



Hope that Pakistan-Belarus Business Forum will prove to be a milestone in increasing bilateral economic and trade relations between the two countries

Belarusian Minister for Energy Alexey Kushnarenko

Pakistan, Belarus vow to boost bilateral ties



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Belarus have reaffirmed commitment to promote mutually beneficial cooperation.

This came at a meeting between Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Foreign Minister of Belarus Maxim Ryzhenkov in Islamabad on Monday.

The two sides expressed satisfaction at the momentum of bilateral exchanges and high level visits between Pakistan and Belarus and expressed the hope that President Aleksandr Lukashenko's visit will further boost bilateral relations.

They also discussed key regional and global developments, including the situation in the Middle East. They expressed their support for peaceful resolution of conflicts and underlined the need for a coordinated approach to address the humanitarian situation in Gaza. The two sides emphasized the importance of enhanced cooperation in international and regional organizations to advance mutual interest and to jointly address global challenges.

Belarus President's visit to boost Pakistan's economy: Tarar

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar has said the visit of the Belarusian President to Islamabad will be a milestone in the development of Pakistan's economy and its people.

Talking to the media at the Nur Khan Airbase on Monday, he said the visit of Belarus President Aleksandr Lukashenko will augur well for the people of Pakistan. He said joint ventures in various sectors will be discussed during the visit.

Attaulah Tarar said the Pakistan Stock Exchange has crossed the mark of 100,000 points as a result of the government's prudent economic policies. He noted that inflation has declined, while the prices of petrol, flour, and electricity have been slashed, providing relief to the common people.

The Minister said the people of Pakistan have rejected the politics of chaos and are supportive of the politics of progress and welfare. He said the economy is taking off and hopefully it will improve with every passing day. INP



RAWALPINDI: President of the Republic of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko has arrived in Pakistan on a three-day visit. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif received the visiting dignitary at the Nur Khan Airbase.

Belarus President arrives in Islamabad on three-day official visit

PM Shehbaz reiterates govt's commitment to end violence against women

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko on Monday arrived in Islamabad on his three-day official visit to Pakistan at the invitation of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

The Belarus President arrived at the Nur Khan Airbase, Rawalpindi where he was received by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif along with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Ishaq Dar, Minister for Interior, Senator Mohsin Naqvi, Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaulah Tarar, and other senior officials.

Children dressed in traditional attire presented bouquets of flowers to the President of Belarus.

During his visit, President Lukashenko will hold extensive talks with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and discuss areas of bilateral cooperation and engagement. Moreover, several agreements and memorandums of understanding (MoUs) will also be signed during the visit. Belarusian President's visit reflects the



work together to further strengthen these ties".

"Delighted to welcome my dear friend Aleksandr Lukashenko, President of Republic of Belarus to Islamabad. Looking forward to our discussions during this important visit," he added.

Earlier, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday reaffirmed government's commitment to a Pakistan where women lived with dignity and safety.

"Violence against women is not only a grave human rights violation but also a profound obstacle to the progress and prosperity of our nation," the prime minister said in a post on X handle on the observance of 'International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women' on November 25.

To this end, he further said, the government stood committed towards strengthening the legal frameworks to combat gender-based

Belarusian President's visit reflects the strong and growing partnership between Pakistan and Belarus

strong and growing partnership between Pakistan and Belarus.

Meanwhile PM Shehbaz Sharif in his post on X said Pakistan and Belarus enjoy strong fraternal relations and "we will

violence, ensuring strict enforcement of existing laws including protection against harassment of women at workplace act, and creating accessible mechanisms for justice.

FM stresses reforms in Department Accounts Committee to promote transparency, good governance



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Monday visited the office of the Auditor-General of Pakistan (AGP) where he expressed his appreciation for the work being done by the DAGP, the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) of Pak-

istan, stressing the importance of reforms in ensuring transparency and accountability in government finances.

The Finance Minister took keen interest in the professional work carried out by the Department of the Auditor-General of Pakistan and emphasized upon reforms in the paradigm of Department Accounts Committee, making the Principal Accounting Officers pay heed to the audit recommendations timely for promotion of transparency and good governance.

Director General (Policy), office of the Auditor-General of Pakistan gave a detailed presentation on the working of Department of the Auditor-General of Pakistan covering its mandate and scope, interaction with the stakeholders, the internal governance and integrity mechanism and the impact of audit activity on strengthening the internal controls, stabilization of economy and benefits for the citizens.

Naqvi pays tribute to martyred Constable Mubashir, vows justice against violent protesters

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi expressed profound grief and paid tribute to Constable Mubashir, who was martyred while performing his duty during violent protests near Hakka.

In a heartfelt statement, the minister extended condolences and solidarity to the family of the martyred officer, acknowledging his ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. "Constable Mubashir achieved the honorable rank of martyrdom while fulfilling his responsibilities," Naqvi stated, emphasizing the bravery and dedication of the late officer.

Minister Naqvi condemned the violence, pledging swift action against those responsible. "The perpetrators of this violence will be brought to justice," he assured. He further vowed that all elements responsible for this tragic incident would face the full extent of the law. Reiterating his support, Naqvi expressed deep sympathy for the bereaved family, stating, "Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of Constable Mubashir. We stand united with them in their time of grief."

The incident has sparked widespread condemnation, with authorities ramping up efforts to ensure accountability for the tragic loss of life.

