matchmaking meeting is part of a larger initiative, following Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to China earlier this year. Upcoming sector-specific events include focus areas such as textiles on 04-05 December, surgical instruments on 20 December and plastics in early January 2025. These initiatives aim to sustain the momentum of Pakistan-China collaboration and facilitate high-impact engagements across various sectors.

## Syria's 'large quantities' of toxic arms serious concern

THE HAGUE: The world's chemical watchdog said Monday that it was "seriously concerned" by large gaps in Syria's declaration about its chemical weapons stockpile, as large quantities of potentially banned warfare agents might be involved. Syria agreed in 2013 to join the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, shortly after an alleged chemical gas attack killed more than 1,400 people near Damascus. "Despite more than a decade of intensive work, the Syrian Arab Republic chemical weapons dossier still cannot be closed," the watchdog's director-general Fernando Arias told delegates at the OPCW's annual meeting. The Hague-based global watchdog has previously accused President Bashar Assad's regime of continued attacks on civilians with chemical weapons during the Middle Eastern country's brutal civil war. "Since 2014, the (OPCW) Secretariat has reported a total of 26 outstanding issues of which seven have been fulfilled," in relation to chemical weapon stockpiles in Syria, Arias said. "The substance of the remaining 19 outstanding issues is of serious concern as it involves large quantities of potentially undeclared or unverified chemical warfare agents and chemical munitions," he told delegates. Syria's OPCW voting rights were suspended in 2021, an unprecedented rebuke, following poison gas attacks on civilians in 2017. Last year the watchdog blamed Syria for a 2018 chlorine attack that killed 43 people, in a long-awaited report on a case that sparked tensions between Damascus and the West.—APP

## NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq arrives in Moscow

DNA

MOSCOW: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq arrived in Moscow on Tuesday along with a six-member parliamentary delegation. At the airport he was received by Vice Chairman of the Russian State Duma Mr. Alexander Babakov.

Honourable Speaker arrived in Russia at the invitation of Russian State Duma Chairman H.E. Mr. Vyacheslav Volodin.

In his comments on his expectations about the visit, Mr Sadiq noted that Pakistan wants to have excellent re-



lations with Russia, which are already developing in a very positive way. The Speaker also plans to invite his Rus-

sian counterpart Mr. Vyacheslav Volodin to visit Pakistan. The delegation led by the Honourable Speaker includes Mr.

Abdul Qadir Patel, Syed Rafiullah, Mr. Sher Ali Arbab, Dr. Muhammad Farooq Sattar, Rana Muhammad Hayat Khan.

## No end in sight to 'horror' in Gaza, told Security Council

To avert further escalation, he urged the international community to renew its commitment to diplomacy and support measures that ensure long-term safety and security for both Israelis and Palestinians. "We need a ceasefire; we need to get the hostages out; we need life-saving support delivered safely now," Hadi added

DNA

UNITED NATIONS: As Gaza teeters on the brink of collapse, a senior UN official has renewed urgent calls for an immediate ceasefire and action to address the humanitarian crisis. Briefing the UN Security Council, Muhammad Hadi, Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, outlined the impact of the conflict, which is now in its second year. "As winter approaches, the horror in Gaza continues to grind on with no end in sight," he said. Since Oct 7, 2023, the conflict has claimed the lives of over 44,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children. Tens of thousands more have been injured, and more than 100 Israelis hostages remain in Gaza under dire conditions. Hadi highlighted the devastating impact of Israel Defence Forces (IDF) operations in northern Gaza, which have led to mass displacement and scores of fatalities, including women and children. Humanitarian assistance to those in need has also been severely impacted, with UN convoys of lifesaving aid looted by armed Palestinian groups. A UN convoy of 109 trucks carrying food was looted on November 16, with 97 trucks lost. Days later, over 20 individuals were reportedly killed during operations targeting looters, led by Gaza authorities. "Attacks on humanitarian and humanitarian convoys must cease immediately. Law and order must be restored, and the civilian population must have safe access to vital aid," Hadi said. Hadi further informed the Security Council about increasing violence in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Thirty-two Palestinians were killed during Israeli security operations over the past few weeks, and Israeli settler attacks on Palestinian communities, particularly during the olive harvest, have escalated. Shooting and ramming attacks by Palestinians also continued, though no fatalities were reported

