



Islamabad POST

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British history made in Katie Boulter win at Australian Open

Detailed News On Page-06

Pak and HK to strengthen cooperation

Detailed News On Page-08



Turkish envoy for expanding Trade With Pak

Detailed News On Page-03



Supreme Court says

People entering Corps Commander House was a 'security breach'

Khawaja Haris, the counsel for the Ministry of Defence, said that the trial of civilians was not a sudden development, as the law has existed since 1967; The top court, in its unanimous verdict by a five-member bench, on October 23 last year, declared civilians' trials in military courts null and void

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court's Justice Hasan Azhar Rizvi said on Tuesday that people entering the Corps Commander House in Lahore on May 9, 2023, was indeed a "security breach" "Did people reach the Corps Commander's house on May 9? People entering the Corps Commander's House is indeed a security breach," Justice Rizvi remarked during a hearing. The judge's remarks came as the apex court's constitutional bench - headed by Justice Amin-Ud-Din Khan - heard intra-court appeals against trying civilians in military courts. The top court, in its unanimous verdict by a five-member bench, on October 23 last year, declared civilians' trials in military courts null and void and ordered that 103 suspects be tried in civilian courts. However, on December 13, 2023, a six-member bench of the apex court - with Justice MusarratHilali differing with the majority - suspended its October 23 order on petitions challenging it. The top court was then again moved against the December order. But after a hiatus, the constitutional bench in December last year conditionally allowed military courts to pronounce reserved verdicts of 85 civilians who were still in custody for their alleged involvement in the May 9, 2023, riots. The May 9 riots refer to the violent protests triggered by the arrest of the PTI founder in a corruption case, during which

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PTI to submit written demands on January 16: Barrister Gohar
PTI chairman emphasised that there is no deal happening

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar stated that the ongoing negotiations are the same as those happening with the government, and that on January 16, they will present two written demands to the government. While speaking to the media outside Adiala Jail, Barrister Gohar said that sometimes judges delay decisions as they need time to write them. "Yesterday, we were informed that a decision would be made," he added. He further mentioned that Imran Khan had been told to arrive at 9 AM, and as soon as his lawyers arrive, he would present himself.

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Fitna al-Khawarij to eliminate soon PM Shehbaz hopeful of lasting peace in Kurram

Convoy of 25 vehicles carrying essential items reaches violence-hit KP district amid tight security

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: As affected parts of the Kurram district received a second consignment of essential goods on Tuesday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he hoped the peace in the restive region would last as the situation was witnessing a gradual improvement after the recent peace pact. "In Kurram, the situation is gradually improving. After the peace agreement, there was a huge setback, but [the situation is better now]," the prime minister told his cabinet members. PM Shehbaz mentioned the setback as just a day after the peace pact was signed, unidentified people fired upon a government vehicle, injuring Kurram Deputy Commissioner Javedul-Mehsud and multiple law enforcers. As a result of the attack, aid trucks scheduled to depart to the crisis-hit region had been stopped. However, as the law and order situation allowed, the aid trucks were sent to the district. "The bunkers are also being dismantled. Medicine and food supplies are also being sent over there," the prime minister

Continued on Page 06

Madrasas safeguard Pakistani deological foundations: Fazl
National Action Plan targets religious institutions, blames JUI-F Chief

DNA

VEHARI: Chief of JamiatUlema-e-Islam (JUI-F), MaulanaFazlurRehman, asserted that if weren't for madrasas, the ideological foundation of Pakistan would have been buried. Speaking to the media in Vehari, FazlurRehman remarked, "We wear turbans not to bow our heads but to hold them high." He criticised what he called baseless propaganda against religious scholars, emphasizing that such campaigns undermine their role in society. He further stated that religious leadership has always promoted harmony and unity in the country. "If madrasas didn't exist,

Continued on Page 06

Petrol price expected to increase

ISLAMABAD: The federal government is expected to raise petrol price by Rs 3.50 per litre for the next fortnight, effective January 16, 2025. In addition, light speed diesel may see a price hike of Rs 5, while kerosene oil price could increase by more than Rs 6 due to fluctuations in the global market. The petroleum industry has submitted a working paper to the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) detailing the proposed price adjustments. - DNA



RAWALPINDI: Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir presenting a commemorative memento to Chief of Army Staff (CAS) of the Bangladesh Army, Lieutenant General S M Kamr-ul-Hassan, during a meeting. - DNA

Eight terrorists killed in KP IBOs

The military's media wing reported that the operations took place between Jan 12 and 13

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The security forces have killed eight terrorists in two separate operations across Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P), according to a statement from the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Tuesday. The military's media wing reported that the operations took place between January 12 and 13. The first operation was an intelligence-based raid in Tank district, where security forces successfully targeted a location of the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban

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Commander meets CJCS, COAS Pak, Bangladesh vow to promote regional peace

COAS reiterated the significance of joint efforts to promote peace and stability in South Asia and the broader region

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan and Bangladesh have agreed on the critical need for continued collaboration in promoting regional peace, security, and stability. An understanding to this effect was reached at a meeting between Chief of Army Staff (CAS) of the Bangladesh Army Lieutenant General S M Kamr-ul-Hassan and Army Chief General Syed AsimMunir in Rawalpindi. During their meeting, both held extensive discussions on the evolving security dynamics in

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TTP presence point of contention with Afghanistan: COAS

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir has said that the only points of contention between Pakistan and Afghanistan are the presence of the banned militant Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan outfit in

Continued on Page 06

Gaza ceasefire deal in 'final stages'

Mediators say negotiations are at their 'closest point' yet, with expectations of an imminent deal

FOREIGN DESK

DOHA: Negotiations to bring the 15-month conflict to an end are in their final stages, Qatar Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Majed al-Ansari told a news conference in Doha on Tuesday. Qatar, alongside the United States and Egypt, has sought to mediate a deal for many months. "A draft agreement has been handed to both Hamas and Israel and major obstacles on key contentious issues between the two sides have been addressed," al-Ansari said. "Current discussions in Doha are focused on finalising the

remaining details," he continued. "Today, we are at the closest point ever to having a deal." The spokesperson predicted that the implementation of the ceasefire agreement would occur "very shortly after it is finalised". "We do believe that we [Qatar] were able, through negotiations and through our partners in Egypt and the United States, to minimise a lot of the disagreements between both parties," al-Ansari added. However, he cautioned against setting expectations too high until there is a formal announcement. "We do believe we are at a developed stage, we do believe we are at a final stage, but obviously,

until there is an announcement, there will be no announcement," he said. "Therefore, we shouldn't be overexcited about what's happening right now. But certainly, we are hopeful." The US, Egypt and Qatar have spent the past year trying to mediate an end to the 15-month war and secure the release of dozens of captives taken during the Hamas-led attack on October 7, 2023. Some 100 Israelis are still captive inside Gaza, although the Israeli military believes at least one-third of them are dead. Israel's military bombardment of Gaza has killed more than 46,000 people and injured nearly 110,000, according to the Gaza Health Ministry.

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PTI failed to submit demands, says Siddiqui

"When the points are presented to us, consultations will be held with the seven coalition parties," says Siddiqui

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Senator Irfan Siddiqui, spokesperson for the government negotiation team, criticised the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for failing to present its demands in writing, despite promising to do so. Speaking to a private news channel, Siddiqui noted that PTI had pledged to submit written demands on December 23 but has yet to fulfil this commitment 22 days later. "It was promised on December 23 that demands would be presented in writing," Siddiqui said, adding: "It has been 22 days, but the demands have not been submitted. If they couldn't provide their demands in this time, it is not our fault." Siddiqui highlighted that the negotiation committee was formed on December 5, yet no written demands have been received. He further remarked that two demands were meant to be submitted to National Assembly Speaker SardarAyazSadiq but were not submitted.

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'Lost all faith in courts', Bushra Bibi tells judge

"Justice system, despite its flaws, is functioning. If it collapses, society will cease to exist," says ATC judge

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Bushra Bibi, the wife of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan, conveyed her loss of confidence in the legal system to a judge on Tuesday. Her comments came during hearing of a case in an anti-terrorism court (ATC), presided over by Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra, which pertained to allegations of ramming a vehicle into Rangers' personnel. During the hearing, the judge and Bushra engaged in

Continued on Page 06

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Pak-Iran trade issues

SB investigates delays in border market operations

Senator Manzoor Ahmed Kakar stated that in a recent meeting of a trade delegation with Iranian officials, the Iranian officials highlighted that the border markets have been delayed due to delays on the part of the Pakistani government

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Functional Committee on Problems of Less Developed Areas on Tuesday discussed the initiatives launched by the Ministry of Commerce to promote local trade facilities, including the border markets in less developed areas. During the meeting of the committee chaired by Senator Agha Shahzaib Durrani, officials of the Commerce Ministry informed that the government had initiated border markets with Iran and Afghanistan, however, the latter had rejected the proposal. Moreover, the physical structure of the border market with Iran was in place; however, it has not become operational due to delays from the Iranian government and lack of road connectivity in the region. The panel was informed that the government has also notified a duty concession for the border markets. Senator Manzoor Ahmed Kakar stated that in a recent meeting of a trade delegation with Iranian officials, the Iranian officials highlighted that the border markets have been delayed due to delays on the part of the Pakistani government. The committee, in order to identify

the cause of the delay, recommended that the Ministry provide details of communications held with the Iranian government within seven days. Furthermore, the committee deliberated on the policy guidelines concerning the certificate of origin for Iranian-origin goods and the way forward to streamline Pak-Iran trade issues. Officials of the Commerce Ministry informed that trade with Iran cannot be conducted through banking channels due to the existing US sanctions on Iran. However, the Balochistan High Court exempted the import/export form for trade with Iran in its stay, which was vacated in October of last year. Afterwards, the government introduced a 45-day waiver for Iranian-origin products, which has also expired. Senator Shahzaib Durrani questioned the fate of the goods ordered before the expiry of the waiver, for which payment has been made and which were currently lying at the port awaiting approval. The committee directed the State Bank of Pakistan and the Commerce Ministry to conduct a joint meeting on the issue so that the goods lying at the port could be cleared and individuals could be saved from losses. Earlier

in the meeting, the Committee discussed the recent status of the committee recommendations made in the previous meeting regarding the alleged corruption in the Park Road Federal Government Housing Scheme. The committee had directed the Housing Ministry to conduct an inquiry into the matter. Secretary of the Cabinet Division, Kamran Ali Afzal, expressed satisfaction with the NESPAC fact-finding and stated that the FIA is also conducting the inquiry and should analyze the report before conducting any further investigation. The committee chairman opined that it would be better if the ministry conducted the inquiry, as its officials understood the technicalities of the matter. The committee directed the Ministry to conduct an inquiry into the matter and submit the report within two weeks. Senators Muhammad Aslam Abro, Falak Naz, Danesh Kumar, Hamid Khan and Manzoor Ahmed Kakar attended the meeting. Secretary Cabinet Division Kamran Ali Afzal, Additional Secretary Finance and Revenue Amjad Mahmood and other senior officials from relevant departments were also present in the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: NDMA's Gender & Child Cell (GCC) collaborated with Gender Task Force and UN agencies hosted a two-day National Level Consultation titled "Transforming Communities through Women and Girls' Leadership for Climate Resilience and Gender Equality."