Pakistan, Belarus agree to cooperate for strengthening of justice system

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Belarus have agreed to share experiences and cooperate for betterment of law and justice system through digitalization, capacity building for prosecutors and attorneys, legal education and awareness and legislative drafting.

A meeting between Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Azam Nazeer Tarar, and Minister of Justice for Belarus, Kovalenko Evgeny took place on Monday. The meeting was marked by a spirit of warmth and mutual respect, as both leaders expressed their ardent desire to further fortify the existing bilateral relations between the nations.

The Belarusian Minister elaborated on the purview and mandate of the Ministry of Justice in Belarus, highlighting the potential for a bilateral accord. The key discussion points included digitalization of the legal system, capacity building for prosecutors and attorneys, legal education and awareness, legislative drafting and international cooperation, exchange of Bar councils/associates, International Mediation and Arbitration Center (IMAC), and Case Assignment and

Management System (CAMS).

The meeting yielded significant outcomes, including an invitation extended by the Minister of Justice for Belarus to the Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Pakistan, and his team to visit Belarus, which was warmly reciprocated. The Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Pakistan, provided a comprehensive briefing on previous treaties and MOUs, laying the groundwork for future cooperation. Both Ministers expressed enthusiasm for collaboration in legal education and exchange of Bar councils/associates, and explored potential areas for future collaboration in IMAC and CAMS. The meeting concluded with a unanimous vote of thanks, as both dignitaries expressed their profound appreciation for the productive dialogue and warm hospitality. As a symbol of their mutual esteem, the Ministers exchanged commemorative Shields and memos, sealing their commitment to furthering the bilateral relationship between their nations. With a shared vision for a brighter future, the meeting marked the beginning of a new chapter in Pakistan-Belarus relations.

'Pak-Belarus bilateral trade potential needs to be enhanced through trade diversification'

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan on Monday said the current trade volume between Pakistan and Belarus does not reflect the potential of the two countries' economic capability, and both countries need to diversify their trade with each other capitalizing on the potential of their strong sectors.

All economic sectors are open to foreign investment and priority sectors for foreign investment include energy, infrastructure, telecommunications, manufacturing, minerals, ICT, agriculture, and many more, the minister said.

Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan said this while addressing the 'Pakistan Belarus Business Forum' along with the Minister for Energy of the Republic of Belarus Mr Aleksei Kushnarenko here and a large number of business leaders participated in the

forum.

The minister said that eight B2B MoUs/Contracts will be signed during the Forum that reflects the complementarity of bilateral trade and these will pave the way forward for more to happen.

He said that it is a great honour for me to co-chair the Pakistan-Belarus Business Forum with Mr Aleksei Kushnarenko, Minister of Energy, the Republic of Belarus. We also co-chaired the 7th Session of the Pakistan-Belarus Joint Ministerial Commission held on 25-26 September 2024 in Islamabad. And I feel happy to share that the majority of the decisions we took in the JMC are materializing. This would not have been possible without the support and collaboration of Mr Aleksei Kushnarenko.

Many decisions were taken and now we are seeing its practical way forward, he added. "I see huge potential to increase trade between Pakistan and Belarus in all sectors, particularly food, Pharma, textile,



leather, logistics and energy. To actualize this potential both sides need to work diligently to minimize tariff and non-tariff barriers along with rationalizing import requirements to offer each other meaningful market access, however, I feel that the forums and steps would help us in achieving

the key milestone of growth", he said. He said "I am quite hopeful that these engagements will help us increase our trade with each other and diversify our trade baskets as well. I also hope that during the discussions and B2B meetings, both sides will dilate upon the areas of

cooperation comprehensively and will come up with practical solutions to the challenges we are facing and a way forward to enhance bilateral trade, investment, and connectivity.

The minister said that the two countries' exports and trade have a major focus on surgical instruments comprising about 62% of the total exports to Belarus and imports of Belarus tractors and machinery. Pakistan is an attractive market with a population of 250 million people and constitutes the sixth largest market in the world. An economy that thrives from many natural and industrial indigenous resources, an economy which has huge potential for growth and enhancements, he said.

He said that Pakistan's exports in meat and dairy, agricultural, wood, paper and paperboard could be increased through bilateral trade cooperation and Pakistan looks forward to receiving investment and transferring knowledge and technology through Joint Ventures from Belarus

"I would like to share that in Pakistan, Belarusian Tractors is a household name and it is considered a symbol of durability and strength. The same is reflected in our bilateral relations as well. I wish this cooperation may be enhanced to other sectors of agricultural machinery and automobiles sector."

He said that the government of Pakistan attaches tremendous importance to improving regional trade, investment and economic connectivity and "We want to progress very fast on major regional connectivity interventions and make Pakistan, a trade and transit hub for the region." Among them was in the field of Electronic Cooperation which has been agreed upon and decided on the development of the Roadmap for Comprehensive Cooperation for 2025-27. This Roadmap has given timelines and assigned responsibilities to the Ministries/organizations/agencies concerned which would help us achieve the set targets in a timely manner, he said.

MARSEW-7 brings together insightful minds to deepen of maritime security: Naval Chief

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf has said that Maritime Security Workshop (MARSEW-7) brings together some of the most insightful minds from the government, military, academia, media and industry, with a common goal: to deepen our understanding of maritime security in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

In his message on the occasion of MARSEW-7, the Naval Chief said it is a matter of great satisfaction for me to observe the evolution of Maritime Security Workshop from its humble beginning in 2017 to an event of national significance with the organization of 7th edition of MARSEW at Pakistan Navy War College.