in the occupied West Bank or Israel, he said. He added that Israel's advancement of settlements and demolition of Palestinian-owned structures also continued, with some ministers "now openly calling" for the annexation of the occupied West Bank. "I reiterate that annexation constitutes a violation of international law and must be firmly rejected," he noted. "Regrettably, the situation remains grave across the region. Israeli military operations continued across the Blue Line with Lebanon, as did the firing of rockets by Hezbollah toward Israel, including a barrage this weekend," he said. He welcomed the ongoing diplomatic efforts to reach a cessation of hostilities and urged the parties to accept a ceasefire "anchored in the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1701." Hadi also warned that developments across the occupied Palestinian territory suggested "an imminent risk of losing

the frameworks" we have been operating under since 1967 and 1973 when the Security Council adopted the resolutions "aimed at laying the foundations for a just and lasting peace". "We continue to call for an immediate ceasefire, the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages and the de-escalation of tensions across the region," he added, appealing for political and security frameworks that would help resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, ending the occupation and achieving a two-State solution. To avert further escalation, he urged the international community to renew its commitment to diplomacy and support measures that ensure long-term safety and security for both Israelis and Palestinians. "We need a ceasefire; we need to get the hostages out; we need life-saving support delivered safely now," Hadi added. Also speaking, UN Special Coordinator for the

Middle East Peace Process Tor Wennesland reflected on the challenges facing the region and the international community's efforts to address the ongoing crisis. He echoed the urgent need for a ceasefire in Gaza and the delivery of critical humanitarian aid as he acknowledged the difficulties. "We have demonstrations in the field and in the Council how difficult this situation is at the moment...I am deeply frustrated from my visits to Gaza to see that despite all efforts...it has not been possible to deliver aid and assistance in the amount needed for the civilians living in Gaza." Marking his final appearance at a formal Security Council meeting, Wennesland thanked Council members, the UN Secretariat and all colleagues for their collaboration and support. In conclusion, he emphasized the need for sustained international engagement in the search for a just and lasting resolution to the crisis.

MOSCOW: Russia said on Tuesday it was expelling a British diplomat who it accused of espionage and summoned London's ambassador to the foreign ministry in Moscow. The FSB security service said the diplomat appeared to have carried out "intelligence and subversive work, threatening the security of the Russian Federation", state news agencies reported. The development came hours after Russia confirmed it had arrested a British man captured fighting for Ukraine, amid heightened tensions between Moscow and the West over the state of the conflict, which began nearly three years ago. The FSB said the diplomat had "deliberately provided false data when obtaining permission to enter our country, thus violating Russian law". Footage broadcast by state media showed Britain's ambassador arriving at the foreign ministry in central Moscow after being summoned for talks, minutes after the expulsion was announced. London and Moscow have expelled several of each other's diplomats on spying allegations in recent years. The FSB said the man expelled on Tuesday was a replacement for one of six British officials that Russia had expelled earlier this year, also on spying accusations.—APP

## OGRA seeks support for uninterrupted transportation of pol products

ISLAMABAD :In coordination with the Petroleum Division, the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has urged law enforcement agencies to ensure the smooth transportation of tank lorries carrying petroleum products to retail outlets. "OGRA, in coordination with the Petroleum Division, has requested law enforcement agencies through Chief Secretaries and local administrations to ensure the unhindered transportation of tank lorries carrying petroleum products to the retail outlets," said an OGRA spokesperson in a statement. To address any challenges faced by tank lorries during transportation, a dedicated communication channel has been established between Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) and District Administrations/Law Enforcement agencies. This initiative aims to ensure a steady and uninterrupted supply of petroleum products across the country.—APP

## Germany urges EU to prepare for Trump tariffs

FRANKFURT: Europe must prepare for US President-elect Donald Trump to impose hefty tariffs on its exports and stick together to combat any such measures, Germany's economy minister said Tuesday. Robert Habeck's comments came after Trump said Monday he intends to slap sweeping duties on goods from Mexico, Canada and China on his first day in office. "We have to be prepared for the fact that something similar could also happen to Europe or Germany," Habeck, who is also Germany's vice chancellor, told a business conference in Berlin. On the campaign trail, Trump threatened to hit goods from across the world with higher tariffs, rattling nerves in Europe as the United States is a major destination for the continent's exports. The president-elect's announcement on Monday indicates that his threats should be taken seriously, Habeck said. Donald Trump vows to slap 25% tariffs on Mexico, Canada, 10% tariffs on China "The EU must react to this in a united manner (and) speak together as Europe," he said, adding that the continent's leaders should seek dialogue before thinking about retaliatory measures. "It must be made clear that in the end everyone loses" from tariffs, including the United States, said Habeck. He noted that by vowing to hit Canada and Mexico with tariffs, Trump was targeting two countries with which Washington had a free trade agreement.—APP