HIU nabs suspect in security guard's blind murder

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Industrial Area Circle Homicide Unit (HIU) team has apprehended a suspect involved in the blind murder of a private company's security guard and recovered the murder weapon on Tuesday. A public relations officer told APP that the accused, identified as Asad Ali, had fatally shot security guard Adil Shahzad using a firearm and fled the scene with the victim's mobile phone, motorcycle registration book, ATM card, and other belongings. DIG Raza took immediate notice of the incident and directed the police to ensure the swift arrest of the suspect. Police official said the police team conducted an investigation using advanced technical and scientific methods, which led to the identification and arrest of Asad Ali. The team also recovered the victim's stolen mobile phone, ATM card, registration book, and other items from the accused. Additionally, the pistol used as the murder weapon was also recovered from the suspect. IG Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi and DIG Islamabad commended the police team for their swift and efficient action. "The suspect will be prosecuted in court based on solid evidence to ensure he receives appropriate punishment," he added.

CDA conducts e-balling for 236 residential plots in sector C-14

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) conducted a successful e-balling process for the allotment of 236 residential plots in Sector C-14, a prime location nestled at the foothills of the Margalla Hills. The process, held under the direct supervision of Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa, was lauded for its transparency and efficiency. The e-balling was conducted with the technical assistance of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) to ensure openness and fairness on Tuesday. Seed numbers were randomly

collected from the participants attending the event to maintain integrity in the selection process. Overseas Pakistanis were given the first right of preference for the plots in Sector C-14. In case, successful applicants fail to pay their dues by the stipulated deadline, the plots will be allotted to citizens on a waiting list formed during the balloting. The CDA received an overwhelming response, with over 1,700 applications submitted for the limited plots. Sector C-14, touted as the future "E-7" of Islamabad, is a highly sought-after residential area due to its prime location and the promise of all modern civic

amenities. The CDA assured applicants that the development work in the sector is progressing rapidly, with 24/7 efforts underway to ensure timely completion. The list of successful candidates has been made available on the CDA's official website and social media platforms, ensuring accessibility for all participants. Chairman Randhawa extended his gratitude to the applicants for their trust in the CDA and congratulated the successful candidates. In light of the growing interest in Sector C-14, Chairman Randhawa announced plans to launch new residential sectors and accelerate development in previously launched sectors.

Somalian Education Minister, envoy visit IIUI

ISLAMABAD: His Excellency, Minister of Education, Culture, and Higher Education of Somalia, Farah Sheikh Abdulkadir, an alumnus of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), along with Somali Ambassador Sheikh Noor Mohamed Hassan visited the university. Minister Abdulkadir toured the Faculty of Shariah and Law, where he once studied. He met with the faculty there and shared his old memories. In the management block auditorium, he met with Somali students to encourage them in their academic pursuits. Meanwhile, he also held a meeting with the IIUI President, discussing avenues for collaboration in education and research.—APP

PSQCA devises mechanism to check food quality: Khalid

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Tuesday said that Pakistan Standard and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA) has mechanism to check the quality of Food & Non-Food items in the country. Responding to a supplementary question of Senator Haji Hidayatullah Khan, the minister said that currently, 173 food and non-food items such as cooking oil, refined palmolein, natural mineral water, wheat flour and others have been included.—APP

PNS YAMAMA visits Turkiye, participates in exercise Mavi Vatan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The newly commissioned Pakistan Navy Ship YAMAMA, during maiden voyage from Romania to Pakistan, visited Golcuk and Ak-saz Naval Bases Turkiye and participated in Turkish Navy Exercise MAVI VATAN-2025. Earlier, upon arrival, the ship was received by representatives of Turkish Navy Forces along with Naval Attaché of Pakistan. PNS YAMAMA's visit to Turkiye was aimed at strengthening brotherly relations and reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to foster wide-ranging bilateral relations and defence ties with Turkiye. In same context,



during the visit, a number of professional and social activities such as leadership engagements, visits to Turkish Naval facilities, professional interactions and discourse on professional subjects of mutual interests were conducted. Deputy Commander Turkish Naval Fleet, Vice Admiral Ibrahim Ozden

Kocer also visited PNS YAMAMA and received a detailed brief on Ship's capabilities. Besides port calls, PNS YAMAMA participated in Turkish Navy Exercise MAVI VATAN-2025. PNS YAMAMA was the only foreign participating unit other than Turkish Naval Ships.

ISSI, MEMO co-host webinar on dynamics in Palestine

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with the Middle East Monitor (MEMO), hosted a webinar titled, "How are the Dynamics in Palestine Impacting the International and Regional System." The webinar was moderated by Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA. The speakers at the webinar included Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI; Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG, ISSI; Dr. Daud Abdullah, Director Middle East Monitor (MEMO); Dr. Afaf Jabiri, Co-Director of the Centre for Social Justice and Change at the University of East London, UK; Dr. Daud Abdullah, Director Middle East Monitor (MEMO); Dr. Moatmer Amin, Department of Political Science, University of Cairo, Egypt; Dr. Jafar Haghpanah, Research Assistant at University of Tehran; Ambassador Mthuzuzeli Madikiza, Former South African Ambassador to Pakistan, and Dr. Ahmet Koro lu, Distinguished faculty member, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Istanbul University. DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood highlighted the roots of the Palestinian issue in seven decades of illegal occupation, brutal repression, and denial of self-determination. He echoed UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres' opinion, stressing that the events of 7 October 2023 did not happen in a vacuum and reflected a long history of marginalization and dispossession. He noted that the current dynamics in Palestine were having a profound impact on the international system, as reflected in: (i) contemptuous disrespect of international law, principles of UN Charter, and basic norms of state behaviour; (ii) virtual impunity for the perpetrator despite conducting a genocide; (iii) inability of the UN Security Council to act in the face of the most grievous danger to world peace and an existential threat to the Palestinian people; and (iv) uncertainties in the wake of the incoming Trump Administration with its commitment to Abraham Accords and a new regional security architecture. While noting global support for Palestine - from the Western street to the Global South to like-minded major powers - he urged decisive action from the Arab League, OIC, and the international community. He called for an urgent ceasefire, safe and sustained provision of humanitarian assistance, and start of negotiations for Palestinian statehood, emphasizing that for peace in the Middle East justice for the Palestinians was indispensable. Ms. Amina Khan highlighted the Palestinian refugee crisis caused by Israel's systematic occupation since 1948. She condemned the ongoing genocide in Gaza, which has displaced millions and questioned refugees' right of return, while commending Palestinians' resilience against oppression. Calling for urgent action, she emphasized their rightful return to an independent homeland with Jerusalem as its capital, noting pivotal legal developments like South Africa's ICJ initiative and the ICC's arrest warrant for Israeli leadership.—DNA

Waheed Group Chairman honored as Pakistan's top edible oil importer

DNA

KARACHI: Abdul Waheed, Chairman of Waheed Group of Companies was honored with the Highest Importer of Edible Oil award in Pakistan by the Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Shaikh, at the Pakistan Edible Oil Conference in Karachi. This recognition marks 40 years of excellence for Waheed Group in delivering high-quality products, particularly through their flagship brand, Fauji Supreme Cooking Oil and Banaspati. The event was widely attended by businessmen from the edible oil sector, along with other business leaders. The business community, especially those in manufacturing, congratulated the Chairman and Directors of Waheed Group. Faad Waheed, Director of Waheed Group, ac-

knowledged that the award is a testament to the group's dedicated service in the field. He expressed hope that Waheed Group would

continue to produce high-quality products in the future and emphasized the group's determination to foster business ties at regional and

international levels, particularly with overseas Chambers of Commerce and Industry, for the benefit of all stakeholders.



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JANUARY

Jan 01 / CUBA	Revolution Day
Jan 01 / Palestine	Palestine Revolution Day
Jan 01 / Sudan	National Day
Jan 04 / Myanmar	Independence Day
Jan 06 / Iraq	Armed Forces Day
Jan 12 / Tanzania	Armed Forces Day
Jan 14 / Uzbekistan	Armed Forces Day
Jan 15 / Nigeria	Armed Forces Day
Jan 20 / Mali	Armed Forces Day
Jan 20 / Laos	Armed Forces Day
Jan 25 / Thailand	Armed Forces Day
Jan 26 / Australia	National Day

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

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



Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Nasir stresses data-driven insights role in business growth

Highlights importance of private sector-government collaboration for unlocking economic growth

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Reliable data is no longer just a valuable asset; it has become essential for making informed decisions in a rapidly changing world. Stability and predictability, which are crucial for business success, depend heavily on the security environment. This was highlighted by Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), during

his speech at the launch of the Annual Security Assessment Report: Pakistan's Comprehensive National Security Profile 2024. The event was organized by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS). The audience included diplomats, think tank members, policy analysts, and business leaders. The report provided a detailed analysis of Pakistan's security situation, focusing on the evolving strategies of militant groups. In his address, Qureshi stressed

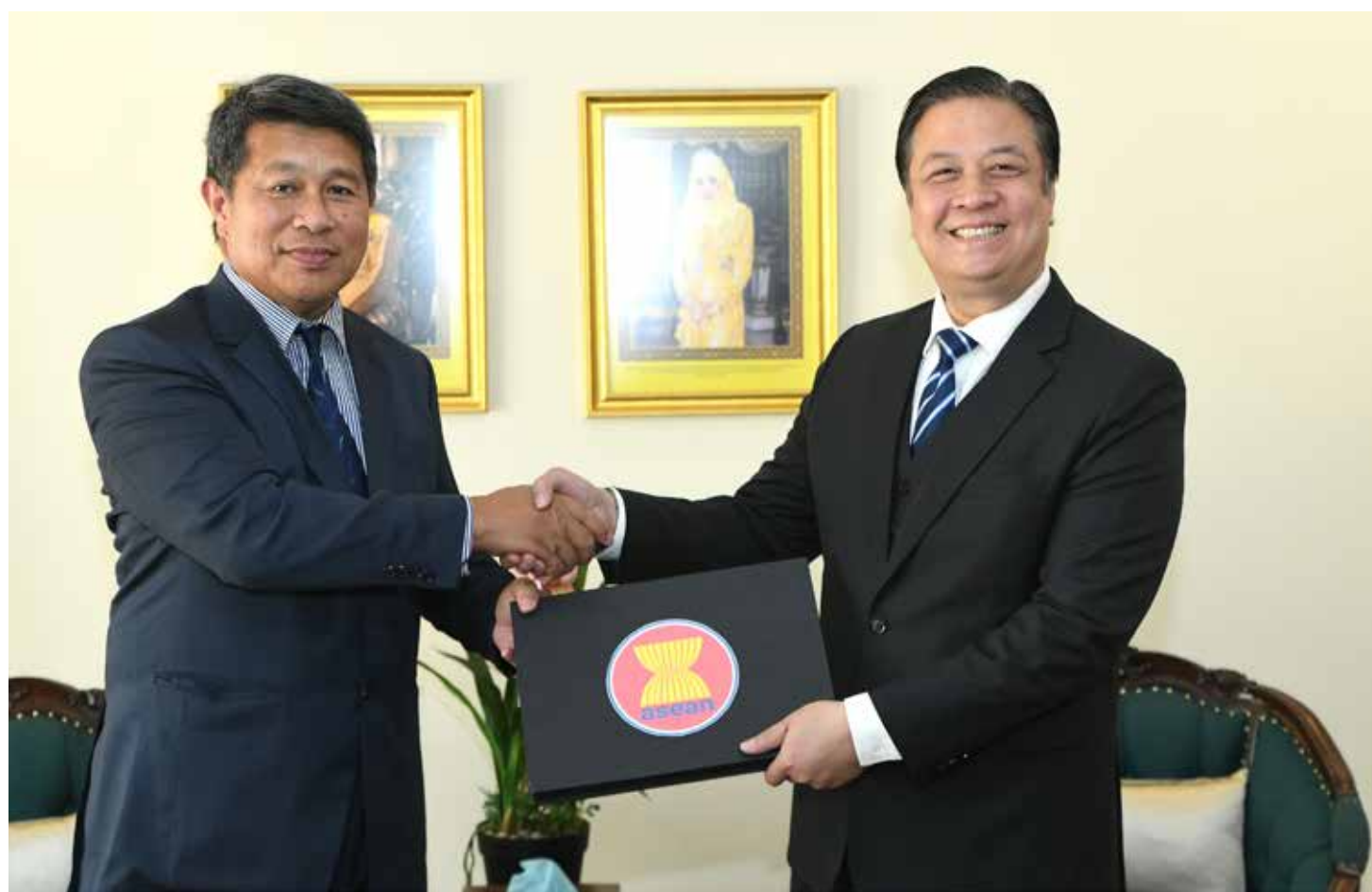
the importance of such reports in helping businesses anticipate risks, seize opportunities, and adapt to changing circumstances. He explained that security challenges affect all aspects of business, including supply chains, market access, investor confidence, and workforce management. Using data-driven insights helps businesses tackle these challenges effectively. Qureshi further emphasized that understanding regional security trends allows businesses to optimize