He said the Workshop has provided a shared platform to maritime stakeholders for raising awareness about maritime potential of Pakistan and dilate upon ways and means to harness this untapped domain, said a news release issued by Directorate General Public Relations (Pakistan Navy) on Monday.

"The Naval Chief said as the global maritime landscape evolves, our immediate neighborhood, the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is facing unprecedented challenges including geo-political contestation and nuclearization.

He said the growth of international trade, the rise of transnational threats and the rapid pace of technological advancements have created both opportunities and risks in the IOR. In this background, securing our maritime domain is not merely a national priority but a necessity, requiring cooperation, innovation, and vigilance, he added.

Besides security challenges in the maritime domain, our rich maritime resources offer great potential for economic prosperity. The country's economic future is inextricably linked to the sea which serves as mankind's last reservoir for sustenance, he said. The Naval Chief said despite the fact that oceans and seas are regarded as the common heritage of mankind, claims and counter claims overseas resources are spawning friction as never witnessed before. The ongoing developments within the IOR have a direct bearing on Pakistan's maritime security. He said in this context, exploitation of Blue Economy for socio-economic prosperity enabled by secure maritime environment necessitates our focused attention.

He said: "I am confident that this Workshop will inspire new perspectives and lead to actionable drive that reinforces our commitment to maritime security and related economic prosperity. Together, let us work towards a secure and stable maritime environment that benefits not only our nation but the global community at large. I wish all the MARSEW participants an insightful interaction and a pleasant stay with their host, Pakistan Navy War College." PR



Editor-in-Chief: Amna Munawwar Awan
Editor: Muhammad Hasam
Office # 408, 4th Floor, Evacuee Trust,
Agha Khan Road, F-5/1 Islamabad
Phone: + 92 51 8354964



CHRIS DOYLE

World must pressure Israel over Netanyahu arrest warrant

national Criminal Court to agree to the arrest warrants would have been catastrophic for international law and the rules-based order. At least the court can now say that it does go after the friends of the big powers. It is not only for African leaders. This matters. It sends a message to wannabe war criminals. However powerful your friends may be, they cannot protect you from the international judicial system. State members of the court must honor their obligations and with gusto. This is a legal obligation, not a request. If any of the accused land in one of the 124 member states, they

but they would not be caught on camera saying the UK would arrest Netanyahu. Back in May 2023, when the court issued an arrest warrant for President Vladimir Putin of Russia, British ministers fell over themselves to welcome the historic decision, including Keir Starmer when he was opposition leader. Starmer has not personally commented on the new warrants. And who was shocked that the far-right Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban invited Netanyahu to come and visit his country? What was also startling was that much of the media coverage focused on the

What should happen now? International Criminal Court member states should be reviewing their entire relationship with Israel. Those with any moral integrity should, if they have not done so already, introduce a full arms ban and cease any military and security cooperation with Israel. All states should demand that Israel hands the accused over to the court. It should be a condition of future relations with Israel that this happens. But there are still questions for the court. Why have there been no warrants over the building of illegal Israeli settlements, which are clear violations of the Rome Statute? This should have been addressed years ago, and particularly following the July advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, which made the authoritative determination that the occupation was unlawful and the settlements had to go, the International Criminal Court should be questioned as to why action has not been taken. There is no dispute of fact. The settlements exist, are being expanded and are in occupied territory. Khan made it clear back in May that these warrants would almost certainly not be the last. Is he considering requesting arrest warrants for other Israeli and Hamas leaders? Israel has assassinated most Hamas leaders. But given the scale of atrocities that Palestinians are suffering every day, it is inconceivable that more Israeli figures will not be charged.

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

If any of the accused land in one of the 124 member states, they must be arrested and dispatched to The Hague

must be arrested and dispatched to The Hague. Some states have made clear they would do this. These include Italy and the Netherlands. On the flip side, there are states prepared to trash international law and the rules-based system led by the US. Some American politicians even threatened sanctions against historic allies like the UK and France if they were to help the International Criminal Court. Others referred to America's so-called Hague Invasion Act, which permits the US to use all means necessary to free Americans or its allies detained on the court's orders. Britain led the pack of those that gave equivocal responses. Ministers said they would respect the decision and abide by their legal obligations,

Israeli reaction and those of its allies, not the crimes themselves. Those states that welcomed the court's decision were rarely mentioned. Absent from most coverage were the victims. Typically, they were not even cited as Palestinians. Readers and viewers might have been left wondering exactly what these war crimes and crimes against humanity were. The voice of the Palestinians, those who have lost loved ones and are at this moment being starved to death, were missing. Many in the media ignored the human rights community's near-universal condemnation of Israel. It is hard to find a single human rights group that has not detailed and condemned the war crimes of which Netanyahu and Gallant are accused.

