



Trump alleges Democratic 'coup' of Biden ahead of Harris speech at site of Jan 6 rally

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump falsely said Democrats had staged a "coup" to force President Joe Biden to drop his re-election bid, as his Democratic rival Kamala Harris planned a rally in Washington that will remind voters of the violent attack on the US Capitol by Trump's supporters.



Afghanistan won't allow its soil to be used against Pakistan: Taliban govt diplomat

Responding to Islamabad's complaints to Kabul on security issues, Afghan Chargé d'Affaires Mawlawi Sardar Ahmad Shakeeb said on Tuesday Afghanistan will not allow its soil to be used by terrorist groups against Pakistan. He was speaking at a seminar titled "Strengthening Economic Ties between Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia" organised by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS).

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Meeting

RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia His Royal Highness Mohammed bin Salman on the sidelines of Future Investment Initiative Forum on Tuesday.



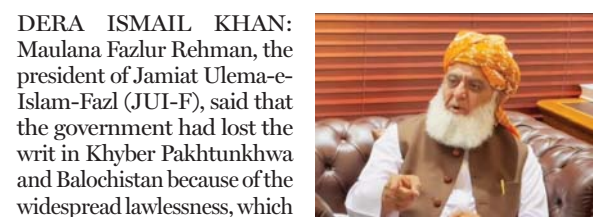
Photo: PID

Pakistan, Russia vow to bolster security, defence cooperation



RAWALPINDI: Pakistan and Russia have affirmed dedication to bolster collaboration in security and defence domains. The resolve was expressed during a meeting between Deputy Minister of Defence of Russia, Colonel General Alexander V. Fomin, and Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir in Rawalpindi on Tuesday. The meeting addressed regional security environment and matters of mutual interest, including enhance-

Fazl claims govt lost grip on KP, Balochistan amid rising lawlessness



DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Maulana Fazlur Rehman, the president of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), said that the government had lost the writ in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan because of the widespread lawlessness, which made people's lives and properties unsafe there, The News reported. Addressing scholars, students and other dignitaries at the Jamia Arabia Naumania Salihiya in Dera Ismail Khan, the JUI-F chief expressed concern over the declining public trust in the state and its institutions while highlighting the significance of their integrity, stability, and respect. He emphasised the need to take prompt action to rectify the situation, avoid further errors and blunders, and avert grave repercussions. Later, talking to the media, he reiterated that the elimination of the interest-based system was not only a manifesto for the JUI-F but it was also the foundation of Pakistan's ideology. He assured that the end of the interest-based system

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia to strengthen cooperation

In meeting with Saudi crown prince, PM hails kingdom's support for economic revival

Spokesman Report

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have reaffirmed commitment to strengthening the bilateral economic partnership.

The resolve was expressed during a meeting between Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and His Royal Highness Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman, on the sidelines of the eighth edition of

the Future Investment Initiative (FII) Conference in Riyadh on Tuesday.

The two leaders also agreed to expand economic cooperation in different sectors, including trade, investment, and economy.

During the meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed his best wishes for the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, and prayed

for his health and well-being. He thanked Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for Saudi Arabia's support for Pakistan in matters related to international financial institutions. The Prime Minister also expressed gratitude for the warm hospitality extended to him and his delegation.

Highlighting the significance of the Future Investment Initiative conference, Shehbaz Sharif commended the Crown Prince's

visionary leadership and noted that Saudi Vision 2030 aligns with Pakistan's key policy objectives.

The Prime Minister referenced the recent visit of a high-level Saudi delegation, led by the Saudi Minister of Investment, and discussed the memorandums of understanding signed during that visit, which lay the groundwork for the economic partnership between the two nations.

Both the leaders also expressed concern over the ongoing Israeli aggression in the region, which has resulted in widespread destruction.

The meeting reflects the longstanding and strengthening religious and cultural ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, underscoring the deepening relationship between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Gilani highlights parliamentarians' role in global peace, justice

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Tuesday highlighted the crucial role of parliamentarians in promoting peace, democracy, and justice on a global scale.

While addressing participants of the Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) gathered in Pakistan for the 45th PGA meeting, Senate Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani praised the organization's four-decade legacy in advocating for human rights, international justice, and sustainable peace.

He highlighted the significant impact PGA has had on shaping global policy and advancing grassroots initiatives aimed at fostering justice and equality worldwide.

He said that the event highlights Pakistan's dedication to

addressing pressing international challenges through parliamentary diplomacy. With a diverse membership of over 1,300 parliamentarians from 140 countries, the PGA epitomizes a united front in promoting democracy and fostering international cooperation.

The Chairman underscored the alignment of Pakistan's values with those of the PGA, particularly in relation to climate change, good governance, and conflict resolution.

He also acknowledged Naveed Qamar's leadership within the PGA and expressed his confidence in Qamar's ability to guide the organization in addressing complex global challenges, reinforcing the importance of inclusivity and diplomacy in achieving sustainable solutions. APP

Two cops martyred guarding polio vaccinators in KP

PESHAWAR: Heavily armed terrorists on Tuesday martyred two policemen escorting a polio vaccination team in Upper Orakzai, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while three militants were also killed in an intense exchange of fire with the security forces.

Upper Orakzai Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Muhammad Rahim said the incident took place in the Dabori Badan area, where armed men opened fire at police personnel escorting the vaccinators.

One of the policemen, Sayyed Hameed, lost his life on the spot, while the other was shifted to District Headquarters Hospital Orakzai. However, the injured cop Muzammil also succumbed to his wounds during treatment.

In a swift response to the attack, the Frontier Corps cordoned off the area and launched a search operation.

Deputy Superintendent of

Police Muhammad Raheem later confirmed that three terrorists were killed in retaliatory firing by the FC personnel, while one of the militants was caught injured.

President Asif Ali Zardari in a statement condemned the armed assault on the polio vaccination team, expressing sorrow over the martyrdom of police officials.

"The cops bravely fought the attackers and killed three terrorists, for which they deserve salutes," he said in the statement. Praying for the early recovery of the wounded cops, the president vowed to continue all-out efforts to eliminate poliovirus across the country.

Reacting to the incident, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi condemned the attack on police and paid tribute to the martyred personnel.

"Attack on the anti-polio team is an attack on the safe future of Pakistan," he said.

It may be noted that the govern-

ment has launched separate polio vaccination drives across the country following the recent spike in cases of paralyzing disease.

Pakistan reported the 41st case of the year when a 42-month-old girl was crippled by the wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) in Balochistan, the epicentre of the outbreak.

The southwestern province is emerging as an area of intense polio transmission this year as 21 of the 41 cases in the country. The breakdown of the remaining cases is Sindh (12), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (six), and one each in Punjab and Islamabad.

The current campaign, led by Pakistan's Polio Programme aims to vaccinate over 45 million children under the age of five, kicked off on Monday.

Officials stress the importance of full participation as incomplete vaccination coverage leaves communities vulnerable to the continued spread and resurgence of polio. Agencies

PM links peace, end to bloodshed in Gaza with global progress

RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday emphatically said that the global dream of progress and prosperity would never be fulfilled and transformed into action unless peace was restored in Gaza and bloodshed immediately stopped over there.

In his address at the 8th meeting of Future Investment Initiative (FII) in Riyadh, the prime minister categorically referred to the situation in Gaza and observed that without peace and immediate end to bloodshed there, the world would not progress and prosper, PM Office Media Wing said in a

press release.

The candid views by the prime minister, at the global event, were appreciated by the audience as he voiced Pakistan's concerns over the grave situation.

The event attended by world leaders and representatives who converged in Riyadh,

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to deliberate upon the theme "Infinite Horizons: Investing Today, Shaping Tomorrow" would also focus on global investments aimed at addressing major issues such as artificial intelligence, robotics, education, energy, space, finance, healthcare, and sustainability. APP

KP CM's aide for early opening of OPD at Child Health Care Hospital

Ihtisham Ali expresses dismay over undue delay in the project

Our Correspondent

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Health, Ihtisham Ali on Tuesday conducted a site visit to the under-construction Khyber Institute of Child Health Care Hospital here in Hayatabad area and emphasized the opening of Emergency Department (ED) and Outpatient Department (OPD) by the first week of December.

Flanked by Additional Secretary Fayyaz Sherpao and Project Director Dr Inayat the advisor directed that only specialized medical personnel should be transferred or appointed to ensure effective hospital operations. He express dismay over undue delay in the project noting that "It was unacceptable that after ten years, the hospital construction was still not completed." Dr. Inayat explained that the

project consists of two main components: the institute and the province's first specialized children's hospital, featuring 250 beds. The initial budget for the project in 2013 was two billion rupees, which had escalated to approximately eight billion rupees by 2021, adding that in order to complete the project, over three billion rupees were still needed, while Rs 1.5 billion were expected to be released during the current fiscal

year. He said that as of now, 80 percent of the construction work had been completed and rapid progress was being made on utility connections, including electricity, gas, and sewerage. He said that if the Federal government would release the required funds in the next fiscal year, the hospital would be made fully operational by the end of next year.

Sindh Governor expresses concerns over increase of dengue, malaria cases

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori has expressed his concerns over the increasing cases of malaria and dengue in the province.

Directing the authorities concerned, he said that disinfectant sprays against dengue and malaria should be ensured continuously.

He said that more dengue and malaria isolated wards should be established in hospitals.

He further said that awareness of dengue and malaria was need of the hour.



KP Assembly passes DDACs KP Amendment Bill 2024

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly with panel Chairman Muhammad Idress Khan here on Tuesday passed the KP Districts Advisory Committee Amendment Bill 2024.



The Bill pertaining to giving DDAC Chairmanship to Members National Assembly, was approved by majority members of the House. The Bill was presented by Provincial Minister Arshad Ayub.

The KP Assembly also passed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Govt Rest Houses Tourism Properties (Development, Management and Regulation) Amendment Bill 2024.

The Bill was aimed for better utilization of the government rest houses for facilitation of tourists. APP

Seminar held on empowering women through land rights

FAISALABAD: A national seminar on "Empowering Women Through Land Rights: Advancing SDGs in Pakistan" was held on Tuesday under HEC's funded project "Women's Land Rights in Pakistan: Laws, Policy and Practices".

The seminar was organized by Dr. Mazhar Abbas, the Principal Investigator of HEC programme at Government College University Faisalabad, said a press release.

Addressing the seminar, Dr. Asia Saif Alvi Chairperson Political Science at University of Sargodha determined the interrelationship among women's rights to land and property, their economic independence and the Sustainable Development Goals.

She also emphasized that without ensuring women's rights to land and property, their economic independence is not possible; and without ensuring their economic independence, achieving the fifth SDG (Women Empowerment and Gender Equality) will remain just a dream.

She further said that mere giving of land and property rights to women will not empower them, but for this, finance, credits and skill development programs are very important elements.

Dr. Muhammad Abrar Zahoor Chairman, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, University of Sargodha emphasized that depriving women of their rights to land and property in our society and erecting obstacles in their development and independence are definitely indications towards denying their existence.

Dr. Mazhar Abbas said that unfortunately, in Pakistan, land is a symbol of power and dignity. Due to which men refuse to give share of land and property to women.

In other words, until men get rid of their ego and are mentally ready to give women their due share of land and property, attainment of women's development, prosperity and independence (i.e. the fifth SDG) will not be possible, he added. Agencies

Profiteers fined

FAISALABAD: Price control magistrates fined 2,390 retailers over Rs15 million for overcharging across the district during the last 24 hours.

Price monitoring teams also legal action against 3,388 retailers for not displaying price lists. Focal person to price control measures, Riaz Hussain Anjum, said here Tuesday that magistrates had also made over 41,000 inspections in markets and bazaars. Over 412 shopkeepers were held, 54 shops were sealed and 26 others were booked for overpricing during the week.