their operations, protect investments, and ensure continuity in uncertain times. He also highlighted the importance of collaboration between the private sector and the government to create an environment that promotes investment, innovation, and economic growth. He urged stakeholders to view the report as a guide for action, suggesting that aligning strategies with the report's findings could strengthen Pakistan's economy and ensure its long-term stability. Pres-

ident Qureshi praised PICSS for their detailed research and valuable report, calling it a critical resource for addressing security and economic challenges. He concluded by encouraging everyone to use these insights to work toward a safer and more prosperous Pakistan. The event reinforced the need for data-driven approaches to address Pakistan's security and economic challenges, laying the groundwork for sustainable growth and stability.

Mushaal urges students for physical, mental health

ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussein Mullick, wife of unlawfully incarcerated Kashmiri leader Yasin Malik said that students should focus on their physical as well as mental health for their bright future and play the positive role the development and prosperity of the country. She was addressing at Pakistan Chamber of Education Sports Gala Inauguration Ceremony as a chief guest, she urged that youth are the future of the country and assets of the nation, said a press release here on Tuesday.—



ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Brunei Kemal Ahmed handing over ASEAN Islamabad Committee Chair to the Ambassador of Vietnam, for the next six months. —DNA

Call for enhancing Pak-Turkiye parliamentary exchanges

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Tuesday expressed confidence that deepening parliamentary ties between the Pakistan and Turkiye would serve to further strengthen bilateral relations. During a meeting with Ambassador of Turkiye to Pakistan, Dr. Irfan Neziroglu he highlighted the enduring relationship between the two nations, which is deeply rooted in shared religion, history, culture, and a sense of brotherhood said a news release. While emphasizing the long-standing and strong ties between Pakistan and Turkiye Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said, "Pakistan and Turkiye are like one soul in two bodies." The speaker further underscored the deep affection and attachment that the people of Pakistan have for Turkiye, acknowledging the significant sacrifices made by the Turkish people in defending democracy and preserving national sovereignty. Ayaz Sadiq also pointed out that both countries share unanimity of views on key regional and global issues, particularly on Kashmir, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, and Karabakh. He noted that Pakistan and Turkiye have consistently supported each other's positions on these matters within international forums and reaffirmed the importance of continuing this mutual support. "The Pakistan-Turkiye Parliamentary Friendship Group in the National Assembly plays a vital role in advancing parliamentary diplomacy and fostering stronger connections between our two nations," he stated. He also stressed the importance of enhancing parliamentary exchanges, which he believes will contribute to greater understanding and cooperation between lawmakers from both countries.

Pindi Cantt Board and CDA issues resolved amicably

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Cabinet has resolved a long-standing issue between the Rawalpindi Cantonment Board and the Capital Development Authority (CDA) regarding the boundaries of municipal authority. This decision follows tireless efforts from both the Rawalpindi Cantonment Board and CDA authorities, bringing relief to the decades-long issue affect-

ing the people of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The Rawalpindi Cantonment Board was established in 1849, with its boundaries clearly defined in 1957. In contrast, Islamabad and the CDA were established in 1960, with the regional boundaries of Islamabad defined in a 1963 notification. This led to disputes over municipal authority boundaries in sectors G-13, G-14, H-13, H-15, I-12, and I-14, which were previously part of the Rawalpindi Cantonment

Board. A dispute arose regarding the boundaries of municipal authority among them, and the public faced various issues due to the resulting situation. The Federal Cabinet's decision resolves this issue, with the western region of H-13, from the railway line to GT Road, and the area south of the railway line to GT Road, up to IJP Road, remaining under the municipal authority of the Rawalpindi Cantonment Board. The remaining sectors

will be excluded from the board's municipal boundaries. The new boundaries will include areas adjacent to Golra Road, EME College, the Diary Farm, Chungi No. 26, and the Motorway Chowk, among others. This resolution will bring ease to the public and institutions, and it's essential to note that this determination only applies to municipal authority and does not affect the border boundaries between Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

Mohtasib addressed record number of complaints in 2024

ISLAMABAD: The Wafaqi Mohtasib, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi has said that the office received and redressed a record number of complaints during the outgoing year 2024, which stood at 226,371 and 223,171 respectively, indicating an increase of 17% and 16% in the receipt and disposal. He expressed these views while informally interacting with a group of journalists, who called on him at the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat here Tuesday. Warmly felicitating the journalists and media persons on the advent of the New Year, the Wafaqi Mohtasib termed members of the media his partner and stakeholders in his efforts to raise awareness about the Wafaqi Mohtasib and its services in support of the citizen's rights. He further added that the outreach of his office was continuously being increased and the new regional offices have been established at Muzaffarabad (AJ&K) and Gilgit which brings the number to 24. He added that the institution is planning to establish more regional offices in remote areas during this year. He further informed that 92.9 percent decisions made by his organization have been implemented during the year 2024, while expressing the resolve to achieve 100% implementation rate. He said that nearly 2.3 million households have benefited from the services of offered by the Wafaqi Mohtasib's Office since its establishment in 1983.—APP

AIOU celebrates 2nd anniversary of facilitation-cum-call center

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) celebrated the second anniversary of its Facilitation Center, established on campus to address student issues under one roof, and its Call Center, set up to provide information online to students residing in remote areas. The event was presided over by Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood and was attended by the university's principal officers and staff. The ceremony began with a cake-cutting, followed by the Vice Chancellor's address. Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood reiterated the university's commitment to enhancing educational standards, increasing enrollment, and maximizing student support facilities using all available resources. He emphasized that students are the university's most valuable asset, and providing them with necessary support remains a top priority. The Vice Chancellor instructed the Facilitation and Call Center staff to interact with students with kindness and respect, addressing their concerns promptly to ensure they leave satisfied that their issues were heard and resolved efficiently. On the suggestion of the Director of Student Advisory, the Vice Chancellor also directed the establishment of a mechanism for issuing reference letters to students. Earlier, the Vice Chancellor, along with principal officers, visited the Facilitation and Call Centers, personally reviewing the services provided at each counter and issuing directives for further improvement. The event was organized by the Directorate of Student Advisory and Counseling Services. Director Student Affairs, Syed Ghulam Kazim Ali gave a detailed presentation on the services of these centers.

Calligraphy workshop at PNCA

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA), National Art Gallery, hosted a captivating calligraphy workshop led by acclaimed Pakistani calligrapher Azeem Iqbal. The event drew aspiring artists and calligraphy enthusiasts, offering them a unique opportunity to learn from one of Pakistan's finest calligraphy masters. The workshop was a continuation of Mr. Iqbal's prestigious calligraphy exhibition, which is currently on display at PNCA. Mr. Iqbal introduced participants to the Kufic script, one of the oldest and most revered styles of Arabic calligraphy. Through live demonstrations, he showcased his precision and creativity, providing insight into the techniques and philosophy that define his work. Participants were given hands-on training, allowing them to explore the intricate art form while gaining a deeper understanding of its cultural and artistic significance.



The attendees expressed their appreciation for the workshop, describing it as an enriching experience that not only enhanced their skills but also deepened their connection to the heritage of calligraphy. One participant remarked, "It was a privilege to learn directly from a master. The workshop was truly inspiring." Director of the

Visual Arts Division at PNCA, Mariam Ahmed highlighted the organization's commitment to promoting traditional arts, stating, "PNCA is dedicated to preserving and showcasing the timeless art of calligraphy. We are grateful to Mr. Azeem Iqbal for sharing his expertise and inspiring the next generation of artists."



NOTICE FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS / HEARING

SHAHZAD PROCESSING SOLUTION (PVT.) LIMITED (SPS)- APPLICATION FOR REGULATED ACTIVITIES RELATED TO COMPRESSION FACILITY, STORAGE, TRANSPORTATION, MARKETING AND SALE OF PIPELINE QUALITY COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS FROM GAS FIELD ZAHRA NORTH-BADIN-IV SOUTH BLOCK

Shahzad Processing Solution Pvt. Limited (SPS) (the applicant) has applied for grant of license on 10-11-2021 to undertake regulated activities related compression facility, storage, transportation, marketing of CNG and Sale of Natural Gas/Flare Gas under NGRA (Licensing Rules, 2002).

The applicant further stated that the pipeline quality gas from Badin-IV South Block Gas fields will be received at 50 psi and 25 C° (77 F°) at the SPS facility. The gas is sweet and dehydrated with the gross heating value of around 1000 BTU/CuFt which will pass through a scrubber and filter to remove entrained liquids before entering the compressor and the compressed gas will be transported through bousers/mobile travasi systems to SPS's industrial consumers. Further, the Gas Sales and Purchase Agreement (GSPA) has been executed between Pakistan Exploration Pvt Limited (PEL) and SPS on 21-11-2024 for sale purchase of natural gas from Zahra North Gas Field located in Badin-IV South Block, Sindh Province.

After submission of the requisite data / information by the applicant, the Authority has admitted the instant application for Public Comments / Hearing. Therefore, all persons and parties who are likely to be affected by the grant of this license are hereby notified to file objections, written comments for intervention requests addressed to Sr. Registrar OGRA, describing the manner in which such persons/ parties may be affected by the grant of this license and may also appear on below mentioned Public Hearing.