Some 185 days after they were requested by prosecutor Karim Khan, the International Criminal Court last week issued warrants for the arrest of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, ex-Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and Mohammed Deif, a Hamas commander. Many ask, will this make any difference? Will Israel end its genocide in Gaza? The answer is almost certainly "no." Netanyahu, now a war crimes suspect at large, is very unlikely to adopt a course correction and neither are his Cabinet colleagues. Israeli officials will conjure up fresh excuses and lines of attack for public relations purposes. Already, Netanyahu has abused the fight against antisemitism by referring to a "modern Dreyfus trial," in reference to an infamous incident from the 1890s, in which a Jewish French officer was falsely accused and convicted of treason before eventually being acquitted. At best, one or two around the Israeli Cabinet table might twitch at the thought they could be next. But many other Israelis in politics, the armed forces and security services should fear further warrants. No doubt, many would like to be able to travel freely, to see loved ones in other countries. Netanyahu is now 75, but younger military commanders may have years to endure any sanction. Undoubtedly, a failure by the Inter-

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Today in History

History of Pakistan



Which consists of underground channels and galleries that collect subsoil water at the foot of hills and carry it to fields and villages. The water is drawn from the channels through shafts that are sunk into the fields at suitable intervals. Because the channels are underground, the loss of water by evaporation is minimized. The exploration of Pakistan's mineral wealth is far from complete, but some two dozen different types of exploitable minerals have been located. Iron ore deposits are mostly of poor quality. The most extensive known reserves are situated in the Kalabagh region, in western Punjab. Other low-grade ore reserves have been found in Hazara, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Small reserves of high-grade iron ore have been identified in Chitral and in the Chihilgazi area (located in northwestern Balochistan), as well as in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Deposits of copper ore

equaling or surpassing the reserves of iron ore have been found, but most sites remain unexploited. There are enormous reserves of easily exploited limestone that form the basis of a growing cement industry, a major component of the manufacturing sector. Other minerals that are exploited include chromite (mostly for export), barite, celestine (strontium sulfate), antimony, aragonite (calcium carbonate), gypsum, rock salt, and marble and granite. Pakistan has modest quantities of petroleum and some large natural gas fields. The first oil discovery was made in 1915. Pakistan intensified the search for oil and natural gas in the 1980s and was rewarded with the discovery of a number of new oil fields in the Potwar Plateau region and in Sindh. A number of fields have been developed, particularly near Badin, in Sindh. Despite the continued search for new and richer fields (including some offshore exploration and drilling), Pakistan has had to import

increasing amounts of oil from abroad to satisfy growing consumption, making the country vulnerable to fluctuations in world oil markets. Most imports take the form of crude oil, which is refined into various products. Pakistan's refinery capacity well exceeds its domestic crude production. The oil sector is regulated by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources, and international oil companies are authorized to operate in Pakistan in cooperation with domestic companies. The largest natural gas deposits are at Sui (on the border between Balochistan and Punjab), discovered in 1953. A smaller field, at Mari, in northeast Sindh province, was found in 1957. A number of smaller natural gas fields subsequently have been discovered in various areas. A network of gas pipelines links the fields with the main consumption areas: Karachi, Lahore, Multan, Faisalabad, and Islamabad. Although proven reserves are large, they have not

kept pace with domestic consumption. Coal mining is one of the country's oldest industries. The quality of the coal is poor, and the mines have been worked below capacity because of the difficulty of access; despite ample reserves, the country regularly imports coal. Although energy production has grown faster than the economy as a whole, it has not kept pace with demand, and as a result there are shortages of fuel and electric power. The bulk of power requirements are provided by thermal plants (coal, oil, and natural gas), with most of the remainder provided by hydroelectric installations. The generation, transmission, and distribution of power is the responsibility of the Pakistani Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), a public-sector corporation.

To be continued....

Breaking the silence on gender-based violence

DR. HANAN BALKHY

Each year about 800 million women and girls are victims of gender-based violence. GBV takes many forms — physical, sexual, emotional and psychological — and its consequences are devastating. Cutting across cultures, borders and communities, GBV is a public health emergency, and a serious violation of human rights. It is a scourge that affects one in three women worldwide. Hold that figure in your head for a moment. If the scale of the problem is staggering, so, too, is the inadequacy of the global response. The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on Nov. 25 marks the beginning of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, an annual international campaign that runs until Dec. 10, Human Rights Day. This year, as we face up to the horrifying extent of GBV, a single question is paramount. How many more must suffer before the world takes meaningful action? Nowhere is the crisis more pronounced than in conflict zones, such as Sudan and Gaza, where women and girls are being systematically targeted. In Sudan, where violence has spiraled since the outbreak of conflict, the UN reports that over 6.7 million people are at risk of GBV. Armed groups have weaponized sexual violence. It is a tool of war, used to instill terror and rip communities apart. In Al-Jazirah state in Sudan, where the situation has deteriorated rapidly in recent weeks due to intense fighting, hunger has intensified, health facilities have been attacked, and there are reports of mass rapes and killings. The victims of this violence are not statistics — they are women and girls whose lives are being deliberately torn apart. Nor does the violence end when they flee their homes. Displacement brings new threats. In Gaza, the conflict and blockade exposes women, girls, children, and adolescents to heightened risks of violence. There has been a rise in incidents of sexual violence, domestic abuse, and trafficking. The psychological toll of such violence is profound. These are not isolated incidents. The threats are systemic, pervasive, and cry out for immediate action. In humanitarian settings, women and girls face a double burden — the trauma of the emergency, whether wars, natural disasters or health outbreaks, coupled with the dramatic increase of GBV. Dysfunctional healthcare systems, when not destroyed, as well as the attacks on health facilities, mean survivors have little, if any, access to lifesaving care. And in food-insecure environments, victims are further marginalized, exposed to the threat of sexual exploitation and abuse, while access to healthcare becomes even more challenging. As the global community grapples with the challenges of emergencies and instability, we must recognize GBV as the profound public health crisis it is. One in four girls will experience violence by the time they reach their mid-20s. Thirty-one percent of ever-partnered women report experiencing GBV in our region. How much worse must the situation become before urgent collective action is taken?