Simulation session on climate change held at Governor's House

PESHAWAR: A simulation session on climate change, organized by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, was held at the Governor's House in Peshawar.

The event was attended by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, Prime Minister's Coordinator for Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam, Chairperson of the Human Rights Standing Committee Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, and Executive Director of Pak Mission Society Adedl Anwar, along with students from various schools.

During the COP session, students were educated about climate change, encouraged to share their suggestions, and actively participate in discussions on the topic.

The seminar emphasized the urgent need for reforms to secure a brighter future for the younger generation, while raising awareness about the impacts of climate change on their lives.

Romina Khurshid Alam said that youth are the future of the country. She stressed upon youth to get awareness about climate change. She appreciated Governor Kundi for his efforts regarding climate change and environment.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi praised the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment for organizing the session at the Governor's House, calling it an excellent initiative.

He invited other ministries to hold seminars and conferences on public interest issues at the Governor's House.

"Climate change is affecting the global environment," Kundi stated. "The youth are our asset and the future of the country. We must all work together to protect the country from the impacts of climate change."

As a token of appreciation, the participating school children presented the Governor with a signed souvenir showcasing their constructive contributions related to climate change.

Later Crescent Art Gallery exhibition was held which was also attended by the mentioned leaders.

Speaking at this event Romina Khurshid Alam appreciated Governor Kundi for taking measures to present the soft image of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Governor Faisal Karim Kundi remarked that Governor House is open for all kinds of people. He said that holding of such events will promote the skills of our country.

Governor Kundi said that we are ready to provide good opportunities to our skillful people to highlight the name of our country. He said that KP is full of technical and skillful people but unfortunately they were ignored. APP

Shopping for winter

CHINIOT: Citizens buying their daily necessities from the cheap market.



Photo: Online

Mayor Karachi for completion of ongoing road works within week

KARACHI: Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Tuesday directed the Engineering department to complete ongoing road construction, repair and carpeting projects within a week.

This was stated during a high-level meeting chaired by the Mayor Karachi with officials from the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's Engineering Department.

He emphasized that there should be no negligence in improving the city's basic infrastructure and urged that machinery and manpower be increased to expedite developmental work.

- Advertisement -

He specifically mentioned accelerating construction work on I. I. Chundrigar Road, Liaquat Road, Mai Kolachi Road, M. T. Khan Road, Old Queens Road, Mumtaz Hasan Road and Jinnah Bridge.

Additionally, he instructed that street lights be converted to LED and permanent lighting arrangements be made for all historical buildings. The



project director, engineers, and other officials should focus on resolving citizens' issues and prioritize their efforts accordingly. He noted that restoring public trust in the organization requires providing prompt relief to citizens.

Municipal Commissioner Afzal Zaidi, Director General Engineering Azhar Ali Shah, chief engineers, XENs, project directors and other officials were also present.

During the meeting, Barrister Murtaza Wahab reviewed the ongoing

work related to road and bridge construction and the maintenance of streetlights in various areas of the city. He highlighted that the deterioration of roads is causing difficulties for citizens in commuting, and therefore, resurfacing and repair work should be completed as quickly as possible.

He instructed that obstacles along the road from KPT to Three Swords Clifton be cleared to ensure smooth traffic flow. After completing the resurfacing work on Jinnah Bridge, lane marking should be done within a week, and streetlights on Qayyumabad Bridge should be restored as soon as possible.

He directed that the carpeting work on M. A. Jinnah Road, Rashid Minhas Road, Kashmir Road, Korangi 8000 Road, Shafiq Mor, and other locations be expedited.

The additional poles on I. I. Chundrigar Road should be removed, and ongoing developmental schemes in District West (three schemes) and District Central (six schemes) should be completed immediately. The devel-

opmental work on G. Alana Road should be finished by next week and opened for citizens.

Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab stressed the importance of using available funds for road construction and repairs in a completely transparent manner, ensuring quality in all construction and repair work.

He emphasized that roads built with significant expenditures should be durable, and the repair and restoration of streetlights should also focus on quality. He urged that all work be closely monitored to ensure prompt completion.

During the meeting, the Mayor received a briefing on road construction and repair, detailing both completed and ongoing projects.

He reiterated that the development and improvement of the city were among our top priorities and urged officials to ensure immediate and prompt implementation of the directives, taking every possible step to enhance the city's infrastructure to provide maximum facilities to citizens.

Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project Construction continues

TARBELA: Chairman WAPDA Engr. Lt. Gen. Sajjad Ghani (R) Tuesday visited under-construction 1530 MW-Tarbela 5th Extension and reviewed the progress on the project.

The Chairman had a detailed visit of the key sites, which include the Raised Intake, the Tunnel and the Power house, and witnessed construction work going on there. During the on-site briefing, the Project Director and the Construction Manager briefed the Chairman about the milestone achieved on these sites.

Temporary support work in the tunnel is complete paving the way for commencement of construction on the connecting tunnel. Installation of equipment such as draft tubes of all three units - Unit No. 18, 19 and 20 - is in progress at the Power house Site.

While, the Contractor is all set to resume construction work on the Raised Intake structure once the



water in the reservoir recedes to the required level. Following the site visit, the Chairman presided over a meeting at the project office attended by the GM Tarbela Dam, PD T5, the Consultants and the Contractors. Overall progress on the project was discussed during the meeting. It was

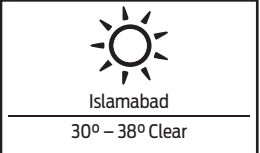
briefed that construction is continuing on all 6 work fronts simultaneously.

The project is likely to be completed in 2025-26. Thorough deliberations were also made on the work plan for meeting the timelines. The Chairman was of the view

that concerted efforts are needed on part of the Consultants and the Contractor to complete the project as per the schedule. Deployment of additional resources is also inevitable for the purpose, he said.

Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project is a component of green, clean and least-cost energy generation plan of WAPDA.

World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank are providing financial assistance for the project to the tune of US\$ 390 million and US\$ 300 million respectively. Under the 5th Extension, three generating units - of 510 MW each - are being installed at Tunnel No. 5 of Tarbela Dam Project and it will provide 1.347 billion units hydel electricity to the National Grid on the average every year. Installed capacity at Tarbela Dam will surge to 6418 MW from 4888 MW after completion of Tarbela 5th Extension. APP



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 5:00 am
Zohr 11:52 am
Asr 3:40 pm
Maghrib 5:18 pm
Isha 6:42 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH 561111
MH 561116
MH 561116
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
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation 9209224
Potohar Town 9209224
Rawal Town 5773343

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service
E-7, F-10 & F-11 9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8 9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 9266616

IG Motorway awards cash prizes to officials For rescuing a family from burning car

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General (IG) Motorway Police Salman Chaudhry honoured the officers of the National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) with cash prizes and certificates of appreciation for saving a family from a burning vehicle, in a ceremony held here on Tuesday.

The IG praised the NHMP officer's dedication and encouraged them to continue serving with the same commitment, ensuring the safety and support of all travellers on national highways.

Earlier, the NHMP officials had saved a family from a burning car while risking their lives during an incident near M-1 Sial Mor on the motorway.

The vehicle, a Toyota Corolla driven by Dawood Ahmed, was heading towards Faisalabad when a petrol leak caused it to catch fire.

DSP NHMP Syed Hasnat Ali, Inspector Saifullah and Lady Sub-Inspector Maleeha Saqlain acted swiftly by using modern fire fighting equipment to control the flames and evacuate the passengers safely.

45th Annual Forum of PGA concludes

President of the PGA and Member of the National Assembly Syed Naveed Qamar read out the joint declaration

ISLAMABAD: The 45th Annual Forum of Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) and the 13th Session of the Consultative Assembly of Parliamentarians (CAP-ICC), hosted by Pakistan's National Assembly, concluded on Tuesday with the unanimous adoption of a joint declaration.

President of the PGA and Member of the National Assembly Syed Naveed Qamar read out the joint declaration while the participants expressed their agreement with the document.

The two-day forum discussed critical global issues, including peace, justice, climate change, and other urgent topics.

Parliamentarians from 39 countries, alongside international jurists, intellectuals, media representatives and civil society members attended the forum.

The successful hosting of this international conference underscores Pakistan's commitment to parliamentary diplomacy and reflects its peaceful, democratic identity.

During the event, seven side sessions were held, discussing topics such as global peace, climate change, the promotion of democratic values, international justice, and the role of parliaments in establishing peace. The presence of a significant

number of foreign parliamentarians and distinguished guests served as a testament to Pakistan's reputation as a safe, progressive country that upholds democratic principles.

In his concluding remarks, President PGA Syed Naveed Qamar expressed gratitude to the National Assembly and all PGA participants for their insights and contributions to the forum. He also extended thanks to international partners for supporting PGA's mission to promote accountability, human rights, and the rule of law.

In her closing remarks, PGA Secretary-General Ms. Mónica Adame expressed heartfelt appreciation to Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, PGA President Syed Naveed Qamar, and Chairperson of the Pakistan National Group (PGA) Senator Sherry Rehman for their warm welcome and commitment to ensuring the forum's success.

She also thanked the National Assembly Secretariat of Pakistan and the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) for providing logistics and technical support to the forum's esteemed participants and guests. APP



101 Anniversary of Turkish National Day

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar and Ambassador of Türkiye, Dr. Irfan Neziroglu, and others cutting the cake during the 101 Anniversary of Turkish National Day at a local hotel in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Russian Deputy Minister for Defence called on chief of the naval staff



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Russian Federation's Deputy Minister for Defence, Colonel General Alexander V. Fomin called on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad.

During the meeting, professional matters of mutual interest including bilateral collaboration and regional maritime security were discussed. The Naval Chief expressed that Pakistan greatly values its relations with the Russian Federation and desires to forge a long-term, multi-dimensional partnership with Russia. Various avenues including bilateral training, exchange of visits and conduct of bilateral naval exercises between the two Navies were also focused.

The visiting dignitary appreciated and acknowledged the Pakistan Navy's efforts and commitments in support of collaborative maritime security. Both the leaders agreed to further strengthen and diversify the scope of existing bilateral defence relationship particularly in maritime domain and naval technologies.

Italian Amb. Armellini calls on DPM/FM Dar



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/ Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday received Italian Ambassador Marina Armellini at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Deputy Prime Minister highlighted the importance Pakistan attaches to its relations with Italy and exchanged views on issues of mutual interest with a focus on trade and investment, migration and mobility, education and people to people contacts, a post on X said.

During the meeting, regional and global issues also came under discussion, it was further added.

PPRA, NUST join hands to boost procurement training in Pakistan

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: In a step to strengthen procurement standards across public sectors, the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) and the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) on Tuesday signed a partnership agreement.

This agreement aims to improve training for procurement professionals in line with the Prime Minister's call for dedicated procurement cells in government institutions.

The Document of Understanding (DoU) between PPRA and NUST was signed today, at a ceremony held at NUST Headquarters in Islamabad. The partnership focuses on enhancing the skills and



knowledge of procurement specialists through targeted certification and diploma programmes.

Mr. Hasnat Ahmed Qureshi, Managing Director of PPRA, shared details about the new programs during the signing event. He highlighted that the

"Certificate in Procurement & Contract Management" and the "Diploma in Procurement & Contract Management" are designed to equip public sector professionals and suppliers with the skills necessary for effective procurement practices. These courses

aim to streamline procurement processes and tackle the complexities professionals often encounter.

"This collaboration is an important step toward raising procurement standards and practices in Pakistan," Qureshi said. The Certificate and Diploma programs are scheduled to begin in November 2024.