The intervention request shall be filed along with fee of Rs.500/- (bank draft) and affidavit verifying the contents of communication before the date of Public Hearing. Copies of the documents submitted by the applicant can be obtained on payment of prescribed charges of Rs.2/- per page from the office of Senior Registrar or can be downloaded from OGRA's official website(www.ogra.org.pk)

In sequel to all above, OGRA has decided to hold Public Hearing in the instant matter according to date, time and venue mentioned below:

Date : January 28, 2025 (Tuesday)
Time : 10:30 a.m
Venue : OGRA Head Office, Sector G-10/4, Islamabad

For any information required from the applicant please contact:

Mr. Zahid Anwar
Advisor (Process & Facilities),
Shahzad Processing Solution (Pvt.) Ltd,
20, Main Margalla Road, Sector F-8/3, Islamabad, Tel: 051-2287170-75, Fax-051-2287154-55

SENIOR REGISTRAR
Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority
OGRA Office, 37 Mauve Area, Service Road South Sector G-10/4, Islamabad
Phone: 051-9108889, 051-9108890-98 (Ext-123), Fax: 051-9108810
Email: registrar@ogra.org.pk

Public Service Message:

گرمیوں کے موسم میں صحت کا تحفظ اور بیماریوں سے بچنے کے لیے احتیاطی تدابیر اختیار کرنے کی تلقین کی جاتی ہے۔

Briefs

Webinar on popularizing mathematics

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Cooperation Organization Science Foundation (ECOSF) and the IPKI Institute are set to host a webinar on January 15 on Popularizing Mathematics and Science. Prof. Dr. M. Zafar Iqbal, Professor Emeritus at Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU) will deliver a lecture on the remarkable contributions of Gregori Perelman, titled "Gregori Perelman: The Man Who Refused a Million Dollar Award." Gregori Perelman, a Russian mathematician, made history in 2006 by solving the century-old Poincaré Conjecture, a milestone in the field of topology. For his revolutionary insights into the analytical and geometric structure of the Ricci flow, he was awarded the prestigious Fields Medal, often considered the equivalent of a Nobel Prize in mathematics. However, Perelman declined both the award and the associated honor, stating, "I'm not interested in money or fame; I don't want to be on display like an animal in a zoo." The webinar will explore Perelman's monumental work, which has significantly influenced mathematics and geometry. According to the ECOSF, Prof. Dr. Zafar Iqbal, a distinguished physicist and academic leader, will shed light on the profound implications of Perelman's contributions. Dr. Iqbal's own academic journey includes serving as Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Chairman of the Department of Physics at Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. He is a recipient of Pakistan's Pride of Performance and Sitara-i-Imtiaz awards and a Fellow of the Institute of Physics (UK). This session is part of ECOSF and IPKI Institute's commitment to promoting scientific literacy and inspiring a deeper appreciation of mathematics and science in society. The webinar can be joined by the participants using Zoom Link: <https://tinyurl.com/mw699dts>. The further details are available at the web link: <https://ecosf.org/The-Man-Who-Refused-a-Million-Dollar-Award>.

This insightful talk will provide students, researchers, and enthusiasts a unique opportunity to explore the fascinating world of mathematics through the lens of Perelman's groundbreaking achievements.—APP

Roy acknowledges govt's efforts on women education

ISLAMABAD: Zindagi Trust founder Shehzad Roy emphasized the importance of providing equal educational opportunities for girls and boys, as it is crucial for the country's development. Speaking to a private news channel on Tuesday, he acknowledged the government's increased focus on women's education but stressed that much more remains to be done. Roy highlighted the issue of the declining number of women progressing from primary to higher education, describing it as a "pyramid effect." He also pointed out Pakistan's inadequate educational infrastructure and suggested that implementing co-education could help address the issue. Expressing concern about societal attitudes, he criticized the practice of prioritizing early marriages for girls over their higher education.—APP

Arfa Karim remembered

ISLAMABAD: The thirteenth death anniversary of the youngest Microsoft Certified Professional in the world, Arfa Karim Randhawa, was observed on Tuesday. Arfa Karim was born in a small village near Faisalabad on February 2, 1995. Arfa Karim became the youngest Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP) by passing the MCP examination at the age of just nine in 2004. Microsoft owner Bill Gates invited her to visit the company's headquarters in the United States when she was 10. She won many awards and international recognitions for her brilliance in the world of Information Technology (IT).—APP



ISLAMABAD: Heavy machinery being used for construction work of Serena Chowk Underpass Project during development work in Federal Capital.

Freedom of Kashmir to remain Pakistan's top priority

"AJK has made remarkable strides in economic and social development since its liberation from the Dogra rulers in 1947. However, much remains to be done to enhance the quality of life for our people

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and renowned diplomat Sardar Masood Khan highlighted the socio-economic progress of AJK while emphasizing the need for further development to improve the lives of the region's people. He reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering commitment to the Kashmir cause during an interactive session with the researchers from the Centre for International Strategic Studies Azad Jammu and Kashmir (CISS AJK). Delivering the keynote address, Masood Khan remarked, "AJK has made remarkable strides in economic and social development since

its liberation from the Dogra rulers in 1947. However, much remains to be done to enhance the quality of life for our people." He lauded the efforts of AJK's founding leaders, stating, "Our elders built this state from scratch with honesty, dedication, and commitment. Today, we have transformed significantly from having only one college in Mirpur in 1947 to now boasting five universities with 11 regional campuses, three medical colleges, and over 100 colleges across the region." He also highlighted the educational achievements of AJK, noting that thousands of students from the region pursue higher education in institutions across Pakistan and abroad, with the literacy rate in District Poonch nearing

an impressive 85%. Touching on infrastructure development, Masood Khan observed, "In 1947, we had only a dirt road connecting Muzaffarabad to Srinagar. Now, a comprehensive network of roads connects even the smallest villages with major cities in AJK and Pakistan." Discussing the region's untapped potential, he emphasized the importance of leveraging AJK's natural resources. "Our region has immense potential for hydropower generation and tourism development, thanks to its abundant water resources and natural beauty, which can attract both domestic and international tourists", he said. While acknowledging the progress, Masood Khan stressed the need to address public concerns.

"We must listen to the voices of our masses and civil society to bridge the gap between elected representatives and the electorate," he added. On the Kashmir issue, the former president reiterated that the liberation of Kashmir and the right to self-determination for its people remain Pakistan's top priority. He lamented the lack of international focus on the issue, stating, "While the global community's attention briefly turned to Kashmir after India's abrogation of its special status in August 2019, the issue has since receded to the background due to the COVID-19 pandemic and international political dynamics in Pakistan." Masood Khan praised CISS AJK for its initiatives and

commended its leadership under Dr. Asma Shakir Khwaja. He acknowledged the institute's dedicated efforts in advocating for the Kashmir cause and its contributions to critical research areas. The session began with welcoming remarks by the Executive Director of CISS AJK, who lauded Ambassador Masood Khan's distinguished career and expressed gratitude for his presence. A comprehensive presentation followed, showcasing the institute's achievements and academic endeavors. The event concluded with Dr. Asma Shakir Khwaja presenting a souvenir to Ambassador Masood Khan as a token of appreciation for his contributions and continued advocacy for the Kashmir cause.

Urdu poet Hafeez Jalandhari remembered

ISLAMABAD: Renowned Urdu poet, the creator of the country's national anthem, Abul Asar Hafeez Jalandhari was remembered on his 125th birth anniversary on Tuesday. Born in Jalandhar on January 14, 1900, Hafeez Jalandhari migrated to Lahore after the independence of Pakistan in 1947. He wrote the lyrics for the national anthem in 1952. Hafeez Jalandhari actively participated in freedom movement and used his writings to propagate for the cause of Pakistan. He also wrote the Kashmiri Anthem, "Watan Hamara Azad Kashmir". He also wrote many patriotic songs during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965. For his literary and patriotic services to Pakistan, Hafeez Jalandhari was awarded the Hilal-e-Imtiaz and Pride of Performance by the Government of Pakistan. He passed away on December 21, 1982 at the age of 82 years.—APP

IRSA releases 29,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 29,700 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 40,600 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1476.95 feet and was 78.95 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 15,100 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jehlum at Mangla Dam was 1134.40 feet, which was 84.40 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 5,900 cusecs and 100 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 20,500, 14,500, 2,000 and 5,000 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 13,600 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 6,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

US, China and UK top 3 destinations of Pakistani export

ISLAMABAD: The United States (US) remained the top export destination of Pakistani products during the first five months of the current financial year 2024-25, followed by China and the United Kingdom (UK). Total exports to the US during July-November 2024-25 were recorded at US \$2512.809 million against the exports of US \$2299.165 million during July-November 2023-24, showing an increase of 9.29 percent, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). This was followed by China, wherein Pakistan exported goods worth US \$1053.161 million against the exports of US \$1223.702 million last year, showing a decrease of 13.93 percent. UK was the third top export destination, where Pakistan exported products worth US \$935.018 million during the month under review against the exports of US \$863.481 million, SBP data revealed. Among other countries, Pakistani exports to UAE stood at US \$925.594 million against US \$817.848 million last year while the exports to Germany were recorded at US \$707.649

million against US \$613.778 million last year, data said. During July-November 2024-25, the exports to Holland were recorded at \$621.164 million against \$560.266 million whereas the exports to Italy stood at \$480.727 million against \$501.999 million. Pakistan's exports to Spain were recorded at \$600.871 million against the exports of US \$638.846 million while the exports to Afghanistan were recorded at \$406.674 million against \$234.563 million last year. The exports to Bangladesh stood at US \$313.998 million against US \$241.960 million. Similarly, the exports to France during the months under review were recorded at US \$230.857 million against US \$207.183 million while the exports to Belgium stood at US \$257.895 million against US \$236.207 million. Pakistan's exports to Saudi Arabia were recorded at US \$303.421 million during the current year compared to US \$275.619 million last year whereas the exports to Turkey stood at US \$136.769 million against US \$158.843 million.—DNA

HIU nabs suspect in security guard's blind murder

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Industrial Area Circle Homicide Unit (HIU) team has apprehended a suspect involved in the blind murder of a private company's security guard and recovered the murder weapon on Tuesday.

A public relations officer told APP that the accused, identified as Asad Ali, had fatally shot security guard Adil Shahzad using a firearm and fled the scene with the victim's mobile phone, motorcycle registration book, ATM card, and other belongings.

DIG Raza took immediate notice of the incident and directed the police to ensure the swift arrest of the suspect. Police official said the police team conducted an investigation using advanced technical and scientific methods, which led to the identification and arrest of Asad Ali. The team also recovered the victim's stolen mobile phone, ATM card, registration book, and other items from the accused. Additionally, the pistol used as the murder weapon was also recovered from the suspect.—APP

Police arrest 3 bike lifters with two stolen motorcycles

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested three bike lifters and street criminals and recovered two stolen motorcycles, Rs 55,000, weapons and other items from their possession, said a Police spokesman. He informed that a team under the supervision of SHO, Taxila Police Station managed to net three bike lifters namely Bilal, Behram and Bilal and recovered 10 stolen motorcycles and other items from their possession. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is underway.—APP

President, PM laud security forces

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday paid tribute to the security forces for eliminating eight Khawarji (terrorists) in two different operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Appreciating the forces for anti-terror operations in Tank and Tirah Valley, the president and prime minister reiterated the nation's resolve to root out terrorism from the country. "The people of Pakistan stand in support of their security forces to eliminate terrorism and are fully resolved to root out this scourge," the president remarked. Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the government and the security forces were pursuing the objective of eliminating terrorism in toto. "The entire nation feels proud of its brave security forces. We will continue to thwart the nefarious designs of the terrorists," the prime minister added.