## Russia expels UK diplomat accused of espionage

MOSCOW: Russia said on Tuesday it was expelling a British diplomat who it accused of espionage and summoned London's ambassador to the foreign ministry in Moscow. The FSB security service said the diplomat appeared to have carried out "intelligence and subversive work, threatening the security of the Russian Federation", state news agencies reported. The development came hours after Russia confirmed it had arrested a British man captured fighting for Ukraine, amid heightened tensions between Moscow and the West over the state of the conflict, which began nearly three years ago. The FSB said the diplomat had "deliberately provided false data when obtaining permission to enter our country, thus violating Russian law". Footage broadcast by state media showed Britain's ambassador arriving at the foreign ministry in central Moscow after being summoned for talks, minutes after the expulsion was announced. London and Moscow have expelled several of each other's diplomats on spying allegations in recent years. The FSB said the man expelled on Tuesday was a replacement for one of six British officials that Russia had expelled earlier this year, also on spying accusations.—APP

## Briefs

### CJP calls JPC meeting on Dec 6

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Yahya Afridi has called a meeting of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JPC) on Dec 6. The upcoming JPC meeting, called by Chief Justice Afridi, will focus on the appointment of judges to the Sindh and Peshawar high courts. Following the approval of the 26th constitutional amendment and the subsequent reorganisation of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan, Chief Justice Yahya Afridi had convened the first meeting of the JPC on Nov 5. During the first meeting of the Judicial Commission, a decision was made to form a seven-member constitutional bench under the leadership of Justice Aminuddin Khan. Seven members of the 12-member commission voted in favour of Justice Aminuddin's appointment, while five members opposed it. It is important to note that during the previous meeting of the JPC, Chief Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, and opposition members in parliament Umar Ayub and Shibli Faraz had opposed Justice Aminuddin Khan's appointment.

### ATC extends Omar's interim bail

COURT REPORTER

LAHORE: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Tuesday extended the interim bail of Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Omar Ayub until December 7 in three cases, including the attack on Jinnah House, related to the May 9 riots. ATC Judge Manzer Ali Gill conducted proceedings on the pre-arrest bail applications, during which Omar Ayub did not appear. However, his counsel filed an exemption application and requested the court to exempt his client from personal appearance for one day. He submitted that Omar Ayub could not appear due to road closures. At this, the court allowed the application and exempted Omar Ayub from personal appearance for one day, besides extending his interim bail until December 7.

### Israeli strikes kill over 30 in Beirut

BEIRUT: Israel's military operations in Lebanon have intensified, killing at least 31 civilians over the last 24 hours amid international efforts to reach a ceasefire. Israeli attacks also wounded 62 people across the country on Monday, according to the country's Health Ministry. Israel's military struck the areas of Tayr Harfa and Chamaa on Tuesday morning, with video footage showing plumes of smoke rising above Beirut's southern suburbs. - Agencies



ISLAMABAD: Protestors of Pakistan Tehreek Insaf March reach Srinagar Highway in the Federal Capital. -Online

## Three terrorists killed as forces foil infiltration bid on Pak-Afghan border

*Terrorists were trying to sneak into Pakistan via Afghanistan border in Hassan Khel area, says ISPR*

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Security forces have thwarted an infiltration attempt by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) terrorists on Pakistan-Afghanistan border in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, killing three militants, the military's media wing said on Tuesday. According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the security forces detected the movement of a group of terrorists, who were trying to sneak into Pakistan via the Afghanistan border in the general area of Hassan Khel in North Waziristan District.