The DoU was signed by Mr. Hasnat Ahmad Qureshi of PPRA and Dr. Rizwan Riaz, Pro-Rector of NUST. Other attendees included Hasnain Bokhari from NUST, Jahangir Rizvi, Assistant Director at PPRA, Muhammad Ali, General Manager of PDC NUST, Farukh Qazi, Director at PPRA, and Sagheer Ahmad, Deputy Director at PPRA.

Holistic regional dialogue critical for effective int'l law regime: Barrister Aqeel

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Spokesperson of the federal government on legal affairs, Member National Assembly (MNA), Barrister Aqeel Malik on Tuesday emphasized upon the urgent need of a holistic regional dialogue for ensuring effective international law regime amid rapidly evolving global world order.

In his keynote address at the 45th Annual Forum of Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) hosted by Pakistan, the government's legal advisor highlighted the need to bring moderation to the existing legal and judicial systems across the globe for ensuring impartial justice.

Barrister Aqeel Malik in his special remarks during the session titled 'Future Opportunities for International Criminal Justice' said that amid a multi-polar world the alleged accusation

pertaining of biases and dual standards in the international legal systems were a matter of serious concern that developed a perception of selective enforcement of laws and prejudices among the developing nations facing conflicts, climate and humanitarian crises.

He added that the member countries to the Rome Statute and the International Criminal Court (ICC) should have to align their domestic laws as per the global legal framework, and mull over instruments to adapt the Rome Statute.

Barrister Malik recommended the PGA forum to initiate a confidence building measure by amending the Rome Statute and convince the countries abstaining to ratify it to accede to the jurisdiction of the ICC.

"Pakistan has always supported independent, powerful, fair and inclusive international forums that are free

from double standards that proved to be meaningful in functioning global justice," he said.

Chair of PGA Cameroon National Group, Oliver Bamenju Agho said there was need of a robust mechanism to counter serious international crimes like human trafficking and violence.

He added that accountability, strengthening of legal frameworks and institutions was crucial to control impunity alongwith improved investigation mechanisms to cope with international crimes.

Chair, PGA National Group, Canada, Ali Ehsassi said the international criminal justice reminds of ensuring accountability and upholding human rights.

He said in the shifting global dynamics the international criminal justice framework was significant in guiding the nations for a peaceful

world.

Associate Legal Officer, Trust Fund for Victims at the ICC, Cheikh Fall said the conflict victims across the globe are the same as the share the same pains, tragedies and crises.

PGA member from Zimbabwe, Consilia Chinanzavava said the international criminal justice was dependent on the willingness of the independent governments to ensure accountability against war crimes, forced disappearances and violence.

The international criminal justice was a critical pillar ensuring accountability, upholding rule of law and human rights, she said, adding, "Ecocide should also be made part of the Rome Statute as fight crime against humanity to contain destruction of environment and strengthen international environmental conventions."

CDA board approves refund policy for overseas Pakistanis

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) Board, on Tuesday approved a full refund of processing fees for overseas Pakistanis who had invested in the Nelore Heights Housing Project.

The CDA held its 15th board meeting chaired by Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa, where several crucial decisions were made.

The meeting focused on supporting overseas Pakistanis, affected residents of Islamabad, and CDA staff members.

The Board decided that plots in Sector C-14 would be allocated through a balloting process, with priority given to overseas Pakistanis.

The CDA Board also addressed long-standing concerns of Islamabad's affected residents by forming a seven-member committee to scrutinize their cases.

A third-party validation committee was approved to review the findings, ensuring fair rehabilitation benefits for the affected.

A committee comprising the Member Administration and the Deputy Commissioner of Islamabad was established to amend CDA's land acquisition regulations. Additionally, the board directed the law wing to develop recommendations for the establishment and restoration of covered markets within the city.

Further, the CDA Board appointed a new legal advisor, stipulating that no former CDA legal advisor would represent cases against the authority within one year of leaving the role.

For CDA staff, the board approved a promotion path for Park Managers and Assistant Park Managers within the Environment Wing.

Physical training instructors employed by CDA were also upgraded to Grade 16, aligning their status with Federal institutions.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almass Ayoub Sabir**
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**
 Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Khurram Jaffrani**
 (jaffrani@adpluse.pk)
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)
 Head Office: **AIMS Building, Street No. 4, H-8/1, Islamabad.**
 spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com
 Phone: +92 51 2227123,
 WhatsApp +92 346 5008408
 Karachi office: **A111, Block C, Gulsha-e-Jamal, PRECHS,**
 Karachi Phone: 021-33399390
 Email: **spokesmankarachi@gmail.com**
 Lahore Office: **7-E, Samanberg, Johar Town.**
 spokesmanlahore@gmail.com

US at the crossroads as voters clamor for change

Dr. Turki Faisal Al-Rasheed

As the 2024 US elections approach, the atmosphere is charged with intensity reminiscent of the Cold War era. Since 2016, American society has become increasingly polarized, exemplified by the ongoing rivalry between Donald Trump and his Democratic counterparts. Joe Biden's ascension to the presidency was largely fueled by public dissatisfaction with the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, a sentiment that has led many to question his effectiveness in crisis management, mirroring critiques faced by his predecessor, Trump.

While the media emphasizes domestic issues such as abortion, immigration, inflation, and taxes, it is crucial not to overlook how foreign policy may sway swing voters, particularly within significant communities such as Arab Americans. The geopolitical landscape, especially the conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza, will likely play a pivotal role in shaping voter sentiment as we move closer to the elections.

Under Biden's leadership, US policy has thrust Ukraine into a precarious situation against Russia, with the Ukrainian populace bearing the brunt of the conflict. Nearly three years in, Russia remains resolute in its stance against NATO's perceived encroachment on its borders. Following recent BRICS meetings, Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed that more than 30 coun-

tries have expressed interest in joining the group, indicating a desire to challenge Western "hegemony" and shape a "multipolar world order."

In Europe, allies are grappling with the fallout of the conflict, facing unprecedented fuel prices, and a refugee crisis that burdens their economies. The lack of a clear military or political resolution exacerbates these challenges, leaving Europe reliant on US directives regarding potential ceasefires in Ukraine and the broader implications for regional stability.

In the Middle East, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu seems to exploit a perception of a US administration as weak and disengaged, as ongoing conflicts draw in regional powers aligned with Iran. This situation raises the specter of a direct confrontation between Israel and its adversaries, a scenario fraught with peril not only for the region but also for international relations.

Democratic candidate Kamala Harris finds herself in a precarious position navigating these complicated foreign policy issues. Her commitment to continue Biden's foreign policy, which has not yielded success in Ukraine or Gaza, leaves her vulnerable to criticism. Her attempts to resonate with Michigan's significant Arab community, such as her assertion to "end the suffering" in Gaza, stand in contrast to her unwavering support for military aid to Israel, highlighting the fractures within the Democratic Party on foreign policy.

Exploring the nuances of this crisis reveals that financial interests often take precedence over political ideolo-

gies. Corporations and state institutions have historically wielded power, sometimes leading to decisions driven more by economic gains than by the well-being of constituents. Wars are often justified through grand rhetoric, but underneath lies a stark reality of "savage capitalism" benefitting arms dealers and the military-industrial complex.

The political scientist Samuel P. Huntington once noted: "The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values... but by its superiority in applying organized violence." While this may prompt reflection on the past, it also suggests the need for a balanced approach in the future. Regardless of the election's outcome, the implications for Europe are significant. Europe must develop a new strategy that navigates its relationship with the US, accounting for shifting dynamics in global politics. The need for a clear articulation of collective interests has never been more pressing as competition from China and ongoing instability in the Middle East create challenges that demand a cohesive response.

In the Arab world, particularly the Gulf states, collaboration among nations will be vital in prioritizing sustainable development and avoiding conflicts. Analysts predict an inevitable and potentially swift American withdrawal from the region, necessitating a reassessment of how Arab nations work together, especially with the Biden administration's evident desire for reduced US involvement.

This transitory phase in American foreign policy could call into question whether it is the US that is leaving or merely redefining its strategy in a complex landscape. The fallout from

military engagement often leaves a legacy of instability, a sentiment echoed by foreign affairs analysts.

Joseph Roth's poignant reflections in "The Emperor's Tomb" on the decline of powerful civilizations resonate with present-day realities, where moral decay and ineffective leadership raise urgent concerns about the future of American democracy. As the country prepares for the elections, it is clear that the American populace itself may emerge as the greatest loser. With divisions deepening and trust in leadership eroding, many yearn for a time when the presidency symbolized national unity and strength.

The upcoming elections will determine not only the future of US leadership but also the implications for global politics. As the US stands at this crossroads, a calculated examination of the interplay between domestic issues and foreign policy will be vital for voters seeking meaningful change in a complex world.

Ultimately, navigating the turbulent waters of the 2024 elections requires a balanced approach that considers both domestic priorities and the intricate web of global relations. As the political landscape evolves, the US public and policymakers must be vigilant and informed, ensuring they champion a vision that promotes unity, moral clarity, and sustainable progress both at home and abroad. Courtesy: Arab News

Dr. Turki Faisal Al-Rasheed is an adjunct professor at the University of Arizona, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Department of Biosystems Engineering. He is the author of "Agricultural Development Strategies: The Saudi Experience."

How can Arab American voters better influence US foreign policy?

Arab American voters are deeply affected by events in the Middle East, most notably the Israeli invasion of the Gaza Strip, which has led to the deaths of nearly 43,000 Palestinians in a little more than a year. However, a leading Illinois candidate suggests this voter group should prioritize local efforts at the grassroots to better influence US foreign policy.

Suzanne Akhras, a Democrat running for the 82nd Illinois State House district, noted a new survey jointly conducted by Arab News and YouGov, highlighting how the Middle East conflict is shaping Arab American voter choices in the presidential race between Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump.

The Syrian American, who has lived in Illinois for 42 years, anticipates a higher turnout among Arab and Muslim voters in the Nov. 5 elections, driven in part by the prolonged Gaza war and its expansion into Lebanon.

However, she urged Arab and Muslim Americans to focus on "their neighbors'" immediate concerns to address both national and foreign policy issues effectively. "They must elect more Arab and Muslim Americans to local municipal and state offices to strengthen their voices," she said on "The Ray Hanania Radio Show" on Thursday.

Noting this is her first candidacy for public office, she explained that building local relationships reinforces public understanding, which can ultimately impact Congressional votes. "Just being present in different spaces at the local level, I think, is really important," she said. "Having those one-on-one conversations, people see your point of view when you humanize it."