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Efforts afoot to create job opportunities for youth

The prime minister was informed about the establishment of a platform named "Prime Minister Digital Youth Hub" to provide information regarding jobs and other services to the youth

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that equipping youth with professional skills was essential to increase job opportunities and the government was actively pursuing a policy to reduce unemployment by promoting the private sector. He said the "Uraan Pakistan" project would create new employment opportunities across the country. The prime minister chaired a meeting on his Youth Programme. The meeting was attended by Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema, Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, Min-

ister of State for IT Shaza Fatima Khawaja and senior officials from the relevant departments, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. During the meeting, the prime minister directed for the formulation of a strategy aligned with the market demands of friendly countries to provide employment to youth abroad, besides, desiring action against fake and unlicensed companies offering jobs abroad. "NAVITC and the Prime Minister's Youth Skill Development Programme should play their role in promoting technical and professional skills. Pakistan's future is linked to the development of the IT sector," the

press release quoted the prime minister as saying. The prime minister was informed about the establishment of a platform named "Prime Minister Digital Youth Hub" to provide information regarding jobs and other services to the youth. He directed that the Digital Youth Hub should be introduced in English language as well as in Urdu and all other local languages to make it accessible to the public. During the meeting, the prime minister was briefed on the progress of the Prime Minister's Youth Employment Plan, measures to equip the workforce with skills required by the international market and other projects.—APP

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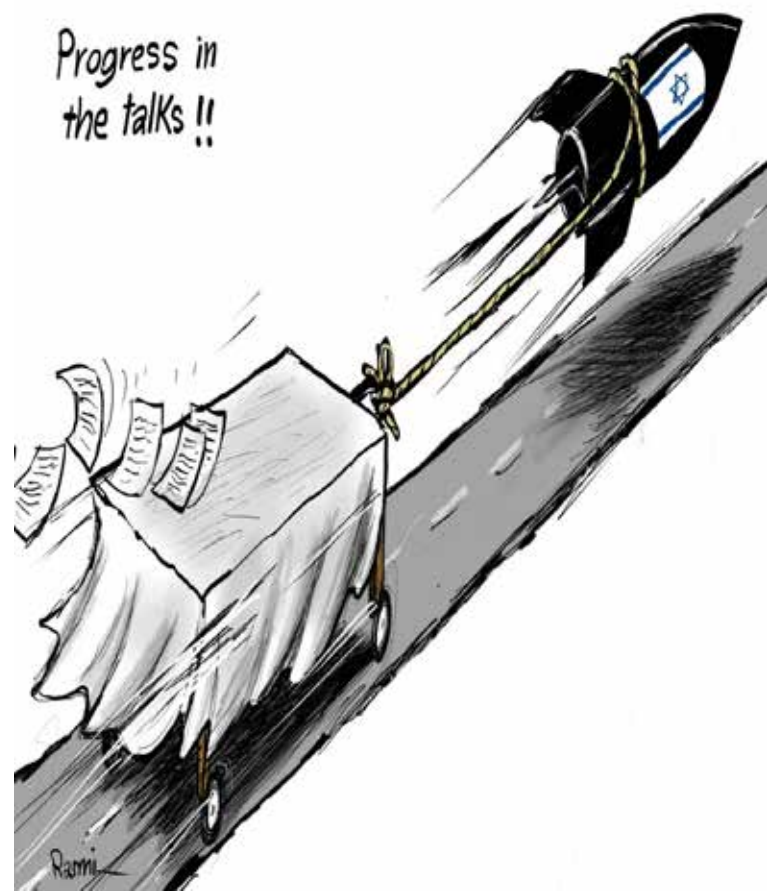
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Cutting off Russian gas

ON January 1, Ukraine terminated the transit of Russian gas to Europe, ending 34 years of almost uninterrupted supply since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Some in the West have celebrated this as a victory over Russia. If anything, it is a potential victory for Türkiye as the Southern Corridor – a 3,500 km-long route for transporting natural gas – rises in strategic importance to European industries rocked by high prices and low productivity. For all practical purposes, the sale, purchase and supply of gas or any other commodity are entirely commercial matters. However, Russian gas has long been politicized in the West, more so in the context of the crisis in Ukraine that started in 2014 and eventually led to Moscow launching what it called a “special military operation” against Kiev in 2022. Ukraine’s recent decision to end the long-standing gas supply route to Europe seems just another minor twist in that soap opera. In the big scheme, it won’t strike a major blow to Russia, despite Poland’s Foreign Minister declaring it a victory. Gas, like oil, flows to where the demand is. The war in Ukraine has seen a huge increase in Russian oil supplies to India and a continued growth in Russian gas supplies to China. Meanwhile, Russia has also increased its LNG exports to Europe to replace cheaper piped gas supplies. Numbers don’t lie. And export data shows that Russia hasn’t been weakened, although its economy has undoubtedly endured seismic shifts. Since 2014, Russia has, on average, exported \$420bn worth of goods each year, two-thirds of that oil and gas. After a hugely profitable year in 2022 when energy prices surged, Russia remained above that trend average in 2023 and looks set to repeat it when 2024 data is compiled. There’s nothing that suggests 2025 will be different, either. The two biggest losers here will be the unrecognised breakaway region of Transnistria within Moldova. In a perverse arrangement, a major power station in Transnistria supplied around one-third of all Moldovan electricity using Russian gas piped across Ukraine. Authorities in Tiraspol – the biggest city of Transnistria – need to engage with the Moldovan government in Chisinau to resolve energy shortages in both places. Specifically, Transnistria may have to bite the bullet on more expensive gas delivered from Europe to restart its power plant and provide electricity to Moldova in return. Of greater strategic importance is Slovakia. By picking a fight with an EU and NATO member, Zelensky may have bitten off his nose to spite his face: Slovakia, with Hungary, will almost certainly act as a major spoiler against Ukraine’s efforts to join NATO and the EU. It’s a timely reminder of how, in the war in Ukraine, statecraft has often been victim to the tyranny of short-term thinking. Ukraine will lose up to \$1bn per year in gas transit fees from its decision. It is one of the ironies of this long-running saga, that since the rise in tensions, Ukraine lobbied Western powers to pressure Russia into maintaining gas transit. In 2014, Ukraine received around \$3bn per year in gas transit fees, and in the face of huge economic challenges, wanted to retain this revenue. Even in 2024, the idea of swapping Azeri gas for Russian gas through the Ukrainian transit system was also mooted, allowing Ukraine to retain its lucrative transit income. Slovakia was a key partner to Ukraine in 2014, when the decision was taken to cease the purchase of gas directly from Russia and to replace it with a so-called reverse flow in which Europe would supply gas to Ukraine.



LA wildfires a reminder for US

CALIFORNIA’S wildfires burn almost every year, but this time, US media claimed they are painting scenes of an “Armageddon.” At least 24 people are believed to be dead and more than a dozen remain unaccounted for as wildfires continue to rage across Southern California, according to US media reports. In a Monday piece titled “L.A.’s wildfires have leaders fighting on two fronts: Nature and politics,” the Washington Post noted that the Democratic leadership in the state is under political attack from the opposition, rather than receiving “words of sympathy or pledges of rebuilding.” The Washington Post has found a problem, but it’s not complete. The haunting images of the 2023 Hawaii wildfires are still vivid in people’s minds. During California’s latest crisis, it feels as though the US is watching history repeat itself without taking action. Since 1983, the US National Interagency Fire Center has documented an average of approximately 70,000 wildfires per year within the country. This staggering figure should, in theory, lead to a well-organized and smoothly functioning fire-fighting system. Yet, when wildfires occur in the US, chaotic scenes continue to unfold. In Los Angeles – one of the wealthiest cities of the world’s richest country – fire hydrants have been found to have little to no water flowing out, leaving many residents powerless as the flames ravage everything in their path. It is lamentable that, according to reports from major US media outlets, many disaster victims seem to have resigned themselves to their fate. A recent Politico article mentioned that when the author asked victims whom they blamed, they pointed to the wind, to God, to population growth, or to the way Californians tucked their homes into the foothills, before they think of lack of investment in infrastructure or the fire hydrants that ran dry. Americans are suffering because the country has lost the ability to unite and transcend divisions in times of crisis. Both parties are engaged in finger-pointing. The Republican side labels California leaders as “incompetent,” and blames DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) initiatives, as well as female firefighters of color and lesbian firefighters. Meanwhile, the Democratic Party blames climate change and pushes back against the Republican attempt to “politicize” the fires. Yet, there is little effective discussion on how to resolve this ongoing crisis, what feasible solutions are available, or how the government will strengthen its ability to prevent and respond to natural disasters in the future. They fight each other amid the chaos of the fire, and in every other challenge they face nowadays. A society that should be uniting in the face of this crisis is instead being torn apart by constant blame and shifting responsibility, even as the fires continue to rage. As a result, some observers argue that the California wildfires were not just a natural disaster, but rather a man-made catastrophe. If American politicians were willing to rethink their approach to crises, this wildfire could serve as an opportunity to heal the nation’s deep political divisions. It should also prompt America to set aside its ideological biases, stop fixating on self-made “threats,” and instead focus on real-world dangers like extreme weather – issues that demand global unity. To make this shift, the US must champion cooperation.

Indonesian President’s visit to Pakistan

Dr M Ali Hamza



Let’s take a quick look at recent history. India’s sensitivity and concerns about combining visits to both Pakistan and India in the same travel itinerary became more pronounced in 2006, when US President George W. Bush visited India to sign a civil nuclear agreement and then flew straight to Pakistan to meet its then-President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf. That didn’t sit well with India at the time. Since then, Indian govt. want world leaders to separate their trips and keep their relations with India and Pakistan separately, means do not de hyphenate just ties but trips as well. A rather peculiar demand...

PAKISTAN is eagerly looking forward to the visit of President Prabowo Subianto, the newly elected leader of Indonesia. This visit will mark another milestone in the strong relationship between the two nations, which have enjoyed close ties since their independence. As the only G20 member state in Southeast Asia, Indonesia is the region’s largest economy and is recognized as a newly industrialized country. The data of 2024 shows that Indonesia is the world’s 16th largest economy by nominal GDP and 8th largest by purchasing power parity, with estimates of \$1.402 trillion and \$4.658 trillion, respectively. Pakistan admires Indonesia’s remarkable progress and is eager to learn from its experiences as a brotherly nation, in areas of socio-economic and political development. With the fourth largest population in the world and the largest Muslim population, Indonesia plays a significant role in global affairs and is a key member of ASEAN. Pakistanis acknowledge these achievements and are ready to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to President Prabowo Subianto. India’s Republic Day is just around the corner on January 26, celebrated with grandeur in New Delhi. A highlight of the event is the presence of a chief guest, who often brings along a contingent of soldiers to participate in the iconic parade. Organizing such a visit requires significant planning and coordination, so the chief guest is typically confirmed well in advance, with the public informed accordingly. However, this year has been unusually quiet. While it’s widely speculated that Indonesia’s newly elected president, His Excellency Prabowo Subianto, will be the chief guest, the Indian government has yet to make an official announcement. In previous years, the guest list was finalized much earlier. For instance, French President Emmanuel Macron’s participation in the 2024 Republic Day celebrations was confirmed in December 2023. Before that, Egypt’s President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi’s visit in 2023 was announced in November 2022. Even in 2020, when Brazil’s then-President Jair Bolsonaro attended, the confirmation came by November 2019. The only exception was in 2021, when the parade was cancelled due to the pandemic. So, what’s behind the silence about Prabowo’s visit this year? It’s an unusual break from tradition, sparking curiosity and speculation as India’s republic day approaches. Sources suggest that President Prabowo plans to visit Pakistan for a three-day trip immediately after attending India’s republic day celebrations on January 26. This could explain

the Indian government’s silence. From India’s perspective, it might seem awkward for a chief guest at such an important event in New Delhi to head straight to Pakistan afterward. The optics could appear unusual, given the longstanding tensions between the two countries. However, is it reasonable to let conflicting interests with a neighbour overshadow the sovereign decisions of another nation? Respecting Indonesia’s right to chart its own diplomatic path is key, and such decisions shouldn’t be viewed through a lens of contention. It seems the Indian government is hesitant to uphold its own principle when another country applies it, the policy of “de-hyphenation”. De-hyphenation is a diplomatic approach where a country maintains independent relations with multiple nations, even if those nations have conflicting interests. It ensures that ties with one country are not influenced or prioritized based on tensions with another. This strategy allows nations to engage with each other individually, treating each as a distinct entity rather than viewing them solely through the lens of their conflicts or rivalries. The concept promotes the idea of separating intertwined foreign policy narratives, enabling more nuanced and balanced relationships. It’s a reasonable and pragmatic approach, but the question remains, why hesitate when it’s someone else’s turn to exercise it? In 2014, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi introduced the de-hyphenation policy toward Israel. The goal was to establish diplomatic relations with Israel that were independent of India’s ties with Palestine. This approach was notably practiced in January 2018, when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited New Delhi to sign agreements on cyber-defence, security, and scientific cooperation. What made this visit particularly significant was its timing, it came just a month after India voted in favour of a United Nations resolution, brought by Türkiye and Yemen, opposing the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, a move against Palestinian interests. Since the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, India has taken a diplomatically neutral stance, applying a de-hyphenation approach to the conflict. While providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine during its time of crisis, India chose to abstain from voting on UN General Assembly Resolution ES-11/1. This resolution condemned Russia’s actions, called for a full withdrawal of Russian troops, and demanded