However, the security personnel successfully thwarted the infiltration bid by surrounding and eliminating three militants in an intense exchange of fire. "Pakistan has consistently been asking the interim Afghan government to ensure effective border management on their side of the border," the ISPR said. It added that Afghan government is expected to fulfil its obligations and deny the use of Afghan soil by terrorists for perpetuating acts of terrorism against Pakistan. "Security forces are determined and remain committed to secure its borders and eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country," the statement concluded. Pakistan has witnessed a spike

in terror attacks on security forces and civilians - especially in KP and Balochistan since the Taliban returned to power in Afghanistan in 2021 following the withdrawal of US and NATO forces. As per a report by the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), the third quarter of 2024 saw a 90% increase in fatalities linked to terrorist violence and counterterrorism operations. The report recorded 722 deaths and 615 injuries in 328 incidents, with KP and Balochistan accounting for 97% of fatalities. Against this backdrop, the federal cabinet in June this year approved Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, a reinvigorated national counter-terrorism campaign following the

Central Apex Committee's recommendations under the National Action Plan to root out terrorism. The government also introduced a major policy shift under a decision to stringently enforce international laws at its borders with Afghanistan, to restrict the influx of militants and smuggled goods into the country. Afghanistan does not recognise the Durand Line, the border between the two countries, arguing it was created by the British to divide ethnic Pashtuns. The 2,640 kilometres border was established in 1893 through an agreement between British-ruled India and Abdur Rahman Khan, then ruler of Afghanistan.

## Israel expected to approve ceasefire with Hezbollah

EU's foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said Tuesday that Israel has no reason to refuse a ceasefire with Lebanon along the lines proposed by France and the United States

FOREIGN DESK

JERUSALEM/BEIRUT: Israel looks set to approve a US plan for a ceasefire with Lebanon's Hezbollah on Tuesday, a senior Israeli official said, clearing the way for an end to the conflict that has killed thousands of people since it was ignited by the Gaza war 14 months ago. Israel's security cabinet is expected to convene later on Tuesday to discuss and likely approve the text at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the official said. EU's foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said Tuesday that Israel has no reason to refuse a ceasefire with Lebanon along the lines proposed by France and the United States. "There is not an excuse for not implementing a ceasefire... No more excuses. No more additional requests. Stop this fighting. Stop killing people," Borrell said at a G7 foreign ministers meeting near Rome. Lebanon's foreign minister Abdallah Bou Habib said he hoped a ceasefire to end fighting between Israel and Lebanese armed group Hezbollah would be agreed later on Tuesday. He said the Lebanese army would be ready to have at least 5,000 troops deployed in southern Lebanon as Israeli troops withdraw, and that the United States could play a role in rebuilding infrastructure destroyed by Israeli strikes. As truce talks intensified, Lebanon's health ministry said Israeli strikes killed at least 31 people on Monday, mostly in the south.

## WB vows to assist Pakistan in addressing economic challenges

The Finance Minister reiterated the government's commitment to fiscal discipline, sustainable growth, and efficient resource utilization

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank has reiterated commitment to assisting Pakistan in addressing economic challenges and achieving its developmental objectives. The resolve was expressed during a meeting between Minister for Finance Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and Country Director of the World Bank, Najib Benhassine and his team at the Finance Division today. The meeting was also attended by the Secretary Finance and senior officers of the Finance Division. During the meeting, the Finance Minister highlighted the importance of collaboration with the World Bank to support Pakistan's economic reforms and development agenda. He appreciated the World Bank's financial and technical assistance across various sectors. The Finance Minister reiterated the government's commitment to fiscal discipline, sustainable growth, and efficient resource utilization. The discussions focused on the establishment of a robust and transparent tax policy framework to enhance revenue mobilization and improve compliance while ensuring equitable taxation. The World Bank team also offered technical assistance to streamline the budget-making process, adopting modern practices to improve transparency and accountability in public financial management, an effective debt management mechanism to ensure fiscal sustainability and reduce risks. Issues related to Agricultural Income Tax Regime and GST harmonisation in coordination with provinces and enhanced focus on active role of National Tax Council also came under discussion. The Finance Minister expressed gratitude for the World Bank's support and reaffirmed the government's resolve