The theme of this year's 16 Days of Activism, "Toward 30 Years of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: Unite to End Violence Against Women and Girls," is a stark reminder of the need for concrete steps to combat GBV. The Beijing Declaration highlighted the vulnerability of women in armed conflicts and, 30 years later, that vulnerability is greater than ever. It is a moment for governments, organizations, and individuals to step up and engineer support systems for survivors, find ways to hold perpetrators to account, and prioritize the elimination of GBV in conflict zones. Violence against women and girls is preventable. There is no excuse. Amid the destruction, the violence and the desperation inflicted on Sudan, Gaza, and other emergency settings, stories of resilience and survival have emerged. With the support of families and healthcare providers, survivors who have endured unspeakable suffering work to rebuild their lives. These include Fatima, a 16-year-old girl who fled Khartoum, was brutally assaulted in Port Sudan, and became pregnant as a result. With the help of her mother and counseling services, Fatima is taking back control of her future. And Sara, a 21-year-old woman who fled violence in Khartoum and was attacked while living in an internally displaced persons' camp. Through the unwavering support of a midwife, Sara received the care she desperately needed. Their stories reflect the strength and courage of survivors who are determined to reclaim their dignity. Healthcare providers such as Ghada, a health service coordinator in Sudan, are at the forefront of the response to GBV, working tirelessly to raise awareness and provide essential care in desperate situations. In the face of enormous challenges, Ghada and her team offer critical services to survivors. Ghada urges more investment in healthcare infrastructure and training for providers: "Healthcare providers play a pivotal role in both protection and response, but we need more resources, more training, and more investment to meet the overwhelming need." Her calls must be answered. Global bodies such as the World Health Organization are making great strides in addressing GBV. While WHO's efforts in my own region, the Eastern Mediterranean, have focused on strengthening health systems by training thousands of healthcare providers, and integrating GBV services into mental health and psychosocial support systems to offer comprehensive, culturally sensitive care, much more remains to be done. GBV in Sudan, Gaza, and other conflict zones serves not only as a reminder of the urgent need for coordinated action, but also underscores how desperately we need peace to prevail.

Dr. Hanan Balkhy is the World Health Organization's Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean.

Showbiz

Nicole Kidman gives major hints about taking a break from acting

Nicole Kidman and her husband Keith Urban have had their worst year ever



Nicole Kidman has recently dropped major hints about taking a hiatus from acting as she decides to move back to Australia with husband Keith Urban and children. A source spilled to Woman's Day, "Nicole and Keith have had their worst year ever, they've barely spent any time together and she's been on her own throughout some of her most distressing times." The Bombshell actress experienced a personal tragedy after the death of her beloved mother Janelle in September. Despite her grief, Nicole had a very busy schedule as she's filming an upcoming six-part crime series Scarpetta in US, and was also spotted at

different red carpets promoting her latest release, Babygirl. A source claimed that her loved ones expressed their concerns for the actress suffering from a "burnout" who's dealing with her grief after mother's demise. "The big worry on everyone's minds is, how much more of this can she take?" remarked an insider. The source told the outlet, "Nicole is still looking as amazing as always but she's been through so much, and she seems to be dealing with her grief by throwing herself into work." "There are times when she sleeps on a plane more than a bed. Everyone's worried about her," added an insider.

Tech

WhatsApp, Instagram among platforms facing nationwide connectivity issues



Social media users across the country are experiencing significant access issues amid the measures taken by the government to restrict the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) convoys marching toward Islamabad for a protest rally. Despite the passage of several hours, the reason behind the disruption remains unclear, as no official statement has been released, fueling speculation about the timing of the outage. While the authorities have acknowledged plans to restrict internet access in areas deemed to have security risks, they have not addressed whether these

measures extend to social media platforms. DownteDetector.com — which tracks real-time overview of issues and outages of websites and social platforms — showed that users of Pakistan were facing disruptions in accessing WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and other sites. However, the disruptions were not only restricted to social platforms, but internet was affected as well. Shahjahan Khurram, an Islamabad-based journalist, said that the recent internet disruptions, be it the closure of X, slowed internet speeds across the country, or the banning of virtual private networks, have made life difficult for Pakistanis. "To survive without the internet and go about your daily activities, whether it be your job or academic activities, in this day and age, seems extremely difficult." Another citizen of Islamabad, Farhad Jarral said that the government seems to "unveil a new level of innovation" in restricting citizens' access to the internet whenever PTI announces a protest in Islamabad.

Health

World's first robotic double lung transplant performed on woman

"I'm so grateful to doctors, nurses here for giving me hope," says 57-year-old patient Cheryl Mehrkar

In a first, world's completely robotic double lung transplant has been received by a 57-year-old woman with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). According to Medical Xpress, at NYU Langone Health in New York City, the breakthrough surgery was performed in October by Dr Stephanie Chang. Moreover, Chang performed a completely robotic single lung transplant, which was the country's first, just a month before. "This latest innovation is a watershed

moment in lung transplantation surgery worldwide and just the beginning of a new era in patient care," said Dr Ralph Mosca, who is a chair of cardiothoracic surgery at NYU Grossman School of Medicine, in New York City. For performing the minimally invasive transplants, Chang and her team use a da Vinci Xi robot. Between the ribs, they make small incisions, then use the robot to remove and replace the damaged lungs.