the reversal of the recognition of Luhansk and Donetsk as independent republics. If India can adopt this policy to balance its relations and priorities, why should it be a problem when another country does the same? After all, diplomacy is about respecting each nation’s right to chart its own independent course. Let’s take a quick look at recent history. India’s sensitivity and concerns about combining visits to both Pakistan and India in the same travel itinerary became more pronounced in 2006, when US President George W. Bush visited India to sign a civil nuclear agreement and then flew straight to Pakistan to meet its then-President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf. That didn’t sit well with India at the time. Since then, Indian govt. want world leaders to separate their trips and keep their relations with India and Pakistan separately, means do not de hyphenate just ties but trips as well. A rather peculiar demand, but one that seems to have been respected. As later American presidents Barack Obama, Donald Trump, and Joe Biden, have visited India without including Pakistan in their itineraries. It’s not just the US, when Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman visited India in 2019, he also went to Pakistan in the same month. However, to align with India’s stance, he took a detour, stopping in Dubai instead of flying directly to Islamabad. There are rumours that the Indonesian President may not travel to Pakistan directly from India. Instead, he might head to Malaysia from India late on January 26. However, there’s no official confirmation of this plan yet. Jakarta has also remained silent about the President’s itinerary, leaving things unclear. If President Prabowo does visit Malaysia, it’s uncertain whether he would then backtrack to Islamabad or postpone his trip to Pakistan altogether. For now, everything remains up in the air. Interestingly, President Prabowo’s predecessor, former President Joko Widodo, flew directly to Pakistan after his visit to India. It will be fascinating to see how President Prabowo approaches this. All eyes are on him and his potential visit to Pakistan. There’s no doubt that His Excellency has no intention of offending India, nor does he wish to be influenced by their pressure. Regardless of the itinerary, Pakistanis are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to host His Excellency. The bond between Pakistan and Indonesia transcends such superficial matters and their bilateral relations are built on a strong foundation of mutual respect and shared interests, far above any fleeting diplomatic nuances.

Don’t rejoice when the enemy dies

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



In Judaism, the Talmud teaches that “Whoever saves one life, it is as if they have saved the entire world” (Sanhedrin 37a). This powerful statement highlights the sanctity of every human life and the collective responsibility to protect and support one another. Hindu philosophy also recognizes the interconnectedness of all beings

ACROSS the broad spectrum of human emotions, grief and sorrow emerge as universal constants. Regardless of whether the loss is caused by a natural disaster or a human-made catastrophe, the pain remains equally profound. Recent events, such as the devastating fires in Los Angeles and the tragic destruction in Gaza, have once again highlighted these shared experiences. While the origins of these tragedies differ—Los Angeles being struck by a natural calamity and Gaza suffering the consequences of deliberate human actions—the anguish endured by those affected underscores the fragility and interconnectedness of human existence. Natural disasters, like the Los Angeles fires, are often perceived as forces of nature, beyond human control. They wreak havoc, displacing families, shattering communities, and leaving behind trails of destruction. In the face of such crises, collective empathy and solidarity often emerge as a beacon of hope. People from diverse backgrounds unite to provide aid and support, transcending boundaries of race, religion, and geography. Yet, despite this outpouring of humanity, the sorrow remains deep. The loss of life, homes, and cherished memories cannot be quantified in material terms. When someone’s home is consumed by flames, the damage goes beyond physical possessions—it creates an irreplaceable void in the heart. Contrastingly, the ongoing suffering in Gaza represents a tragedy of human making. This is not the result of unpredictable natural forces but deliberate actions stemming from political conflicts and power struggles. The scale of destruction in Gaza is immense, and the human toll is staggering. Entire families are obliterated, homes reduced to rubble, and futures shattered. The sorrow in this instance is compounded by the realization that such tragedies are preventable. They reflect humanity’s capacity for cruelty and disregard for life when blinded by enmity and greed. Both cases compel us to reflect on the nature of human suffering and our response to it. In moments of loss, the essence of shared humanity becomes evident. The Quran reminds us of this interconnectedness in Surah Al-Hujurat (49:13): “O mankind, We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of

you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you.” This verse highlights the unity of the human race and calls for mutual understanding and compassion. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) further emphasized the sanctity of human life and the need for empathy. In a well-known hadith, he said, “The believers, in their mutual kindness, compassion, and sympathy, are just like one body. When one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever.” This profound analogy underscores the importance of standing together in times of hardship, irrespective of the source of the calamity. Christian teachings echo similar sentiments. In the Bible, Romans 12:15 urges believers to “Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.” This call for empathy underscores the shared nature of human suffering and the importance of supporting one another in times of grief. In Judaism, the Talmud teaches that “Whoever saves one life, it is as if they have saved the entire world” (Sanhedrin 37a). This powerful statement highlights the sanctity of every human life and the collective responsibility to protect and support one another. Hindu philosophy also recognizes the interconnectedness of all beings. The concept of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam,” meaning “The world is one family,” reflects the idea that humanity is bound together in a shared existence. The Bhagavad Gita teaches compassion, non-violence, and the importance of performing one’s duty to help others, particularly in times of distress. Similarly, Buddhism emphasizes the cultivation of compassion and the alleviation of suffering. The principle of “Karuna” (compassion) is central to Buddhist teachings, urging individuals to act with kindness and empathy toward all living beings. However, it is disheartening to witness selective empathy in the world today. While natural disasters often evoke widespread sympathy, man-made tragedies can sometimes become entangled in political biases. The suffering of innocents in Gaza, for example, is at times overlooked or justified under the guise of geopolitical narratives. This selective morality undermines the universal principle of

valuing every human life. Reflecting on the title, “Don’t rejoice when the enemy dies, Friends will also die,” we are reminded of the dangers of dehumanizing others. Celebrating the demise of an adversary can lead to a cycle of hatred and retaliation, perpetuating suffering. The Quran warns against such attitudes in Surah Al-Isra (17:33): “And do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden, except by right. And whoever is killed unjustly – We have given his heir authority, but let him not exceed limits in [the matter of] taking life. Indeed, he has been supported [by the law].” This verse stresses the sanctity of life and the importance of justice, urging restraint even in the face of conflict. When we witness tragedies like the Los Angeles fires or the devastation in Gaza, it is a moment to pause and reflect on our shared vulnerability. These events remind us that suffering knows no boundaries and that human loss, regardless of its origin, is a wound to our collective soul. It is only when we internalize this truth that we can truly empathize with others and work towards a world that values life above all else. The lessons from the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) guide us toward compassion and justice. They remind us to rise above petty divisions and view every life as sacred. In the face of natural calamities, we must come together to support those in need. In instances of human-made disasters, we must strive to address the root causes and advocate for peace and reconciliation. Ultimately, the pain of losing one’s home, whether to a fire or a bomb, is a stark reminder of life’s uncertainties. It teaches us to cherish what we have and to extend our hands to those who have lost everything. The true test of humanity lies not in how we respond to the suffering of those we know and love but in how we react to the pain of strangers and even adversaries. The world today needs more compassion, understanding, and collective action. As individuals and as a global community, we must reject the notion of selective empathy and embrace the universal principle of valuing all lives equally. Only then can we hope to build a world where sorrow is met with solace, and suffering is alleviated by solidarity.

Briefs

People entering Corps...

FROM PAGE 01
state installations, including the General Headquarters, were also attacked. As a result, the military court handed down punishments to all 85 accused last month, but a few days ago, 19 convicts were pardoned after they appealed for mercy. During the hearing, Khawaja Haris, the counsel for the Ministry of Defence, said that the trial of civilians was not a sudden development, as the law has existed since 1967. In the FB Ali case, those prosecuted were retired individuals, he said, adding that even during peacetime, civilians interfering in military affairs would face trial in military courts. At this, Justice Azhar remarked that it should be noted the FB Ali case occurred during a period of civil martial law. He questioned whether there was a mastermind behind the conspiracy and who orchestrated it. To this, Haris responded that the trial of the mastermind or conspirators would also take place in the military courts.

PTI to submit...

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"Since I have been in this jail, no trial has started before 11 AM," Barrister Gohar remarked. Barrister Gohar emphasized that there is no deal happening. "If such a deal were happening, we wouldn't hide it from the public. The negotiations are the same as those with the government." When asked about the recent meeting between Army Chief and Ali Amin Gandapur, Barrister Gohar explained that such meetings are ongoing, mainly about law and order situations, and maintaining working relations is essential.

PTI failed to submit...

FROM PAGE 01
"When the points are presented to us, consultations will be held with the seven coalition parties. All coalition parties will then consult with their leadership on the demands," Siddiqui explained. He also emphasised that deliberation takes time, saying: "It is not possible for a letter to arrive one day and for a response to be given to the letter on the same day. If the demands are substantial, we need to deliberate on them. We must form a collective stance after the demands are presented." Siddiqui assured that while the PTI set a January 31 deadline, the government would provide a response before that date.

'Lost all faith in courts'...

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conversation with the former saying: "It has taken some time, but legal protocols have been followed." To this, the former first lady replied: "That is not an issue, but we have lost faith in the courts". Disagreeing, Judge Sipra assured: "It is not like that everywhere. The justice system, despite its flaws, is functioning. If it collapses, society itself will cease to exist. You have appeared before me in other hearings as well."

Gaza ceasefire...

FROM PAGE 01
According to details leaked by the Israeli media, the ceasefire deal being hammered out will be implemented in three stages. In the first, 33 Israeli captives being held in Gaza will be released. Israel will free 50 Palestinian prisoners in exchange for each female soldier released, and 30 Palestinian prisoners in exchange for the remaining civilians being held captive. The second phase will begin 16 days later, focusing on negotiations to release the remaining prisoners. The final stage will address long-term arrangements, including an alternative government in Gaza and rebuilding efforts. The reports also said Israel will completely withdraw from the Philadelphia Corridor - the strip of land between the borders of Gaza and Egypt - at the end of the first phase of the deal.



ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussein Mullick Chairperson Peace and Culture Organization and wife of Jailed Kashmiri Hurriyat Leader Mohammad Yasin Mullick confer medal to students during the prize distribution ceremony of annual Sports Gala of Private Educational Society as a Chinese woman also showers her interest, at Sports Complex in Federal Capital. - Online

ICC grapples with Afghanistan dilemma

The rapid rise of their men's team has coincided with the disbanding of their women's squad even though that team never played any international match

NEW DELHI: After years of showcasing Afghanistan's remarkable rise as a success story, the International Cricket Council (ICC) is under pressure to crack the whip on its member nation, which has seen major curtailment of women's rights by the Taliban government. England and South Africa have been urged to boycott next month's Champions Trophy matches against Afghanistan, whose maiden appearance in the men's 50-overs tournament as one of the world's top eight teams is a testament to their growth in recent years. The rapid rise of their men's team has coincided with the disbanding of their women's squad even though that team never played any international match. The Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) had 25 contracted women players in 2020 but most of them are now living in exile in Australia following the Taliban takeover of their country in August 2021. The new rulers clamped down on the rights of women and girls, restricting their access to education and work, curbing their freedom of movement, and forcing them to cover their faces and bodies.