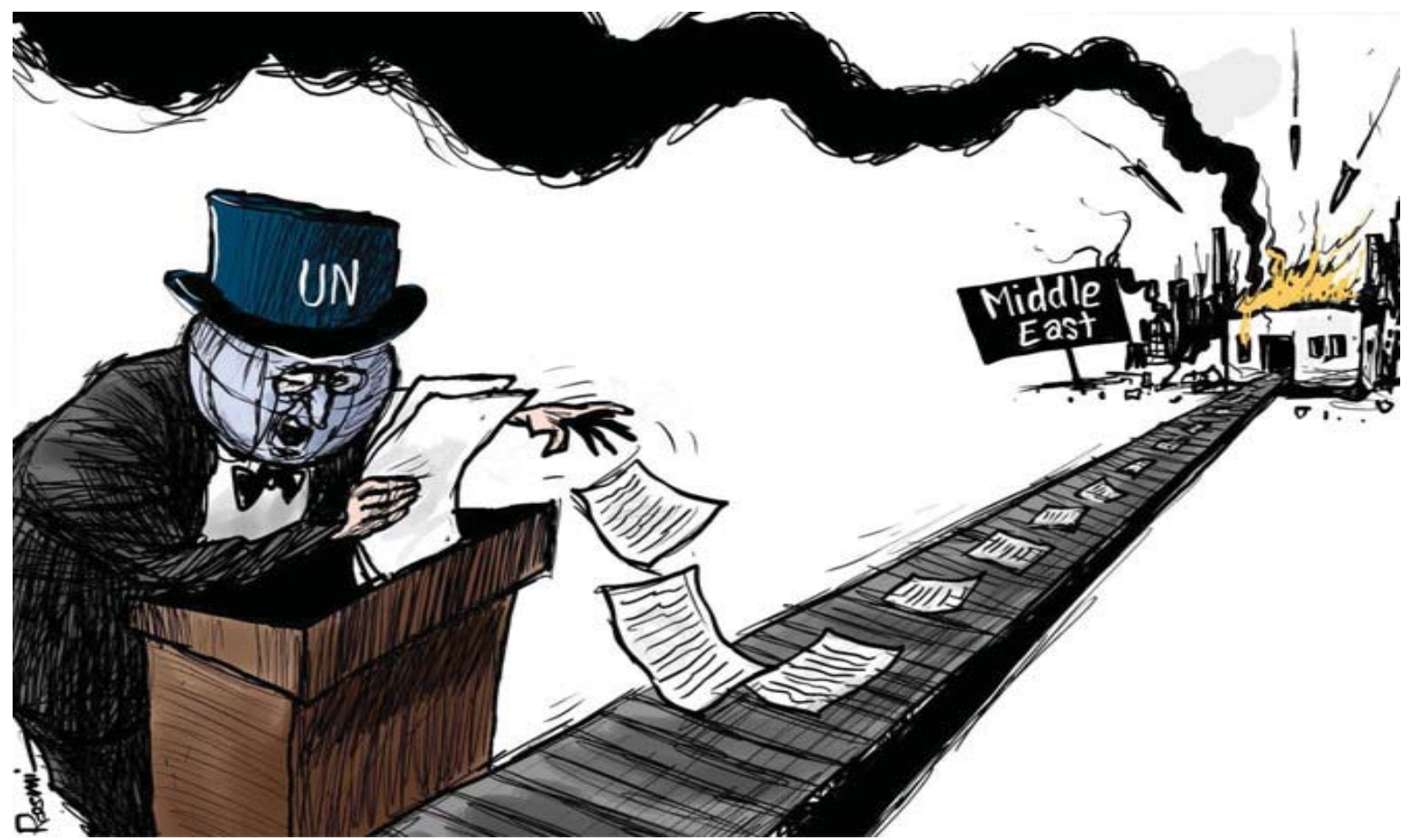
Akhras's husband, Dr. Zaher Sahloul, is the founder of MedGlobal, a US-based NGO providing medical assistance to refugees in the Middle East and Europe. Akhras emphasized her mission to aid people both domestically and abroad, building alliances to establish a foundation for advocating broader foreign policy changes.

Describing US policy in the Middle East as "unfortunate," she said: "I'm so sad. It breaks my heart because we saw this in action in Syria. We're seeing this now."

She identified her top three issues for residents of the 82nd Illinois House District as women's healthcare, community safety through responsible gun laws, and mental health resources.

The 82nd Illinois House District spans several major suburbs in Chicago's western and southwestern areas, home to a significant Arab and Muslim population. "My top three issues are ensuring we protect women's access to health, including reproductive rights and maternal health," Akhras said. "They need support in every aspect."

Meanwhile, Democratic nominee Kamala Harris's attempt to win Arab American voters away from Green Party candidate Jill Stein faltered when her aides expelled a prominent Democrat from a meeting on Oct. 22, 2024.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi. (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

EU, Gulf states pave way for new era of shared prosperity

Zaid M. Belbagi

The first-ever EU-Gulf Cooperation Council summit in Brussels earlier this month was a testament to the Gulf region's growing geopolitical significance on the global stage. Co-chaired by European Council President Charles Michel and Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, the summit brought together European and Gulf leaders to discuss a "strategic partnership for peace and prosperity" between two regions that share significant economic, security, and energy interests. The second edition of this biennial summit will take place in Riyadh in 2026.

The summit is a timely acknowledgement of the growing economic and strategic cooperation between Europe and the Gulf. The EU is the GCC's second-largest trade partner, with the two having exchanged over \$180 billion in trade last year. Following the summit, the two sides issued a joint statement confirming their intention to revive talks over an EU-GCC free trade agreement that was suspended in 2008.

Beyond the economic benefits of cooperation, the growing EU-GCC relationship is also motivated by a shared vision of regional security in the Middle East. With the war in Gaza having persisted for a year, and now having expanded to hostilities between Israel, Lebanon, Iran, and the Houthis in Yemen, inter-regional cooperation is critical for negotiating a viable ceasefire in order to end the conflict. Europe is already bearing

significant consequences of the war and volatility in Ukraine and is thus eager to secure its trade and energy interests in the Middle East. This includes maritime security cooperation with the GCC.

The growing partnership between the EU and the GCC is multifaceted, with the potential to boost cooperation in fields such as clean tech, digital communications, education, and climate change mitigation. Renewable energy provides a particularly promising avenue for collaboration between the two regional organizations. During the World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi in April, the EU launched the EU-GCC Cooperation on Green Transition project to create a joint platform to exchange best practices and expertise between stakeholders, the adoption of policies and technologies to aid the GCC's green transition, and the creation of a fruitful business environment between EU and GCC green tech companies.

This mutual interest in cleantech and energy security was emphasized at the recent EU-GCC summit. With both regions focusing on a rapid transition to green energy and given the Gulf investments in the field, there is the potential for established European renewable companies to localize in the Gulf and utilize the region's abundant natural resources in a manner beneficial to both sides. Clean hydrogen was emphasized as being particularly significant for both sides.

Despite numerous avenues of cooperation, the EU-GCC will not be without its challenges. On the strategic front, the two regions have had differences over political solutions and military responses in the Middle East. The GCC countries

did not join the EU's Operation Aspidochelone launched in February to counter Houthi attacks in the Red Sea. To the chagrin of the GCC states, the EU has not been able to develop an effective and coordinated stance on Gaza. Additionally, they are also not keen to emulate Europe's staunch opposition to Russia.

In the field of renewable energy, the development and export of hydrogen is expensive, and European cleantech companies' willingness to localize in the Gulf has been slow. There is also the emerging challenge of the EU's tilt to the right. With right-wing and populist parties making electoral gains across European countries, it remains to be seen whether their anti-immigrant — often anti-Arab — domestic policies will hamper their foreign policy toward the Gulf states. This may not pose a significant challenge as the Gulf states have previously dealt with populist governments by identifying pragmatic areas of cooperation.

Regardless of these challenges, the EU-GCC summit highlights the willingness of these two geopolitical heavyweights to work together and identify the most effective areas of cooperation. While coordinated political strategies develop over time, the two regional organizations are keen to prioritize partnerships in the spheres of trade, energy, technology, and education for a shared and prosperous future.

Courtesy: Arab News
Zaid M. Belbagi is a political commentator and an adviser to private clients between London and the Gulf Cooperation Council. X: @Moulay_Zaid

Rules not rivalries: adjusting to our multipolar reality

Baria Alamuddin

As Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine initially floundered in 2022, Western decision makers predicted that they could break Russia economically and that a flood of funds and weapons would decisively turn the tide of the war, teaching a definitive lesson that hostile invasions always ended in disaster.

At the BRICS summit last week, the Russian president was anxious to send a riposte to the West: not only was he still in power, but he had also gathered a dozen world leaders around him, demonstrating that efforts at isolation had failed.

For Western policymakers, it was a lesson that should long ago have been obvious: when rogue actors are allowed to violate international law with impunity, states such as North Korea, Iran and Russia gradually begin acting as a bloc to subvert and undermine the global system.

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the US and its European allies enjoyed uncontested supremacy, enabling them to impose their rules and values. But the American superpower refused to live by its own rules: engaging in illegal overseas wars, refusing to be accountable before international courts, and abusing its veto to protect its closest allies as they violated human rights with impunity.

The result was that as other states such as China, India and Russia sought to consolidate their superpower status, they felt no compulsion to even pretend to abide by international norms that had long-since ceased to function.

But beyond Putin's propaganda coup, BRICS continues to be a diverse and dysfunctional bloc. While some of these countries are drawn together by mutual hostility toward the US, many of them enjoy far greater trading ties with the West than with each other.

While BRICS countries account for 35 percent of the world's GDP, more than the G7, the organization lacks any sort of institutional apparatus or strategic agenda for consolidating economic and political alignment, let alone promoting alternative currencies to rival the dollar. The final "Kazan Declaration" was a grab-bag of platitudes that

served only to emphasize the diverse worldviews of participants — creating the question of whether BRICS serves any greater purpose than as a photo opportunity. For the first time since the 1980s we hear threats to deploy nuclear weapons and expand nuclear arsenals. If any party acted on these threats, such a conflict could escalate so rapidly that none of us would be alive to comprehend what had occurred. The current conflict in the Middle East is highly likely to prompt Iran to accelerate its efforts to reach military nuclear threshold, making the region infinitely more precarious.

Artificial intelligence, cyberwarfare, intelligent drones and other technologies will meanwhile revolutionize the face of conflict — multiplying the destructive effects, while offering a variety of cheap, deadly options for terrorists and non-state actors, who themselves can thrive amid ever-increasing numbers of disintegrating states.

NATO has responded to assertive behaviour by China and Russia through closer alliances with Asian and Pacific states, staging ostentatious military exercises while expanding munitions industries. The US presidential election, meanwhile, is a stark choice between multilateralism or unilateralism, with immense implications for American relations with other world powers.

We all prosper when we trade together, peacefully coexist, and are not spending high proportions of GDP on armaments. America and Europe must adjust to the reality that China and Russia are today global powers; but China and Russia must relearn the lesson that exploiting their growing might to oppress weaker neighbors, or their own citizens, will end in tears. The planet is crying out for leaders whose foremost priority is the wellbeing of their citizens, who comprehend that the only route to peace and prosperity is through a multilateral rules-based world.

Enough of the hypocrisy, double standards and empty rhetoric — in our new multilateral global reality, if old powers such as America and Europe want emerging rivals to play by the rules, they themselves must first set the example in consistently acting according to their own principles. Justice for all — or justice for nobody. Courtesy: Arab News

Baria Alamuddin is an award-winning journalist and broadcaster in the Middle East and the UK.

US Election

Trump media stock surges 21% after NYC rally

Stock closes at \$47.36 per share eclipsing recent high driven by media scrutiny over Trump escaping assassination

NEW YORK: Shares of Donald Trump's social media company, Trump Media & Technology Group, experienced a significant surge of over 21% on October 28, 2024, following a high-energy campaign rally at Madison Square Garden.

The stock closed at \$47.36 per share, eclipsing its recent mid-summer high, which had been driven by intense media scrutiny after Trump narrowly escaped an assassination attempt during a rally in Pennsylvania.

This recent rally in New York City attracted thousands of supporters, showcasing Trump's enduring popularity among his base.

The volatility of DJT stock has been notable over the past few months.

Following the assassination attempt, the stock saw a spike but subsequently fell below \$12 by late September. October has brought a recovery, with the stock now back to levels seen in July.

Analysts suggest that the fluctuations in Trump Media's stock value are not necessarily reflective of the company's operational performance—particularly given that Truth Social, the platform run by Trump Media, gener-

ates limited revenue and has a relatively small user base.

Instead, the stock appears to function as a proxy for pro-Trump retail investors rallying behind the former president as he campaigns for a return to the White House.

This latest stock surge coincides with a shift in the political betting landscape.

Betting platforms such as Polymarket and Kalshi have shown increased favorability towards Trump, despite national polls indicating a tightly contested race with Vice President Kamala Harris.

Concerns have emerged regarding potential manipulation of these betting markets, particularly after reports highlighted a French national making significant pro-Trump bets through multiple accounts.

Polling data illustrates the current competitive landscape of the election.