Four days after patient Cheryl Mehrkar was added to the transplant list after months of careful evaluation, the groundbreaking double transplant was performed on October 22. "For a long time, I was told I wasn't sick enough for a transplant," she recalled in an NYU news release. "I'm so grateful to the donor and their family for giving me another chance at life," Mehrkar added. "And I'm so grateful to the doctors and nurses here for giving me hope."



AJK-PM committed to divert public money to people's welfare



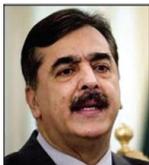
MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that every single penny of tax-money would be spent on the welfare of people.

He said this while talking to different delegations that called on here on Monday. He said that the present government was committed to improve the lives of economically less-privileged sections of society. He said that the recently announced health package would be instrumental in addressing health-related problems of the people. The present government, he said, has promoted a merit-based system and transparency in public affairs. "In addition to improving infrastructure, the government has chalked out a comprehensive policy to promote tourism in the state", he added.

The PM said that the provision of cheap electricity and cheap flour to citizens of the region were the major initiatives the present government has taken. "Clean Muzaffarabad project worth 360 million rupees has been approved to make the capital city more attractive", the PM said. "Recruitments in different departments have been made on merit through NTS", the PM said, adding that around 3000 youth have got jobs.

The PM on the occasion reaffirmed his government's support to Kashmiris' ongoing struggle for right to self determination. He said that it was high time that the United Nations should take effective notice of the worsening political and human rights situation in the Indian occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir and take practical measures to resolve the lingering Kashmir dispute which, he said, was the main cause of unrest and human rights violations in the region.

Gilani departs for five-day visit to Saudi Arabia



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, along with a delegation, departed for a five-day official visit to Saudi Arabia via Saudi Airlines.

The visit is being undertaken at the invitation of the Chairman of Saudi Arabia's Shura Council. The primary objective of the visit is to enhance bilateral relations and institutional cooperation between the two nations said a news release.

During the visit, the delegation, led by the Chairman of the Senate, is scheduled to hold high-level meetings with the Chairman of the Saudi Shura Council, the Governor of Medina, the Governor of Riyadh, and other senior officials. The delegation will also perform Umrah during their stay.

UN chief calls for urgent action against violence towards women, girls

UNITED NATIONS: In a sharply worded statement, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called attention to the growing epidemic of violence against women and girls, describing it as a "shame on humanity." His remarks came as a sobering report released by UN Women and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on Monday revealed that in 2023, 140 women and girls died every day at the hands of their partner or a close relative, which means one woman killed every 10 minutes. Released on the 25th anniversary of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the report sheds light on the global crisis of femicide and calls for urgent action. "The epidemic of violence against women and girls shames humanity," said the UN chief in his message for the day on Monday. "The world must heed this call. We need urgent action for justice and accountability, and support for advocacy", he added. Additionally, he said, online spaces have become increasingly hostile for women, with a surge in

misogyny targeting them through social media and digital platforms. Guterres also expressed concern over a growing backlash against women's rights. In many places, legal protections for women are being weakened, and human rights advocates—especially women—are facing threats, harassment, and even death for speaking out against injustices. Monday's report also coincides with the start of the annual 16 Days of Activism campaign, which runs from 25 November to 10 December. This year, the UNITE to End Violence against Women campaign is drawing attention to the alarming escalation of violence against women under the theme, "Every 10 minutes, a woman is killed. #NoExcuse. UNITE to End Violence against Women". Femicide transcends borders, socioeconomic statuses, and cultures, but its severity varies regionally. According to the report, Africa recorded the highest rates of intimate partner and family-related femicides, with 21,700 women killed in 2023, followed by the Americas and Oceania. APP

PM's climate aide, Belarusian Minister meet, agree to work for environmental sustainability, climate resilience

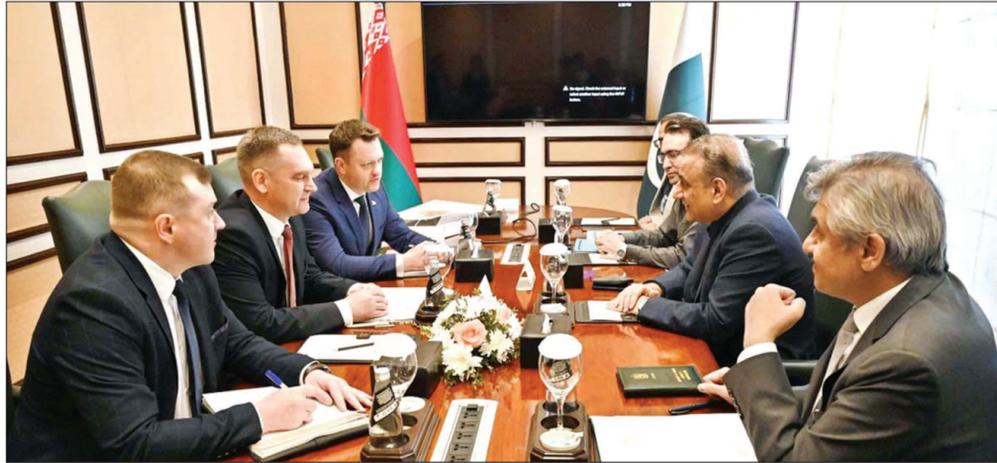
VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: PM's Coordinator on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam and Belarusian Minister for natural resources and environmental protection, Sergey Maslyak have agreed to closely work together to boost cooperation for achieving common environmental sustainability and climate resilience-related goals, with focus on eco-tourism, water conservation, circular economy, green technology transfer, exchange programmes, biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation. Both sides met on Monday and highlighted and discussed the potential for launching joint projects between Pakistan and Belarus to build up climate change adaptation and resilience against the exacerbating impacts of global warming, particularly floods, heatwave, droughts, groundwater depletion and renewable energy. The PM's climate aide emphasized that collaboration between the two countries on biodiversity research and innovative wetland preservation techniques by leveraging Belarus's of expertise would prove to be of