"Where's the hope for women that want to

play sport, want to go to school, that want to be able to work? Where is the hope for them?" Tonia Antoniazzi, a Labour MP in the UK, told BBC. "This is a bigger issue around sex-apartheid that I feel very strongly about." While the English and the South African boards have ruled out boycotting Champions Trophy fixtures against Afghanistan, they placed the onus on the ICC to formulate a unified approach to the tricky issue. The Dubai-headquartered governing body said it was on the task.

"We are committed to leveraging our influence constructively to support the Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) in fostering cricket development and ensuring playing opportunities for both men and women in Afghanistan," an ICC spokesperson told Reuters. The ICC has formed a task force headed by its deputy chairman Imran Khwaja, who is leading "the ongoing dialogue on this matter", the official said. While the women's team has been disbanded, Afghanistan men's team have shifted base to Dubai. Star players Rashid Khan and Mohammad Nabi have raised voice against the "deeply unjust" move to deny Afghan women access to education.

"This decision has profoundly affected not only their future but also the broader fabric of our society," Rashid, who has been the face of Afghan cricket, wrote on X last month. Former captain Nabi echoed Rashid's view on the same social media platform. "Denying girls the chance to learn and serve their people is a betrayal of both their dreams and our nation's future," wrote Nabi. "Let our daughters study, grow, and build a better Afghanistan for everyone. This is their right, and it is our duty to protect it." Afghanistan became a test-playing nation in 2017 and finished sixth in the 2023 ODI World Cup beating former champions England, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in group matches. Their English coach Jonathan Trott also guided them to the semi-finals of the T20 World Cup in West Indies and the United States last year. Afghanistan's full-membership looked at stake under the Taliban rule but most ICC members felt banning them would achieve little in a strife-torn country where the game remains a major source of happiness. Britain's Culture minister Lisa Nandy was also apprehensive of the utility of boy-

cotting a cricket team. "I think they are counterproductive, penalise hard-working athletes," Nandy told BBC. "They are not the people we should be penalising for the Taliban's appalling actions against women and girls..." "The question is, what are the right levers? Diplomacy and public pressure. We are raising awareness but we should allow sport to be sport." England, who have ruled out any bilateral cricket with Afghanistan, forfeited a 2003 World Cup game against Zimbabwe in protest against Robert Mugabe's regime. Australia also play Afghanistan only in multi-team ICC events and have refused to host them more than once. South Africa Sports Minister Gayton McKenzie has likened the Afghanistan situation to the Apartheid era in his own country when much of the sporting world boycotted them. The Afghan board did not respond to Reuters request for comments. Afghanistan begin their Group B campaign against South Africa in Karachi on Feb. 21 before taking on England and Australia. India, who will play their matches in Dubai, are in Group A with defending champions Pakistan, New Zealand and Bangladesh. - Agencies

Arsenal's Jesus out with suspected ACL injury

WEB DESK

LONDON: Arsenal's Brazilian forward Gabriel Jesus is set for a lengthy spell on the sidelines after suffering what is suspected to be an anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injury, according to British media reports on Tuesday. Jesus, 27, left the pitch on a stretcher before the end of the first half in Arsenal's FA Cup tie with Manchester United on Sunday, which Mikel Arteta's side lost on penalties. "We know more now. It is not looking good at all. We need to review with one more specialist and will have better information this afternoon," Arteta told a press conference ahead of Arsenal's Premier League game with Tottenham Hotspur on Wednesday. "I don't want to confirm anything until we have the final report this afternoon. We were very worried after the game and we are very worried today," Jesus had just recently hit goalscoring form, netting his first league

goals of the season when scoring a double against Crystal Palace in December, and scored another in a win over Brentford on New Year's Day. He also scored a hat-trick against Palace in a League Cup quarter-final game last month. Jesus joined Arsenal in 2022, having won four league titles with Manchester City. Arsenal may now look to bring in a new striker during the January transfer window, but according to the manager, it is not the only area in which they may need to invest. "We have other issues as well. A player can bring things to a team in different ways. That is what we are trying to do," Arteta said. "We are actively looking in the market to improve the squad. We would be naive not to do that. There is an opportunity to improve the squad." Arteta also spoke about the online abuse suffered by Kai Havertz, after the forward had his penalty saved during Sunday's shootout, which led to Arsenal exiting the FA Cup in the third round. "It is incredible, honestly. We really have to do something about it," Arteta said.

Paolini finds Wei through to 2nd round

MELBOURNE: Jasmine Paolini eased through to the second round of the Australian Open with a dominant 6-0 6-4 win over Chinese qualifier Wei Sijia on Tuesday as the Italian savoured a return to the Grand Slam that launched her golden season last year. The late-blooming Paolini was a revelation in 2024 as she made the French Open and Wimbledon finals, and qualified for the season-ending WTA Finals. If that wasn't enough, she also won the women's doubles gold medal at the Paris Olympics partnered with Sara Errani and steered Italy to a fifth Billie Jean King Cup title in November. Now the diminutive 29-year-old has eyes on a first Grand Slam title at Melbourne Park. - Agencies

Daniil Medvedev destroys net camera as he avoids exit

The Thai wildcard was in sight of the biggest win of his career - as well as handing Medvedev the most surprising defeat of his - on his Grand Slam debut

WEB DESK

SYDNEY: Daniil Medvedev destroyed a net camera as he battled to control his emotions in a five-set thriller against world number 418 Kasidit Samrej in the first round of the Australian Open. Medvedev, a three-time finalist in Melbourne, furiously smashed his racquet against the camera in the middle of the net after falling behind in the third set. The Thai wildcard was in sight of the biggest win of his career - as well as handing Medvedev the most surprising defeat of his - on his Grand Slam debut. But Samrej, who has never previously competed at an ATP Tour event, started to struggle physically and the Russian regained his composure to win 6-2 4-6 3-6 6-1 6-2. The fifth seed has made five-set matches a habit in Melbourne, with this his fourth in a row after blowing a two-set lead against Jannik Sinner in last year's final. "I know that I play better when I play more tennis, so why play one hour 30 [minutes]?" Medvedev joked during his on-court interview. "It's minimum three hours to feel my shots better and to have a good sensation." Medvedev began shouting at his coach as early as the second set before his emotions really came to the fore in the third when he went a break down.

Raducanu advances as British history made in AO

Elena Rybakina needed just 53 minutes to reach the Australian Open second round with a dominant win over Australian teenager Emerson Jones

SPORTS DESK

SYDNEY: Katie Boulter became the sixth British player to win their first-round singles match at this year's Australian Open - the most in the nation's history during the Open era. Boulter, seeded 22nd, secured the new record with a hard-fought 6-4 3-6 7-5 victory over Canada's Rebecca Marino. The 28-year-old British number one was nowhere near her best against 98th-ranked Marino and needed all of her competitive spirit to get over the line. "That was way too stressful for me, I would have preferred an easier match today," said Boulter, who plays Russian Veronika Kudermetova next. Meanwhile, Emma Raducanu overcame second-serve wobbles to start her 2025 season with a scrappy win in the Australian Open first round. The British number two, whose preparations were disrupted by a back injury, won 7-6 (7-4) 7-6 (7-2)

against Russian 26th seed Ekaterina Alexandrova. While hitting well from the baseline, Raducanu was hampered by double faults and lost serve six times. The 2021 US Open champion hit 15 double

faults, including a particularly deflating one on break point when she looked to close out a straight-set victory from a 5-4 30-0 lead. However, the way she regrouped and dominated another tie-break

to get over the line was impressive. The 22-year-old had a sheepish grin as she walked to the net and said afterwards: "I think my serve had a mind of its own." World number 61 Raducanu will

face another higher-ranked player next in Amanda Anisimova.

The 23-year-old American, who is ranked 35th having returned from a nine-month mental health break in 2023, beat Argentina's Maria Lourdes Carle 6-2 6-3 to set up Thursday's match. Raducanu insisted she was "ready to go" in Melbourne after recovering from the back spasm - suffered when she bent down to tie a shoelace - that ruled her out of a season-opening event in Auckland. Playing her first match since November, it was never likely to be plain-sailing for Raducanu on her Grand Slam return against a seeded player. Meanwhile, in a dramatic turn of events at the Australian Open, Eva Lys, the German world No. 128 and a lucky loser in the draw, was called to action with no warning, replacing the 13th-seeded Anna Kalinskaya moments before her scheduled match against Australian Kimberly Birrell. Despite the chaos, Lys delivered a commanding 6-2, 6-2 victory to advance to the second round.



PM Shehbaz hopeful of lasting...

FROM PAGE 01
said, terming it a "positive development". PM Shehbaz hoped that all stakeholders will join hands to ensure the peace, supervise the talks between the warring groups, and also try to ensure that such incidents do not take place again. In a relevant development today, the second convoy of 25 vehicles carrying essential goods has reached Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Kurram district, local administration confirmed. However, 20 other vehicles failed to get clearance and were sent back to Tal. This development marks the successful delivery of another consignment of essential items, including flour, sugar, ghee, and medicines to affected parts of the Kurram district which remained in the spotlight for months following a wave of tribal violence that claimed over 130 lives and resulted in the closure of routes for over 100 days.

Madrasas safeguard...

FROM PAGE 01
the ideology of Pakistan would have been abandoned. We were targeted, but no action was taken against those spreading prejudice and division," he added. Commenting on the role of Sharia courts, Fazlur Rehman lamented their lack of recognition. "Decisions of Sharia courts are given no importance. Even a judge of the Sharia court cannot ascend to the position of Chief Justice. However, we succeeded in introducing a constitutional amendment to eliminate usury. The 26th Amendment has empowered Sharia courts in this regard," he explained. The JUI-F chief also criticised the National Action Plan, claiming it targets religious institutions. "How can I accept such a plan?" he questioned.

Pakistan, Bangladesh..

FROM PAGE 01
the region and explored further avenues for enhancing bilateral military cooperation. The two sides underscored the importance of a stronger defence relationship. They emphasised that the enduring partnership between the two brotherly nations must remain resilient against external influences. Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir reiterated the significance of joint efforts to promote peace and stability in South Asia and the broader region, while ensuring that both nations continue to contribute to regional security through collaborative defence initiatives.

TTP presence...

FROM PAGE 01
the latter and cross-border attacks. The remarks attributed to the army chief were carried by state broadcaster and were uttered during his Peshawar meeting a day ago with politicians from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have been strained due to frequent border skirmishes and Islamabad repeatedly demanding Kabul take action against the TTP for using Afghan soil to launch attacks in Pakistan. Kabul denies the allegations.

Eight terrorists...

FROM PAGE 01
Pakistan (TTP) group, commonly referred to as the khawarij. During the operation, six terrorists were killed, ISPR stated. In a second engagement in Khyber district's Tirah Valley, security forces neutralised two more terrorists associated with the TTP. The ISPR added that sanitisation operations are ongoing in the region to clear any remaining militants. The security forces have vowed to continue their efforts to eradicate terrorism and restore peace in the country. Earlier, Security forces killed 27 terrorists during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in the Kacchi district of Balochistan and destroyed a huge caches of arms, ammunition and explosives, the Inter-services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement on Monday.