A recent Forbes/HarrisX poll, conducted with 1,244 likely voters, shows Trump leading Harris by two percentage points, with 51% support for Trump compared to Harris's 49%.

This marks a significant turnaround from earlier months when Harris

maintained a lead in many surveys.

Additionally, a Wall Street Journal poll of 1,500 registered voters indicates Trump ahead by three points, with 49% supporting Trump versus 46% for Harris.

These trends reflect a noticeable shift in voter sentiment, suggesting that Trump is gaining traction as the election date approaches.

Both candidates are intensifying their campaign efforts as Election Day nears. Trump, who has held rallies in key battleground states, aims to solidify support among religious voters, particularly in Georgia.

His recent rally in New York showcased his hardline stance on immigration, where he pledged to deport what he described as "vicious and blood-thirsty criminals," echoing themes that resonate with his core supporters.

Conversely, Harris is focusing her campaigning on states like Michigan, where she plans to highlight her administration's economic initiatives and the importance of investing in manufacturing jobs.

During her campaign, Harris has engaged with voters in various settings, including community events aimed at



connecting with working-class individuals.

Her rhetoric emphasizes unity and a forward-looking agenda, positioning herself as a candidate focused on addressing the needs of the American people.

As the two candidates vie for undecided voters, the dynamics of their campaigns are becoming increasingly

stark. Trump continues to advocate for a return to policies from his previous administration, citing achievements in the economy prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the challenges faced during the pandemic's onset, he argues that his leadership was superior to that of the current administration.

In contrast, Harris is pushing for

proposals aimed at mitigating rising costs and addressing housing issues, seeking to appeal to voters who are feeling the pinch of inflation and economic uncertainty.

The upcoming election is shaping up to be closely contested, with early voting already indicating robust participation—over 41 million Americans had cast their votes as of the latest reports.

However, this turnout still lags behind the record-setting numbers seen in the 2020 election, which was heavily influenced by the pandemic.

Both campaigns recognize the critical importance of energizing their bases while also appealing to undecided and independent voters who could swing the election.

As the race enters its final stretch, the interplay between stock prices, betting odds, and voter sentiment will be crucial in determining the outcome of the election.

Analysts and supporters alike will be closely monitoring the unfolding events, as both candidates work tirelessly to secure their paths to victory in what promises to be a historic election. Agencies

Following Nasrallah's death

Hezbollah appoints Naim Qassem as new leader

Qassem, whose promotion from deputy leader was announced on Tuesday, replaces Hassan Nasrallah

BEIRUT: Hezbollah has announced Naim Qassem as its new head.

Qassem, whose promotion from deputy leader was announced on Tuesday, replaces Hassan Nasrallah as secretary-general of the Lebanon-based armed group.

Nasrallah was killed in Beirut in late September by an Israeli strike. Many other senior Hezbollah officials have also been targeted since Israel turned its focus on the group that month.

In a statement, Hezbollah said Qassem was elected to take up the position due to his "adherence to the principles and goals of Hezbollah."

It added that the group would "[ask] God Almighty to guide him in this noble mission in leading Hezbollah and its Islamic resistance."

The killing of Nasrallah, who embodied the Lebanese Shia movement in the eyes of its supporters and



the wider region, was seen as having left a vacuum inside a group that had already lost much of its leadership as a result of months of Israeli assassinations.

Nasrallah's cousin Hashem Safieddine was previously viewed as the favourite to take the helm of the Iran-

linked Hezbollah, but he died in an Israeli strike on Beirut shortly after his relative.

The 71-year-old Qassem has often been referred to as Hezbollah's "number two". He is one of the religious scholars who founded the group in the early 1980s and has a long history in Shia political activism.

He was the most senior Hezbollah official to continue making public appearances after Nasrallah largely went into hiding following the group's 2006 war with Israel.

Since the former leader was killed, Qassem has made three televised addresses, speaking in more formal Arabic than the colloquial Lebanese favoured by Nasrallah.

On September 30, he issued a defiant message, saying that Hezbollah remains ready to fight Israel and to win. Reuters

Russian IT specialist jailed for 13.5 years over alleged CIA espionage attempt

Since launching its Ukraine military offensive in 2022, Russia has issued numerous harsh sentences for treason

PARIS: Russia on Tuesday sentenced an IT specialist to 13 and a half years in prison for allegedly attempting to pass state secrets to the CIA, state media reported.

Moscow City Court found IT worker Firuz Dadoboyev "guilty of treason for the benefit of the US", TASS state news agency reported, citing the FSB security agency.

It reported Dadoboyev works in IT at a Moscow company, is originally from Tajikistan and has dual citizenship.

The FSB said Dadoboyev illegally acquired information that was a "state secret" and planned to pass it to a US intelligence officer.

"With this aim, he set up contact with the CIA," it claimed, adding that Dadoboyev was detained by FSB officers in October 2022 and had since "repented" his actions.

Since launching its Ukraine military offensive in February 2022, Russia has issued numerous harsh sentences for treason. AFP

Authorities in Taiwan warn of rapidly intensifying Typhoon Kong-rey

LONDON: The authorities in south-eastern Taiwan suspended some ferries and advised fishers to return to shore on Oct 29, as the island's weather forecaster warned that the approaching Typhoon Kong-rey was "rapidly" intensifying.

Packing maximum wind speeds of 155kmh, the storm could make landfall on late Oct 29 or early Oct 31, the Central Weather Administration said.

"It is now intensifying rapidly," Mr Lin Po-tung of the weather agency told a news conference.

He warned waves could reach 5m or 6m high on Oct 30, with heavy rain also forecast in the capital Taipei.

Disaster officials in Taitung county, which looked set to bear the brunt of Kong-rey based on the storm's current trajectory, advised fishers to return to shore and secure their boats, while ferry services to outlying islands were suspended.

"The main impact on Taitung will be damage caused by strong winds," the local fire agency said.

Further north in the coastal city of Hualien, which was hit by a 7.4-magnitude earthquake in April, the authorities prepared supplies for the vulnerable, as well as vehicles ready to evacuate people.

Taiwan is accustomed to frequent tropical storms from July to October, but scientists have warned that climate change is increasing their intensity, leading to heavy rain, flash floods and strong gusts.

In July, Gaemi became the strongest typhoon to make landfall in Taiwan in eight years, killing at least 10 people, injuring hundreds and triggering widespread flooding in the southern seaport city of Kaohsiung.

That was followed in early October by Krathon, which killed at least four people and injured hundreds, as well as triggering mudslides, flooding and record-strong gusts.

In a bid to avoid a repeat of the flooding, there have been "increased efforts on clearing sediment from rivers and in more areas", said Mr Wang Yi-fung, a spokesman for the Water Resources Agency, under the Economic Ministry. AFP



Two detained after temple fireworks explosion leaves nearly 150 injured in India

The fireworks blaze caused burns to the faces and hands of those in the tightly packed crowd

NEW DELHI: Indian police detained two people Tuesday after a temple fireworks show erupted into a ferocious explosion, leaving almost a hundred people in hospital, eight in a critical condition.

Hundreds were crowded around a Hindu temple at Nileschwaram in the southern state of Kerala on Monday evening to watch the fireworks, videos posted by Indian newspapers showed.

Then, from inside a building, a surge of cracks can be heard, before a powerful ball of flame surges high into the sky.

"Around eight people are critical, and around 154 have been reported injured, out of which 97 people are admitted in hospital," local police chief Shilpa Dyavaiah told AFP.

"They burst firecrackers very close to the place where they have stored



the firecrackers," Dyavaiah said, adding that sparks from the burst crackers reached the cache.

Indian media reports, citing officials, said the blaze caused burns to

the faces and hands of those in tightly packed crowd.

Local government official K. Inbasekhar said no permission had been given for the fireworks show.

The temple president and secretary had been taken into custody, The Hindu newspaper reported.

Religious gatherings in India have a grim track record of deadly incidents caused by safety lapses and poor crowd management.

In 2016, at least 112 people were killed after a huge explosion caused by a banned fireworks display at a temple marking the Hindu new year.

India is readying for its major fireworks season, a traditional celebration for the Hindu festival of lights, Diwali, later this week.

The fireworks also spew hazardous acrid smoke, and the capital New Delhi has banned firecrackers to curb hazardous air pollution.

Police are often reluctant to act against violators, given the strong religious sentiments attached to the crackers by Hindu devotees. AFP

Indonesia urges UN Security Council to stop Israel from banning UNRWA

JAKARTA: Indonesia called on the UN Security Council on Tuesday to halt Israel's ban on the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, a move Jakarta says violates the world organization's charter and immunity of its bodies.

On Monday evening, the Israeli parliament — the Knesset — passed two bills; one barring UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees from operating on territories occupied by Israel, and another banning Israeli authorities from any contact with the UN agency.

The bans, set to take effect in 90 days, are expected to severely restrict UNRWA from operating in the regions where it is supporting the Palestinian population in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and

the Gaza strip.

"This decision clearly violates and contradicts the UN Charter and the 1946 Convention on the immunities of UN agencies," the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement.

"Indonesia urges the international community, especially the UN Security Council, to immediately halt Israel's actions and ensure its compliance with obligations under international law, UN Security Council resolutions, and the ICJ (International Court of Justice) rulings to end the occupation in Palestine."

In July, the ICJ ruled that Israel's occupation of the occupied Palestinian territories is unlawful and should come to an end "as rapidly as possible."

Indonesia has been increasing its contributions to UNRWA since Israel's war on Gaza escalated last October. "UNRWA is an agency mandated by the United Nations to serve an irreplaceable role in providing education, healthcare, and aid to millions of Palestinian refugees. Indonesia reaffirms its commitment to continue supporting UNRWA in discharging its mandate," the ministry said.

UNRWA was established by the UN General Assembly in 1949, originally to support 700,000 Palestinians who were forced from their homes during the creation of Israel.

Today, it serves some 5.9 million people and operates in the occupied Palestinian territories, as well

as Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, with contributions from UN member states. Since Israel escalated its attacks on Gaza more than a year ago, nearly all Palestinians in the area have relied on UNRWA for basic necessities.

This includes reliance on food, water and hygiene supplies, while almost half of the enclave's 2.2 million population have been sheltered in the UN agency's schools, clinics and public facilities.

Israeli forces have killed at least 233 UNRWA staff in the year-long war, during which Tel Aviv launched an intense campaign to delegitimize the UN body.

This includes accusing UNRWA employees of association with the Gaza-based militant group Hamas, which earlier this year had



led to some countries, including the US, suspending funding for the agency.

Most nations have since restored their contributions, with the excep-

tion of Washington, its biggest donor.

Monday's vote by the Israeli parliament "sets a dangerous precedent," said UNRWA head,

Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini.

He wrote on X that it "will only deepen the suffering of Palestinians, especially in Gaza where people have been going through more than a year of sheer hell."

Israel's relentless air and ground attacks on Gaza have killed over 43,000 Palestinians and injured more than 101,000. The real death toll is suspected to be much higher, with estimates published by medical journal The Lancet indicating that, as of July, it could be more than 186,000.