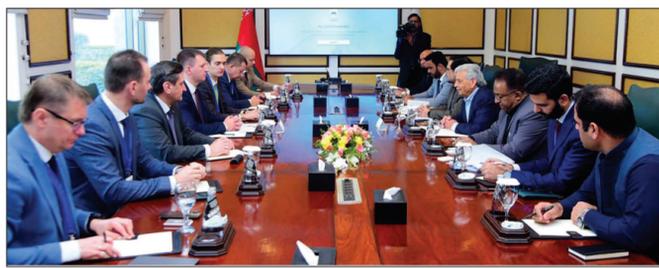
unprecedented value. Romina Khurshid Alam also called for joint efforts in policy development to align strategies with international standards, aiming to bolster sustainable climate development in Pakistan. Collaborative initiatives between two countries for enhancing biodiversity conservation would be of paramount importance, aiming at restoring native species in Pakistan, enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem stability, she said and stressed the importance of preserving natural resources for

achieving sustainable development goals, particularly related to climate change, water, sanitation, energy, agriculture, gender equality and women empowerment. Both the countries discussed development and protection of ecological tourism within protected areas like nature reserves, national parks and nature reservations. Romina proposed collaboration on mitigation of climate change and adaptation emphasizing the potential for both countries to promote principles of green economy, circular economy and low carbon economy for environmental sustainability enhancing resource management, and creating economic opportunities. Romina Khurshid advocated for collaborative policy development with international standards and emphasized the importance of international collaboration in shaping environmental policies highlighting the need for improving regulatory frameworks to strengthen environmental governance, ensuring that both nations can better achieve their sustainability goals. Sergey Maslyak said Belarus's experience in environmental monitoring can complement Pakistan's efforts to implement eco-friendly policies and practices. Establishing joint ventures in these areas could further strengthen their partnership.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan meeting with Minister of Transport and Communications Belarus H.E. Alexey Lyakhnovich.

Tanveer for promoting industrial, agricultural trade ties with Belarus



VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain here on Monday highlighted the importance of expanding bilateral trade relations with Belarus specially in the industrial and agricultural sectors. The minister stressed the need to explore ways and means to increase the industrial cooperation between the two countries in diverse fields. During a meeting with Belarusian delegation, which was led by Minister for Industries Ali-aksandr Yafimua, Rana Tanveer said Pakistan has considerable export potential with Belarus for items like inflatable footballs, articles of bedding and similar stuffed items, sports and outdoor games equipment, footwear, rubber, plastic and metal products, said a news release. During the meeting, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to advancing the partnership between Pakistan and Belarus in multi-faceted areas. Highlighting the trade potential, Minister Yafimua shared that Belarus imports goods worth \$17.2 billion annually, noting that Pakistan's current share in this trade is not reflective

of its true export potential. He said that Pakistani products will be given space in the Belarusian market. He identified key products that Pakistan could export to Belarus, including inflatable footballs, bedding items, sports and outdoor equipment, footwear, and rubber, plastic, and metal goods. Rana Tanveer discussed cooperation in the field of agricultural machinery and tractor manufacturing plants, following which the delegation showed keen interest in the production of agricultural machinery and establishing tractor plants besides technology transfer under Joint Ventures (JVs). The minister extended invitation to the Belarusian counterpart to start a pilot project on agricultural productivity enhancement in Pakistan. Similarly, he said M/s Millat Group dealing with agricultural machinery wanted a JV for manufacturing agricultural equipments in Pakistan. During the meeting, both sides also deliberated on the prospects of Belarusian investment and JVs in the area of electric vehicles (EVs). Rana Tanveer said that around thirty-one companies have issued manufacturing licenses by the Engineering Development Board (EDB)

enabling them to produce two/three-wheeler EVs in Pakistan and the production figures are steadily rising.

He said that the National Electric Vehicle Policy 2019 set ambitious targets of 50% reduction of the country's projected emissions by 2030 and to convert 30% of vehicles to Electric Vehicles (EVs), 50 % of bikes to be e-bikes by 2030.

For faster adoption of EVs and development of EV ecosystem, the government is considering to establish an EV Cell and also to launch a subsidy scheme for E-Bikes to promote EVs in the country.

They also discussed the opportunities to enhance cooperation between the countries in the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) sector. Currently, joint collaboration between the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) of Pakistan and the Belarusian Fund for Financial Support of Entrepreneurs is under consideration.