Briefs

US tops as Pakistan's largest export market

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Total exports to the US during July-November 2024-25 amounted to \$2.512 billion against the exports of \$2.299 billion during July-November 2023-24, showing an increase of 9.29%, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). This was followed by China, wherein Pakistan exported goods worth \$1.053 billion against \$1.223 billion last year, showing a decrease of 13.93%.

The UK was the third top export destination, where Pakistan exported products worth \$935.018 million during the months under review against \$863.481 million, SBP data revealed. Among other countries, Pakistani exports to UAE reached \$925.594 million against \$817.848 million last year, while the exports to Germany reached \$707.649 million against \$613.778 million last year. During the same period, exports to Holland amounted to \$621.164 million against \$560.266 million, whereas exports to Italy were \$480.727 million against \$501.999 million.

Pakistan's exports to Spain reached \$600.871 million against \$638.846 million, while exports to Afghanistan stood at \$406.674 million against \$234.563 million last year. Exports to Bangladesh totalled \$313.998 million against \$241.960 million. Similarly, exports to France during the months under review were \$230.857 million against \$207.183 million, while exports to Belgium stood at \$257.895 million against \$236.207 million.

Shibli lambastes on Senate Chairman

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Senator Shibli Faraz said that the failure to implement production orders for Ejaz Chaudhry is a violation of parliamentary dignity. Speaking to the media after the Senate Advisory Committee meeting, Opposition Leader Shibli Faraz highlighted that Senator Ejaz Chaudhry is a member of the Senate and revealed that he had made repeated efforts over the past one and a half years to secure production orders for him. He emphasised that the non-implementation of the Senate Chairman's production orders means contempt of Parliament. "We were nervous that the production orders would not be implemented. The Punjab government has not taken the orders seriously and has already set records in authoritarian practices," he remarked. The senator further stated that the Punjab government's refusal to honour the production orders undermined the dignity of the Upper House.

Pak, Hong Kong emphasize strengthening economic ties

Finance Minister of Pakistan, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, Calls on the Chief Executive of Hong Kong (SAR), Honorable John K C Lee



STAFF REPORT

HONG KONG: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday emphasized the need for strengthening economic and diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Hong Kong. The remarks from the finance minister came during his meeting with the Chief Executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR), John K C Lee, aimed at enhancing bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and Hong Kong.

According to a statement released by the Ministry of Finance, during the meeting, the two leaders engaged in constructive dialogue on a wide range of topics, including economic collaboration, trade relations, investment opportunities, and cultural exchanges between the two regions. "The discussion aimed to foster closer ties and explore avenues for mutual growth and prosperity," read the statement. "Aurangzeb emphasized the importance of strengthening economic and diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Hong Kong,

highlighting the potential for increased cooperation in various sectors, including finance, technology, and tourism. "He underlined the shared values and interests that bind the two regions and expressed Pakistan's commitment to deepening these ties further." Meanwhile, Lee welcomed Aurangzeb's visit and echoed the sentiment of enhancing collaboration between Pakistan and Hong Kong. "He acknowledged the significance of fostering strong partnerships to drive economic development, innovation, and cul-

tural exchange, emphasizing the mutual benefits of such cooperation.

"The meeting between Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb and Chief Executive John K C Lee exemplified the commitment of both parties to strengthening bilateral ties and exploring opportunities for meaningful engagement across various sectors," read the statement.

In an interview on Monday, ahead of his meeting with Lee, Aurangzeb said that Pakistan is exploring more joint ventures with Hong Kong and secondary listings for its firms in the global financial centre.

"If there is an opportunity for companies out of Pakistan, as joint ventures with local companies, to come in and do primary and secondary listings in the Hong Kong stock exchange, for instance, I think it can be a real win-win, not only in terms of the investment that we expect back in Pakistan, but also outward investment," he said.

Aurangzeb said Pakistani companies and banks had traditionally opted for secondary listings on the London Stock Exchange.

"I would say that Hong Kong can certainly do more in promoting itself as a destination for companies to raise capital," he added. Aurangzeb departed for Hong Kong on Saturday to participate in the 18th Asian Financial Forum (AFF), where he will hold meetings with heads and senior officials of key Asian financial institutions. He will also meet prominent members and leaders of the Pakistani community residing in Hong Kong.

Salaried class become 3rd-largest taxpayer in FY24

Tax collection on power bills jumps 30% to Rs124bn, property sector adds Rs104bn from purchases, Rs95bn from sales

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The salaried segment in Pakistan became the third-largest contributor to the total tax revenues by paying a staggering Rs368 billion during the fiscal year 2023-24 (FY24), up 39.3% from Rs103.74 billion in FY2023, official data revealed on Tuesday. According to the data published by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) on its website, contracts were among the top contributors to revenue collection in the year under review, accounting for Rs496 billion — up over R106 billion from the previous year. Moreover, taxes collected on bank profits and securities surged 52.8% to Rs489 billion, while tax collection on dividends shot up by a whopping 70% year-on-year to

Rs145 billion — in line with a boost in the profitability of the corporate sector. The energy sector posted a 30% jump in tax collection on electricity bills, amounting to Rs124 billion, while property transactions added Rs104 billion collected from purchases and Rs95 billion from sales. Tax revenue from telephone bills grew by 14.3% to nearly Rs100 billion. On the other hand, the export sector showed a 27.2% increase, contributing Rs94 billion. According to the FBR document, other tax streams included technical fees, cash withdrawals, commissions, and retailer contributions. The FBR faced a significant tax shortfall of Rs386 billion in the first half of this fiscal year (July-December). The revenue collection stood at Rs5,623 billion, falling short of the desired target of Rs6,009 billion. It must be noted that the IMF has given an indicative target of Rs6,009 bn till the end of December 2024, but the FBR managed a net collection of Rs5,623 billion during the first six months of the current fiscal year (CFY). It is yet to be ascertained how much the FBR collected through advance collection because there were projections that it would face a shortfall of over Rs400 billion in the first half of the current fiscal year.

PIA's flights to UK likely to resume within 2-3 months

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday informed the Senate that Pakistan International Airline (PIA)'s flights to the United Kingdom (UK) are likely to resume within two to three months. Replying to a calling attention notice raised by Sherry Rehman about the grounding of PIA aircrafts in the context of an unclear privatization plan, the minister said all out efforts were being made for the resumption of PIA's flight to UK. A UK aviation team would visit Pakistan by end of January for physical examination in this regard, he added. He said the losses of the national flag carriers have exceeded over Rs 650 billion. The process for PIA's privatization was very transparent and all the proceeding was live telecast, he said and added that as per the law, the government rejected the bidding as it was lower than the reserved price. He said the privatization of PIA would proceed and proper work was being done in this regard. Ishaq Dar said that out of a total of 22 operational aircraft, 6 were included Boeing, 11 Airbus and the remaining ATR in the PIA fleet. Some 11 aircraft including six Boeing and 5 Airbus were being repaired, he added. He said PIA was collecting around Rs 84 billion in revenue per annum from the UK and Europe through operating its flights before imposing ban due to a statement given by the then Aviation Minister Ghulam Sarwar Khan.

PTI's intra-party polls case on Jan 21

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday scheduled a hearing for the intra-party elections case of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). The hearing will take place on January 21, with the Chief Election Commissioner issuing notices to PTI representatives Raaf Hasan and Barrister Gohar, as well as the petitioners. Arguments will be presented during the proceedings. It is pertinent to mention that PTI conducted its intra-party elections in March 2024. The ECP provided the party an opportunity to submit its response.

Uzair Baloch acquitted in murder case

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The district and sessions court of Karachi has acquitted Lyari gang war leader Uzair Baloch in a case involving the murder of a police officer and two others. During the hearing, Uzair Baloch's lawyer, Advocate Farooq Haider Jatoi, argued that Uzair had no connection with the case and was implicated in it on the basis of statements of suspects. The lawyer highlighted that other accused had already been acquitted in the case and no eyewitness had identified Uzair as involved. Following the arguments, the court acquitted Baloch in the murder case registered at the Chakrawa police station in 2009.

Pak confirms 71st polio case

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at the National Institute of Health (NIH) has confirmed Pakistan's 71st case of wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) for 2024. The case involves a young male child from Jacobabad, Sindh, with the onset of symptoms reported on December 27, 2024. This confirmation marks the fifth reported polio case from Jacobabad alone, underscoring ongoing challenges in the fight against the disease despite repeated mass vaccination drives. The national tally for WPV1 cases in 2024 now stands at 71, with Balochistan reporting the highest number at 27 cases.



DHAKA: President FPCI Atif Ikram Sheikh and officials of the Bangladesh Federation signing agreement to establish Pakistan, Bangladesh Business Council. Both sides agreed to intensify business relations between the two countries. — DNA

Senator Ejaz writes from KotLakhpat Jail

On Tuesday, Chaudhry was not allowed to attend the Senate session despite production orders issued by Gilani a day earlier

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Senator Ejaz Chaudhry of the embattled Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Tuesday poured his heart out after he was not allowed to attend the Senate session despite issuance of his production orders by Senate Chairman Yusuf Raza Gilani. In his letter, which is now circulating in the media, Chaudhry said he has been incarcerated for the last 20 months and the Senate chairman issued his production orders thrice during this period, but every time the government Punjab government trashed these orders and returned the Senate staff empty handed. He said the Senate chairman issued his production orders in 2023, 2024, and now in 2025. He said that trashing Senate chairman's orders was a joke with democracy. He said that rule of tyranny cannot work. On Tuesday, Chaudhry was not allowed to attend the Senate session despite production orders issued by Gilani a day earlier. This is not the first production order issued for the senator, who is imprisoned at Lahore's KotLakhpat Jail. In March last year, he was due to be produced in the Senate but was unable to attend the session. In November of last year, Chaudhry was among 21 other PTI figures formally indicted by a Lahore Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in cases related to the countrywide riots on May 9, 2023, registered at the Racecourse and Sarwar Road police stations. "We are greatly saddened as colleagues of a senator of this house who has been incarcerated for the last 1.5 years in a Lahore jail," Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Shibli Faraz, said. Opposition lawmakers could be seen carrying placards with pictures of the missing senator during the senate proceedings. Faraz thanked the speaker for issuing the production order for Chaudhry adding, "Despite that, he is not among us because the government of Punjab does not want him to come here and talk." The PTI leader said that it was Chaudhry's legal, constitutional, and democratic right to attend the Senate session, terming the Punjab government's explanation of security issues obstructing his production in the Senate as "regrettable".

Imran won't strike a covert deal: Saif

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Adviser to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister on Information Barrister Saif said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan would not hide any deal, if made. Speaking to a private news channel, Barrister Saif revealed that individuals with connections to the establishment have been meeting the PTI founder. He said that in their meeting, Imran Khan made it clear he would not accept any offer to compromise principles. Barrister Saif added that the PTI founder had expressed that any potential deal would not be conducted in secrecy. "We all know there are people in every party who play both sides. The government is more interested in engaging the PTI and its founder," Saif commented. Barrister Saif said that as Speaker National Assembly Ayaz Sadiq took the lead in government-PTI talks, other Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) members including Khawaja Asif and Atta Tarar often make 'contradictory' remarks that undermine the process. Barrister Saif pointed out that federal government actions, particularly those of the PML-N, revealed their 'lack of confidence'. Barrister Saif also discussed a conversation he had with the PTI founder before November 26 protest, adding that it was agreed that the protest would be held at a place called 'Sangjani.' "However, PTI leader Ali Amin Gandapur was reportedly opposed, citing objections from Bushra Bibi, the wife of PTI Chairman Imran Khan," he added. The adviser revealed that on November 26, the provincial government faced significant pressure, and had they made any proposals, it would have intensified that pressure.

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