"Failing to push back these bills will weaken our common multilateral mechanism established after World War 2," Lazzarini said. "This should be a concern to all." Agencies

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
90,864.09	90,195.51	
Day's High	Day's Low	
91,358.15	90,449.41	
Index Value	Change	
22,092,881,507	+668.58	
Percentage	Time	
+0.74%	29 Oct, 2024 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
8,219.61	-66.01	
Percentage	Time	
-0.80%	29 Oct, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
42,333.40	-54.17	
Percentage	Time	
0.13%	29 Oct, 12:58 pm GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
38,903.68	+298.15	
Percentage	Time	
+0.77%	29 Oct, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	183.75	184.94
Bahrain Dinar	730.70	738.70
Canadian Dollar	199.56	201.96
China Yuan	38.88	39.28
Danish Krone	39.82	40.22
Euro	297.40	300.15
Hong Kong Dollar	35.36	35.71
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.92	1.98
Kuwaiti Dinar	896.87	906.37
Malaysian Ringgit	63.34	63.94
New Zealand \$	165.23	167.23
Norwegians Krone	24.98	25.28
Omani Riyal	715.20	723.70
Qatari Riyal	75.54	76.24
Saudi Riyal	73.60	74.15
Singapore Dollar	208.64	210.64
Swedish Korona	25.82	26.12
Swiss Franc	317.51	320.31
Thai Bhat	8.18	8.33
U.A.E Dirham	75.30	75.95
UK Pound Sterling	356.85	360.35
US Dollar	277.25	278.75

Pakistan's exports to US increase by 6.18% in Q1 of FY2024

The overall exports to the US were recorded at US \$1.461 billion during July-September (2024-25)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's export of goods and services to the United States (US) witnessed an increase of 6.18 percent during the first quarter of the current fiscal year (2024-25) as compared to the exports of the corresponding quarter of last year, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported.

The overall exports to the US were recorded at US \$1.461 billion during July-September (2024-25) against exports of US \$1.376 billion during July-September (2023-24), SBP data revealed.

On a year-to-year basis, the exports to the US also surged to \$511.525 million in September 2024 against the export of \$441.569 million in September 2023.

Meanwhile, on a month-on-month basis, the exports to the US witnessed an increase of 7.95 percent during September 2024 as compared to the exports of \$473.838 million in August 2024, the SBP data revealed.



Overall Pakistan's exports to other countries witnessed an increase of 7.82 percent in the first three months, from US \$6.952 billion to US \$7.495 billion, the SBP data

revealed. On the other hand, the imports from the US into the country during the months under review were recorded at US \$558.562 million against US \$471.776 million last year, showing an increase of 18.39 percent in July-September (2024-25).

On a year-on-year basis, the imports for the US also increased to US \$187.700 million in September 2024, against the export of US \$120.799 million in September 2023.

On a month-on-month basis, the imports from the US into the country witnessed a nominal decrease of 1.12 percent during September 2024, as compared to the imports of US \$185.606 million during August 2024, according to the data.

The overall imports into the country witnessed an increase of 15.71 per cent, from \$12.288 billion to US \$14.219 billion, according to the data. APP

Ahead of cold weather

ISLAMABAD: A vendor frying fish ahead of cold weather in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

PSX stays bullish, gains 668 more points

KARACHI: The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 668.57 points, a positive change of 0.74 percent, closing at 90,864.09 points as compared to 90,195.52 points on last trading day.

A total of 602,810,650 shares were traded during the day as compared to 567,264,435 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 28.203 billion against Rs.29.210 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 440 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 171 of them recorded gains and 219 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 50 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 41,401,611 shares at Rs 1.27 per share, Silk Bank Limited with 31,281,039 shares at Rs 1.08 per share and Pace (Pak) Limited with 30,208,661 shares at Rs5.73 per share.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.162.00 per share price, closing at Rs 19,180.00, whereas the runner-up was Siemens (Pakistan) Engineering with Rs 122.62 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,348.81.

Hallmark Company Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 27.38 per share closing at Rs 816.66 followed by Sazgar Engineering Works Limited with Rs 22.00 decline to close at Rs 992.56. Agencies

LCCI, PITB ink MoU to boost employment



LAHORE: The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) and Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with an objective to establish an advanced job-matching and recruitment platform at the LCCI, fostering direct links between job seekers and employers across the province.

The MoU was signed by LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad and PITB Senior Programme Manager Shams ul Islam along with Director Labour North Imran Haider Tipu. LCCI Senior Vice President

Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry and Executive Committee Members were also present.

Highlighting the significance of the collaboration, LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad welcomed the establishment of the Punjab Job Portal at the LCCI, a crucial step in efficiently connecting the business community with skilled talent. He expressed appreciation for the Punjab government's initiative and acknowledged PITB's contribution in deploying a staff member on-site at LCCI to assist members with the portal. He said that the

Punjab Job Portal is designed to streamline the job-matching process for the business community. This collaboration with PITB will not only benefit our members but also support the broader economy by bridging workforce gaps.

Mian Abuzar Shad further emphasized the importance of sustained collaboration between LCCI and PITB, sharing his optimism for the ongoing partnership. "Our goal is to build a strong alignment between our organizations, ensuring a prosperous future for all stakeholders involved," he added.

Shaza Fatima calls for adopting emerging technologies

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Tuesday underlined the urgent need to adopt emerging technologies to drive the country's progress, calling for joint efforts to uplift Pakistan.

She expressed these views during a signing ceremony of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) among Jazz, the National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST), and the National Information Technology Board (NITB).

Secretary IT, Zarrar Hasham Khan and Special Secretary IT Division, Azfar Manzoor, were also present. Shaza Fatima highlighted the necessity for Pakistan to stay aligned with global advancements in technology.

She said that the collaboration between Jazz, NUST and NITB would not only

foster innovation but also position Pakistan as a leader in AI, aligning the country's capabilities with international standards. "This initiative marks a significant step in leveraging technology for national development," she added.

Shaza Fatima stressed the importance of developing Pakistan's first Local Large Language Model (LLM) within a defined timeline. She also pointed out that academia-industry linkages could generate job opportunities for the youth, emphasizing the need to equip them with the latest digital skills.

Speaking at the event, Jazz CEO Aamir Ibrahim highlighted the critical role of Artificial Intelligence and big language models in shaping the country's future. "We are committed to building a local ecosystem that meets the needs of our communities," he said.

Most global stock markets rise with eyes on megatech results

LONDON: Most major global stock markets rose on Tuesday with investors looking ahead to the release of US economic data and the earnings reports of tech titans this week.

Oil prices rebounded after a sharp fall the previous day on relief that Israel's strikes on Iran spared the country's energy infrastructure.

Concerns in the oil market have now shifted back to focus on potential oversupply in 2025 and a slowdown in demand from China, the world's largest oil importer, according to analysts.

US stocks closed higher Monday, boosted by the cheaper oil, and as investors look ahead to a busy week of economic indicators with the

market already hovering near record highs.

The US government will release its third quarter GDP growth estimate this week, as well as its closely watched monthly labour market report, which will indicate the health of the world's largest economy.

Investors are also eyeing the earnings reports of five of the "Magnificent Seven" US tech giants due this week, including Google-parent Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, Facebook-parent Meta, and Microsoft.

"Although any market focus on earnings will rapidly be diverted to next week's presidential election and Federal Reserve meeting," said Danni Hewson, head of financial analysis

at AJ Bell.

Major European stock markets were in the green in late morning trading while Asian markets ended mixed.

London edged up around 0.1 percent as investors awaited the first budget of Britain's new Labour government on Wednesday, expected to include tax rises on businesses.

Shares in banking giant HSBC rose around four percent, leading gains on London's FTSE 100, after it reported a strong set of earnings that beat profit expectations.

Meanwhile, shares in British oil and gas giant BP dropped one percent after the company reported a slump in profits on weak oil trading



and refining margins, despite beating analyst expectations.

In Asia, Tokyo and Hong Kong stocks climbed but Shanghai and Singapore retreated.

Japanese shares built on the previous day's gains as cheaper oil and the weaker yen outweighed uncertainty after Japan's ruling coalition fell short of a majority in Sunday's general election.

Investors are awaiting the Bank of Japan's rate decision later this week, with the central bank expected to stand pat following two hikes earlier this year.

Focus is also on a key political meeting in Beijing next week, with investors hoping for details of an expected major stimulus plan to support China's struggling economy. Agencies

APBUMA demands disbursement of refund claims

FAISALABAD: All Pakistan Bedsheet & Upholstery Manufacturers Association (APBUMA) has demanded immediate disbursement of refund claims and said that textile sector is experiencing crucial situation and it may face collapse if the refunds are not released.

In a statement on Tuesday, Central Chairman APBUMA Imran Mehmood Sheikh said that the textile exporters have grave concern over the prolonged delay in the disbursement of outstanding refunds under various categories.

He said that the exporters are still awaiting rightful refunds, which placed immense financial strain on businesses and adversely impacted the growth potential of the textile export sector.

He said that textile exporters, being one of the most compliant sectors in the country, have continued to fulfill their tax obligations and contributed significantly to Pakistan's economy. APP

Rupee sheds 06 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani rupee on Tuesday depreciated by 06 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.74 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.68.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.25 and Rs 278.75 respectively.

The price of Euro increased by 27 paise to close at Rs 300.23 against the last day's closing of Rs 299.96, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs1.81, whereas an increase of 34 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs360.39 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 360.05.

The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 01 paise and 02 paise to close at Rs 75.61 and Rs 73.95 respectively. Agencies

Rizwan sets ICC Champions trophy, T20 WC in India as targets as captain

Rizwan said that a good captain's trait is to keep the team united

Spokesman Reporter

LAHORE: The newly-appointed white-ball captain Mohammad Rizwan has said that winning ICC Champions trophy 2025 and Men's T20 World Cup in India & Sri Lanka are his goals as captain of the Pakistan white-ball captain.

In his first interview as captain with PCB Digital on Monday, he said the team has been losing in the semi-finals and final of the major ICC tournaments, adding, the team needed to make preparations keeping Champions trophy and T20 World Cup in mind.

About his other goals as captain, Rizwan said nurturing a future captain and a back-up wicket-keeper were his other targets as captain, adding that he would like to lead by example. "I will leave behind a legacy in which Pakistan cricket will have a group of good players after him," he responded.

Rizwan further said that a good captain's trait is to keep the team united, adding that the unity in the team was not due to one individual.

"I wish to take Pakistan cricket to new



heights with the right combination of the young and senior cricketers in the team," the captain asserted, adding, cricket fans will find a new-look team under him.

It is a dream come true to don national color but it is even more gratifying an honor to lead Pakistan cricket, he said, adding that he could not express his feelings of elation on being nominated as Pakistan white-ball captain.

Rizwan said it is a privilege to lead a team of immensely talented individuals and a challenge as well to come up to the expectations of the nations, adding that he will do his best to efficiently handle the pressure of the game by keeping a balance between the pressure and the honor.

"I have led U 19 and domestic outfits in the past but I was never desirous of the

captaincy of the national side," Rizwan said, adding that he has learnt a lot from the past captains of the Pakistan team.

The wicket-keeper batsman said he will try to do justice with the job and apply what he had learnt over the years, adding that there is immense difference in captaining in domestic cricket and leading at the international level.

On his hopes for good performance as captain, Rizwan said he had served as vice captain in all formats and the whole team was happy with him and he will continue to lead in the same way.

On the upcoming Australia series, Mohammad Rizwan said the going has been always remained in Australian conditions for Pakistan team, adding if one looks closely at the stats of the last test series in Australia, one finds that the team lost from a point of advantage. "We will defeat Australians on their soil if work on the mistakes we made during the last series," Rizwan said, adding, "If we did not overcome Australia in the past, it never meant we can not beat them this time." He said the only requirement is to give the good fight.

PCB chief Naqvi meets Rizwan, Agha ahead of Australia tour

"Nation expects good performance from the team under your leadership in the Australia and Zimbabwe series," say PCB chief

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Mohsin Naqvi Tuesday met with recently appointed white-ball captain Muhammad Rizwan and vice-captain Salman Agha, ahead of their departure for the Australia tour on Tuesday.

The chairman also conveyed good wishes for both Rizwan and Salman, who will be leading the team in the one day internationals (ODIs) and Twenty20s matches.

In his meeting with the players in Lahore, the chairman expressed hope that the team will perform well in Australia and the following tour of Zimbabwe, the board said in a statement released today.

The national side is set to play three ODIs and T20Is each against the Kangaroos which will be followed by a series against Zimbabwe with the same number of matches.