The second meeting of Pakistan-Belarus Joint Working Group (JWG) was held on November 16, 2017 at Grodno, Belarus where an agreement on Industrial, Scientific and Technical Cooperation between both countries was signed. At present, the draft of the agreement is again being revisited by the both countries for the re-signature as the Belarusian concurrence on it is awaited. Once the Belarusian concurrence is obtained, a summary to the cabinet might be moved for soliciting approval of re-signing of the same at the earliest possibility. Both sides agreed to call meeting of the joint working group at the earliest to explore mutual areas of cooperation and finalised a plan to expedite the process in different areas of cooperation.

The meeting concluded with a mutual resolve to explore and capitalize on the untapped potential in trade and industrial collaboration between the two nations.

Direct flights to Moscow, trade corridor with Belarus, Central Asia on the agenda: Aleem Khan

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan on Monday emphasized Pakistan's commitment to enhancing connectivity through the launch of direct flights to Moscow and Belarus, alongside the development of trade corridors linking China, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Belarus.

These priorities were shared during a joint meeting with Belarusian Minister for Transport Alexei Lyakhnovich, attended by senior officials from the communication sectors of both countries, said a press release.

Speaking on the occasion, Alexei Lyakhnovich, accompanied by the President of Belarus, extended an invitation to the Federal Minister to visit Belarus, emphasizing the importance of enhancing connectivity through railways and roads.

"Cross-border trade is pivotal for strengthening the economy and promoting bilateral relations," Lyakhnovich stated, terming the visit a significant step toward fostering collaboration.

Abdul Aleem Khan welcomed the delegation comprising 68 members, including the President of Belarus and other dignitaries, noting its potential to leave a lasting positive impact on Pakistan-Belarus relations. "We want to further enhance G2G and B2B activities with Belarus in the future for which both the countries will make serious efforts", he added.

"Like Azerbaijan and Turkey, we also want to make Belarus an investment partner with our country as Pakistan is rich in natural resources and blessings of Allah Almighty while positive results can be achieved with our skilled workforce", he remarked.

"The communication sector is of utmost importance and we want a Trade Corridor to Central Asia on the lines of the Karakoram Highway and CPEC to promote business activities in this region", the minister said. The meeting also discussed the pending construction of various motorways and highways in Pakistan's communication sector, while both sides agreed to continue taking steps in future, in this regard.

Belarusian Minister for Military Industry calls on Khawaja Muhammad Asif

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State Authority for Military Industry of Belarus Mr. Pantus Dmitry called on Minister for Defence and Defence Production, Khawaja Muhammad Asif here Monday. Matters pertaining to bilateral cooperation between both countries in the field of defence and defence production came under discussion, said a press release issued here. Both sides also agreed to work together to strengthen their bilateral cooperation in mutually beneficial fields.



Belarusian minister explores handcrafted rickshaw

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan brought a touch of Pakistani culture to the Pakistan-Belarus Business Forum 2024 by showcasing a beautifully handcrafted rickshaw.

The two-person taxi, featuring intricate designs and highlighting local craftsmanship, drew the admiration of Belarusian Energy Minister Alexey Kushnarenko. In a lighthearted moment after the forum, Minister Kushnarenko explored the rickshaw, sitting inside to appreciate its design and comfort.

Federal Minister Jam Kamal Khan, while sharing the details, highlighted the hard work and artistry behind the vehicle. He also extended an offer to export these iconic rickshaws to Belarus, emphasizing their cultural and economic value.

Minister Kushnarenko expressed keen interest in the idea, showing enthusiasm for exploring such unique trade opportunities. This interaction added a personal and cultural dimension to the event, symbolizing the strengthening ties and mutual appreciation between Pakistan and Belarus.

42 foreign officers briefed on Pakistan Navy's maritime role



ISLAMABAD: Delegation of national security and war course (nswc-25), led by Air Vice Marshal Amir Munir visited naval headquarters. The delegation comprised of 42 x officers from friendly countries, 28 x civil services officers and 11 x faculty members.

The participants were briefed on Pak navy's role for seaward defence and development of maritime sector. Vice chief of the naval staff vice admiral Ovais Ahmed Bilgrami graced the session as the chief guest. DNA

CM Maryam meets ADB country director for Pakistan resident mission Dr Emma Xiaoqin Fan

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif met Country Director for Pakistan Resident Mission of Asian Development Bank Dr. Emma Xiaoqin Fan to discuss ongoing development projects, strengthening of economy, providing cooperation for improving basic infrastructure along with enhancing cooperation in agriculture, health, education, environmental cooperation and digital development. Matters pertaining to 'Jalalpur Irrigation Project' and 'Clean Energy' came under discussion. Country Director Asian Development Bank Dr. Emma Xiaoqin Fan, appreciated steps being undertaken by the Punjab government for women empowerment and other public welfare initiatives.

The Chief Minister appreciated financial and technical support of Asian Development Bank in various projects of Punjab. She while speaking on the occasion said, "ADB's cooperation is playing a pivotal role for

prosperity of the people and restoration of national economy." She added, "The Punjab government is moving forward under a comprehensive plan to attain socio-economic development. Collaboration with the Asian Development Bank will further strengthen development objectives in Punjab." Country Director for Pakistan Resident Mission of Asian Development Bank Dr. Emma Xiaoqin Fan said, "Asian Development Bank is keen to further expand its cooperation with Pakistan, especially Punjab. Punjab's climate policy will prove to be beneficial for the environment and national economy."