to implement reforms aimed at sustainable economic progress. On the occasion, the Country Director of the World Bank appreciated the government's reform initiatives and assured continued support from the World Bank in key areas identified during the discussions. Meanwhile, Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held a meeting with a delegation of the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) led by Dr. Andreas, Chairman IASB. The delegation included Mr. Jianqiao Lu, Member IASB, Mr. Farukh Rehman, President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP), and Mr. Rana Usman Khan, Chairman of the Asia-Oceania Accounting Standards Group. Mr. Ashfaq Tola, Chairman of the Reforms and Resource Mobilization Commission of Pakistan (RRMC) and senior officers from the Finance Division also attended the meeting. The Finance Minister highlighted the government's comprehensive policy framework aimed at enhancing tax revenues through improved documentation and financial transparency. He emphasized the importance of standardizing financial regimes to align with global practices, which are crucial for fostering investor confidence, both domestic and international. He reiterated the government's commitment to ensuring policy continuity to create a conducive environment for sustainable economic growth. Dr. Andreas acknowledged Pakistan's leadership in adopting international accounting standards and commended the country for being an early follower of global practices. He expressed appreciation for the support provided by ICAP in advancing these efforts, emphasizing the role of professional organizations in promoting financial transparency and capacity building.

## Gilani calls for enhanced Pakistan-Saudi coop

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Tuesday emphasized the need to strengthen trade ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in key sectors such as textiles, agriculture, and technology to achieve shared prosperity. During his official visit to Saudi Arabia, Gilani, accompanied by his delegation, held separate meetings with the Speaker of the Saudi Shura Council and the Saudi Arabia-Pakistan Friendship Group, according to a news release. "I deeply appreciate the warm reception and hospitality extended by the Speaker of the Shura Council," he said during the meetings. Discussions centered on bilateral cooperation, trade relations, and critical issues such as Palestine and Kashmir. "This visit reflects the strong brotherly ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia," he added. Gilani called for enhanced institutional collaboration, increased delegation exchanges, and stronger people-to-people connections between the two nations. He urged joint efforts by Saudi Arabia and Pakistan to resolve the issues of Palestine and Kashmir for the rights of Muslims worldwide. "The global community must raise its voice against the ongoing atrocities in Palestine and Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK)," he stressed. He called for practical solutions in line with United Nations resolutions and international laws. Highlighting severe human rights violations by Indian forces in IIOJK and Israeli forces in Palestine, Senate Chairman urged the global community to address these urgent issues. He also expressed gratitude for Saudi Arabia's unwavering support for Pakistan's stance on these matters, underlining the importance of continued collaboration to advance mutual interests.

## Trump vows big tariffs on China

WASHINGTON: US President-elect Donald Trump on Monday said he intended to impose sweeping tariffs on goods from Mexico, Canada and China, prompting a swift warning from Beijing that "no one will win a trade war." In a series of posts to his Truth Social account, Trump vowed to hit some of the United States' largest trading partners with duties on all goods entering the country. "On January 20th, as one of my many first Executive Orders, I will sign all necessary documents to charge Mexico and Canada a 25 per cent tariff on all products coming into the United States," he wrote. In another post, Trump said he would also be slapping China with a 10pc tariff, "above any additional Tariffs", in response to what he said was its failure to tackle fentanyl smuggling. - Agencies

## Fuel shortage looms as supply hindered to various cities

Ogra assures of all possible measures to improve fuel supply, says it is in contact with stakeholders

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The government's measure to block roads in its bid to deter and hinder the progress of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers' march towards Islamabad has resulted in adverse repercussions for the fuel supply chain leading to the risk of shortages in Lahore and Rawalpindi. "There is a chance of shortage of petroleum products in Lahore and across Punjab [...] Petrol stock is low at some petrol pumps in Lahore [but] has not run out [yet]," said Petroleum Dealers Association Secretary Khawaja Atif in a statement. The warning comes as any fuel shortage would significantly add to the woes of citizens - whose movement has already been restricted due to roadblocks - and will further compound the financial repercussions of the ongoing protest, which according to Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb cost Rs190 billion per day to the country.

Expanding on the situation, Atif lamented the hindered fuel supply and said that Lahore's daily consumption of petroleum products exceeded five million litres, whereas the number stood at around 50 million litres for the whole of Punjab. Warning that the continuation of the prevailing circumstances might lead to serious consequences, the association's secretary urged the government to open the roads so that the fuel supply could be restored. It is to be noted that the Lahore division serves as a major hub for economic and commercial activity and the inability to replenish fuel supplies on time will adversely affect essential services, daily operations and livelihoods of millions in this region and its surrounding areas. The News reported on Tuesday. Shedding light on the situation in Rawalpindi, Chaudhry Zafar Elahi, President of the Petroleum Dealers Association North, expressed concern over the depleting petrol stock at filling stations in the city.

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