Several members of the Green Shirts have already reached Australia's Melbourne city from Lahore, while the second group will depart from Karachi



on this evening.

"Leading the white ball team is an honour and the nation expects good performance from the team under your leadership in the Australia and Zimbabwe series," said Naqvi, praising the talent and professionalism of Pakistani team players.

He added that playing with unity and fighting till the last ball will guarantee success.

"If the team performs as a team, no one can beat you," said the PCB chief in the statement posted by PCB on its official X account.

Both Rizwan and Salman thanked the chairman for trusting them with the important job and showing full confidence in them.

PCB chief Mohsin Naqvi meets Mohammad Rizwan, Salman Agha

ahead of Australia tour

Rizwan said that the team is determined to perform well during the tour of Australia and Zimbabwe.

"Will try hard to meet the expectations of the nation," he added.

PCB's Chief Operating Officer Salman Naseer was also present during the meeting.

Upcoming white-ball series

Australia

November 4 — ODI, MCG, Melbourne

November 8 — ODI, Adelaide Oval, Adelaide

November 10 — ODI, Perth Stadium, Perth

November 14 — T20I, The Gabba, Brisbane

November 16 — T20I, SCG, Sydney

November 18 — T20I, Bellerive Oval, Hobart

Zimbabwe

November 24 — ODI, Bulawayo

November 26 — ODI, Bulawayo

November 28 — ODI, Bulawayo

December 1 — T20I, Bulawayo

December 3 — T20I, Bulawayo

December 5 — T20I, Bulawayo

Mohammad Masroor take charge as fielding coach for upcoming tours

Masroor previously served as the fielding coach for the national team during the two Test matches against England

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has appointed Mohammad Masroor as the fielding coach for the national team for the upcoming series against Australia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa.

Media reports said that Masroor's appointment came on the recommendation of Jason Gillespie, who was impressed by Masroor's coaching methods during the Pakistan Shaheens' tour of Australia.

Masroor previously served as the

fielding coach for the national team during the two Test matches against England.

This marks Mohammad Masroor's first full-time coaching assignment with the Pakistan national team, although he has previously worked with the Pakistan Shaheens and the Under-19 team.

In 2018, he also served as an assistant to Steve Rixon during the home series against the West Indies.

Masroor is scheduled to depart for Australia with other players from Karachi

tomorrow, ready to take on his new role as the team prepares for the challenging upcoming series.

Yesterday, Gary Kirsten resigned from his role as head coach of Pakistan's ODI and T20I teams, just six months after his appointment in April 2024.

His decision comes amid growing tension between Pakistan's new coaching staff and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) following a controversial shift in authority.

Earlier this year, the PCB changed its

policies, removing selection responsibilities from Kirsten and his colleague Jason Gillespie, who also joined as a coach.

Now, team selection is fully managed by an independent committee, effectively sidelining the coaches from the decision-making process. This change has sparked discontent within the coaching staff. Gillespie voiced his dissatisfaction recently, stating he felt reduced to just a "match-day analyst." He remarked, "It wasn't what he signed up for."

PJF, affiliated units celebrate World Judo Day

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Judo Federation (PJF) and its affiliated units celebrated World Judo Day nationwide, honouring the legacy of Jigoro Kano Shihan, the founder of judo, said a press release issued by Pakistan Judo Federation on Tuesday.

Aligned with the International Judo Federation's theme of "Well-being," this year's observance highlights a holistic approach to health, extending judo's influence beyond the tatami to enrich all aspects of life. PJF, affiliated units celebrate World Judo Day for over 13 years, the PJF has marked this day to celebrate the sport and the values it instills, emphasizing physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing as essential for quality of life.

The PJF held the 17th Men's and 10th Women's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inter-District

Judo Championship at the Lala Rafique Sports Arena under the auspices of the district government and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Judo Association. Matiullah Khan, Secretary of Sports and Youth Affairs Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was the chief guest. He was accompanied by Pir Abdullah Shah, Additional Secretary of Sports and Youth Affairs Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Saleem Raza, Director of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sports Directorate.

International athletes Malaika Noor and Muhammad Abbas also attended the event. Malaika recently became the first junior female athlete from Pakistan to compete in an IJF event, while Muhammad Abbas showcased an impressive performance at the Asian Cadet & Junior Championship in Korea. The PJF Secretary General Masood Ahmad, officials



and players joined the celebrations embracing the theme of "Wellbeing."

In the Inter-District Championship, various districts from KP participated, including Lakki Marwat, Kohat, Swat, Abbot-

tabad, Mardan, and Peshawar. Abbottabad claimed the women's title with 85 points, followed by Lakki Marwat with 60 points. In the men's category, Khyber District took first place with 93 points, while Peshawar finished

second with 87 points. PJF, affiliated units celebrate World Judo Day. The chief guest addressed the judokas, wishing them health and success on World Judo Day and congratulating all athletes and coaches. He highlighted that judo transcends physical activity, acting as an international language that bridges national borders, cultural barriers and language differences.

He noted that the judo bow symbolizes mutual respect and that judo students gain valuable social skills and form meaningful relationships.

In Islamabad, the Islamabad Judo Association (IJA) celebrated the day by organizing an event with school students, who participated in cake cutting and received certificates. South Asian gold medalist Hamid Ali also joined the festivities. APP

Army grabs 1st position in sr category of Taekwondo Championship



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Army bagged first position in the senior category of the Combaxx 17th Korean Ambassador Cadet and Senior National Taekwondo Championship 2024 here at the Liaquat Gymnasium of Pakistan Sports Complex.

The event's closing ceremony saw prominent attendees, with Federal Secretary for the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination, Nadeem Irshad Kayani, being the Chief Guest.

The guests of honor included Koo Bong Kim, Patron in Chief, Pakistan Taekwondo Federation; Bilal Riaz Barki, Joint Secretary, IB; Omar Saeed, CEO, Pakistan Taekwondo Federation; Mrs. Farah Saeed, Executive Member, Pakistan Taekwondo Federation; Murtaza Hassan Bangash, Secretary General, Pakistan Taekwondo Federation; Col (R) Waseem Ahmed Janjua, President, Pakistan Taekwondo Federation.

Waseem Ahmed thanked Combaxx and expressed gratitude to the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) and Korean Ambassador Park Ki Jun for their support. He also commended all participating departments for their competitive spirit.

Medals and awards were presented at the closing ceremony.

In Female -73 kg, Gold: Ariba (HEC); Silver: Memoona (KPK); 3rd Bronze: Rifat (Police); 4th Bronze: Eman Rashid (Army).

In Female +73 kg, Gold: Manisha Ali (HEC); Silver: Nida Fatima (WAPDA); 3rd Bronze: Aiman (Islamabad); 4th Bronze: Pakeeza Khan (KP).

In Male -87 kg, Gold: Ikhtsham ul Haq (Army); Silver: Adnan Bhatti (WAPDA); 3rd Bronze: Farhad Khan (KPK); 4th Bronze: Tayab Hussain (HEC).

In Male +87 kg, Gold: Hamza Saeed (Army); Silver: Waqar Ali Shah (WAPDA); 3rd Bronze: Yasir Barki (HEC); 4th Bronze: Tariq Khan (KP).

In Tag Team Results, Gold: Army; Silver: PAF; 3rd Bronze: HEC; 4th Bronze: KPK.

In Best Teams Junior Category, 1st Position: Punjab; 2nd Position: KP; 3rd Position: Islamabad.

In Senior Category, 1st Position: Army; 2nd Position: HEC; 3rd Position: WAPDA.

The championship showcased Pakistan's top taekwondo talent, celebrating excellence and sportsmanship on the national stage. APP

Asjad Iqbal excels IBSF World Snooker Championship

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Asjad Iqbal reaches round of 16 in the IBSF World Snooker Championship 2024 at Doha, Qatar.

According to details, in World Qualifier 1 Stage Round 64, Muhammad Asif (Pak) beat Ali Ahmad Yousufi (Afghanistan) 4-0 (62-51, 62-55, 71-07, 67-21). In Round 32, Simon Lichtenberg (Germany) beat Ahsan Ramzan (Pak) 4-1

(93(62)-0, 71-45, 0-84(84), 63-52, 83-0); Asjad Iqbal (Pak) beat Mohammad Soufi (Syria) 4-1 (73(64)-35, 44-67, 67-15, 58-48, 67-09); Jia Jun Ong (Singapore) beat Muhammad Asif (Pak) 4-2 (83-24, 70(70)-0, 0-97(50), 19-82(82), 82-55, 117-10). APP

Asjad Iqbal is seen in action on a snooker table during the championship.

Rayyan claims silver at Doha Qatar Int'l Junior Squash C'ship



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Muhammad Rayyan Zaman on Tuesday secured an impressive silver medal in the Under-11 category at the prestigious Doha Qatar International Junior Squash Championship.

According to information received here, the eight-year-old Rayyan, who is the grandson of legendary World Squash Champion Qamar Zaman and son of Asian Champion Mansoor Zaman, demonstrated exceptional skill and determination throughout the tournament. Rayyan claims silver at Doha Qatar Int'l Junior Squash C'ship. In the thrilling final match, he competed against Malaysia's Dylan Sadan, however, lost the fixture 11-9, 11-19, 12-10.

The outstanding achievement marks a bright beginning for the young squash prodigy, who is poised to follow in the footsteps of his illustrious family members. Rayyan claims silver at Doha Qatar Int'l Junior Squash C'ship

"We are incredibly proud of Rayyan's accomplishment," Qamar Zaman told APP "His hard work and dedication have paid off, and we can't wait to see what the future holds for him." APP

Quaid-e-Azam Wheelchair T20 Cup begins on Tuesday

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Quaid-e-Azam Wheelchair T20 Cup, Pakistan's premier domestic cricket event, will roll into action on Tuesday at Bohranwali Cricket Ground in Faisalabad.

The colourful opening ceremony will be followed by the first match between Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while the second match will feature Punjab against Gilgit-Baltistan, said a statement by Pakistan Wheelchair Cricket Council.

Six teams from across the country, comprising national and international wheelchair players will participate in the tournament.

The event promises to showcase exciting cricketing action and promote the game at the grassroots level.

Pak-Russia Joint Military Consultative Committee

RAWALPINDI: Secretary Defence, Lt. Gen Muhamamd Ali (Retd) and Deputy Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation, Colonel General Alexander V. Fomin, in a meeting of 5th Pak-Russia Joint Military Consultative Committee (JMCC) meeting at Ministry of Defence, on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

ADB approves \$500 mln loan to support climate, disaster resilience in Pakistan

Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change and disasters

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$500 million policy-based loan to support climate change and disaster risk reduction and resilience in Pakistan.

The Climate and Disaster Resilience Enhancement Program (CDREP) will strengthen Pakistan's institutional capacity for planning, preparedness, and response; increase inclusive investment in disaster risk reduction and climate resilience; and support the scale up of disaster risk financing using a risk-layered approach, according to ADB press release received here

Tuesday.

Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change and disasters triggered by natural hazards in Asia and the Pacific. Average losses from disaster events exceed \$2 billion per year. Women and other vulnerable groups are disproportionately affected by climate change and disaster events.

"This program builds on ADB's longstanding work in Pakistan to understand and reduce climate and disaster risks and support effective disaster response," said ADB Director General for Central and West Asia Yevgeniy Zhukov.

"We are proud to support



an integrated and comprehensive approach to climate and disaster risk management, including a portfolio of disaster risk financing instruments for timely and adequate funding for disaster response," Zhukov added.

The program supports enhanced capacity for disaster risk mapping and modeling for investment and development decisions. It enhances coordination for disaster monitoring and response. It supports

enhanced planning and prioritization of gender-sensitive and resilient public investments, including integrated flood risk management and nature-based solutions.

The program supports mobilization of climate finance from public and private sources. This includes issuance of a domestic green sukuk (Islamic bond).

A key innovation of the program is the use of ADB's Contingent Disaster Financing option for the first time in the Central and West Asia region. This will provide quick disbursing budget support in the event of a disaster.

The program will support the establishment of a soli-

idity fund to facilitate the uptake of risk transfer solutions such as agriculture insurance. The program also supports shock-responsive social protection to deliver cash assistance in the event of a disaster.

ADB has also approved a technical assistance grant of \$1 million to support implementation of the program.

Pakistan was a founding member of ADB. Since 1966, ADB has committed over \$52 billion in public and private sector loans, grants, and other forms of financing to promote inclusive economic growth in Pakistan and improve the country's infrastructure, energy and food security, transport networks, and social services.

At UN, Pakistan says it neither wants, nor is engaged in arms race in South Asia

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has voiced concern over the continued supply advanced weapons and sensitive technologies to one state in South Asia — an obvious reference to India — saying it was fueling instability in the tension-ridden region.

"At a time when the world is besieged by conflicts, when cooperation is most needed to bolster peace-building efforts, some states continue to prioritize financing wars over pursuing peaceful solutions," Pakistani delegate Gul Qaiser told the General Assembly's Disarmament and International Security Committee

on Monday.

He said that efforts such as the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) have achieved only limited success in regulating conventional weapons.

"Despite its emphasis on assessing arms transfers based on humanitarian, legal, and security considerations, the reality is stark: advanced weaponry continues to flood volatile regions, often exacerbating disputes and even contributing to atrocities, including genocides," Qaiser, a Counsellor in Pakistan's Mission to the UN, said in a debate on Conventional Weapons.

"In South Asia, one State is

being supplied with advanced weapons and sensitive technologies leading to destabilizing accumulations despite the fact that it adopts hostile policies towards its neighbours and remains in defiance of multiple UNSC (UN Security Council) resolutions," the Pakistani delegate added.

"Pakistan, for its part, is committed to the establishment of a strategic restraint regime in South Asia, which includes an element of conventional force balance," Qaiser said, adding, "Pakistan neither wants, nor is engaged in an arms race in the region."

He also called for addressing

the causes that propel the trade in arms, instead of an exclusive focus on managing its effects.

The success of Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), the Pakistani delegate said, lies in the delicate balance it seeks to maintain between humanitarian considerations and the legitimate security interests of States.

Pakistan, he said, shares the concerns about the possibility of acquisition and use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) by non-state actors and terrorists.

Qaiser said work on Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems

(LAWS), also known as 'killer robots', should continue with an aim to develop international rules through a new Protocol that spell out prohibitions and regulations governing autonomous weapon systems to ensure compliance with the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and consistency with the objectives and purposes of the CCW.

He also called for addressing broader concerns regarding Artificial Intelligence in military capabilities and the use of autonomous weapon systems, saying these issues go beyond IHL and require urgent international attention. APP

No let-up in Israeli military attacks in Gaza, situation only getting worse: UN

UNITED NATIONS: After a week-end of relentless Israeli military attacks throughout the war-shattered Gaza Strip and especially the north, UN humanitarian officials warned Monday that the already dire aid situation is only getting worse.

UNRWA, the largest UN aid agency in Gaza, reported "no improvements" at Kerem Shalom, the main crossing point for lifesaving food, fuel and medicine.

"One of our biggest concerns now is people not having enough to eat," the agency said, adding that aid entering the enclave is at its lowest level in months, with commercial goods barely trickling in.

The UN agency for Palestine refugees said that it continued to receive desperate pleas from colleagues in north Gaza where people remain trapped under rubble and first responders including the UN are blocked from reaching them.

"There is a huge sense of frustration among displaced families in north Gaza due to the horrors they are facing, which they describe as a live broadcast of their death and suffering," said UNRWA spokesperson Louise Wateridge.

Tens of thousands of civilians are in grave danger, she said, echoing a statement from the UN Secretary-General on Sunday in which he expressed shock at the harrowing levels of death, injury and destruction in north Gaza as the Israel Defense Forces pushed ahead with their latest offensive.

Across Gaza more widely the risk of famine persists, according to the latest UN-partnered IPC food insecurity assessment. It estimated that some 1.84 million Gazans are acutely food insecure.

Less than two weeks since that assessment was published, UNRWA now says that the number of children expected to be malnourished could increase by 20

Highlighting that ambulances no longer run and civil defence teams have stopped operating, the UNRWA official described the health situation in north Gaza and Gaza city as catastrophic.

The sick and wounded have no access to lifesaving care, families lack food, their homes have been destroyed, they have no shelter and nowhere is safe, Ms. Wateridge explained, adding that two of the three hospitals remaining in North Gaza governorate have been directly hit.

"Patients are now dying due to the resulting power outage and lack of supplies and doctors are being forced to prioritize one patient over another, because there are not enough supplies, staff or facilities", she said.

In Jabalia refugee camp in the north, meanwhile, UNRWA reported that it has not received water for the seventh consecutive day, and our team has been unable to operate any of the UNRWA water wells. Insufficient fuel is available

to run water facilities, forcing people to risk their lives to find drinking water or consume water from unsafe sources, the UN agency noted.

UN humanitarian report that more than 450,000 displaced people are living in 101 flood-prone sites.

An update from the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on Monday highlighted that almost 15,000 — or 95 per cent — of Gaza's cattle have died, and nearly all calves have been slaughtered.

Fewer than 25,000 sheep — around 43 per cent — and only about 3,000 goats — around 37 per cent — remain alive. In the poultry sector, only 34,000 (one per cent) of the birds have survived.

There is no food, no barley, no fodder and also no water during the conflict; we had over forty heads of livestock, and now they are twenty or even less, said Hakmah El-Hamidi, from Al-Zuwaydah in central Gaza Strip.

Petrol price expected to drop further in November's fortnightly review

ISLAMABAD: Prices of petroleum products in Pakistan may witness a decline of up to Rs3.50 per litre from November 1 for the next fortnight.

According to the media reports, a reduction of up to Rs 3.50 per litre in prices of petrol, diesel and kerosene oil is expected for the upcoming 15-day period beginning November 1, driven by a recent cut in global crude oil price.

However, the final change in fuel prices will be determined after reviewing the global rate on October 31.

A report, published in The News, claimed that the average price of petrol had dropped in the international market to \$76 per barrel from \$77.5 per barrel.

Furthermore, the report stated the price of petrol may increase by Re0.78 and HSD by Re0.26 per litre, if the authorities adjust the internal equalisation freight margin (IEFM) of Rs2-3 per litre at least, which the

government kept negative for the ongoing fortnight from October 16, 2024, to keep the POL prices at the lower side, though international prices went up.

In case the authorities adjust the IEFM, even then the price of kerosene oil will go down by Rs1.42 and light diesel by Rs3.32 per litre.

The government earlier reduced IFEM by Rs3.04 and Rs4.07 per litre for HSD and Mogas, respectively owing to which oil marketing companies and refineries faced losses.

In a letter, written on October 16, 2024, to the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) chairman, the Oil Companies Advisory Council (OCAC) said the government deviated from its existing pricing formula.

To manage the prices at the lower side from October 16, 2024, the Customs Duty for HSD was reduced from Rs15.18 to Rs13.26 per litre. Agencies

Sindh govt to enhance security measures for Chinese nationals

Sindh interior minister says overall security for foreign workers needs to be enhanced

KARACHI: The provincial administration of Sindh convened a meeting on Tuesday to assess and enhance security measures aimed at protecting Chinese nationals working on various projects in the province.

This follows a tragic incident earlier this month when a deadly attack at Karachi airport resulted in the deaths of two Chinese engineers.

Sindh Interior Minister Ziaul Hassan Lanjar, who chaired the meeting with law enforcement and intelligence officials, stated, "The security of CPEC and non-CPEC affiliated Chinese citizens must be coordinated and effective at every level."

He also expressed concerns regarding the safety of Chinese

nationals working with local businesses. "The sponsors must also be made aware of their responsibilities regarding the arrival and security of foreigners in Sindh," Lanjar added.

He emphasised that with the formal support of the Sindh government, overall security for foreign workers, particularly those associated with CPEC and non-CPEC projects, needs to be enhanced.

The fatal explosion outside Karachi airport on October 6 claimed the lives of two Chinese engineers involved in the energy sector, just days before the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Islamabad, which was attended by numerous high-profile foreign dignitaries. Agencies

UNRWA cannot be replaced, say UN top officials in response to Israeli parliament ban

UNITED NATIONS: Top UN officials continued to line up on Tuesday to defend the irreplaceable role of the world body's agency for Palestine refugees, UNRWA, stressing that if implemented, the Israeli parliament's decision to ban it would only deepen suffering of Palestinians in besieged Gaza.

Echoing UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres's warning late Monday that the development would likely have "devastating consequences" as UNRWA is the principal deliverer of aid relief inside the war-shattered enclave, UN human rights chief Volker Turk called the Knesset move "deeply troubling for many reasons".

In Geneva, spokesperson for the UN human rights office (OHCHR) Jeremy Laurence said that the High Commissioner had pointed to the "potential dire impact" on the rights of all those who depend on the UN Relief and Works Agency.

"Without UNRWA, the delivery of food, healthcare, education, among other things, to most of Gaza's population, would grind to a halt," he said. "Civilians have already paid the heaviest price of this conflict over the past year. Truly, this decision will only make matters worse for them, far worse."

The OHCHR spokesperson reiterated previous concerns "about Israel's compliance with international law" with regard to its intense bombardment of Gaza, where tens of thousands of civilians have been killed, according to the local authorities. Laurence also highlighted that Israel remained bound by its obligations "under a range of human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights. After Monday's reported 92-10 vote by Knesset members in favour of two bills targeting UNRWA, head of the UN World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, called the development "intolerable", while also "threatening the lives and health" of all those who depend on UNRWA.

Around one in four UNRWA staff in Gaza is a health worker carrying out routine but lifesaving work, noted WHO spokesperson Tarik Jasarevic. They "basically provided more than six million medical consultations last year in the health centres that are run

by UN and they have been providing these consultations for more than half of Gaza population," he said.

These health teams are responsible for the routine immunization of children including for polio and screening for disease and malnutrition, the WHO spokesperson explained. "So, really, if you think that 3,000 of their staff are health workers, it's really unmatched; it could be it couldn't be matched by any agency, including WHO," he said.

After more than a year of intense Israeli bombardment, Gaza's devastated communities continue to suffer from insufficient outside help. "Out of 25 requests for missions this month, only seven of them managed to take place, others were either denied or were impeded," Jasarevic said.

The WHO official noted that as long as there was no agreement on humanitarian pauses, "it is difficult to imagine to have this second round of polio vaccination" in northern Gaza.

From the UN aid coordination office, OCHA, spokesperson Jens Laerke stressed the need to keep diplomatic avenues open, for the sake of millions of Palestinians helped by UNRWA across the Occupied Palestinian Territories. "We are trying to not have an implementation of this [Knesset vote]," he said, adding that if the bills became law, they would "add to the acts of collective punishment" by Israel on Gazans.

Catherine Russell, head of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), defended the crucial role of UNRWA in delivering aid to Palestinian children and families and warned that the youngsters' "lives and futures" were at stake.

UNICEF spokesperson James Elder told journalists in Geneva that without UNRWA, the humanitarian system in Gaza would likely collapse and the UN Children's Fund "would become effectively unable to distribute lifesaving supplies here. I'm talking vaccines. I'm talking winter clothes. I'm talking hygiene kits, health kits, water and sanitation" and lifesaving support for malnourished youngsters facing famine. "So, a decision such as this suddenly means that a new way has been found to kill children," he said of the Knesset vote. APP