

# Independent

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## Deportation process applies to all illegal foreigners: PM Kakar

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday reiterated that as per government's policy and relevant laws, they were sending back all the illegal aliens and foreigners from the soil of Pakistan as the set deadline of October 31 under the repatriation process draws nearer. He said that such policy was not centric to only illegal Afghan nationals that had been staying inside the country but encompassed all those undocumented and illegal foreigners.

In an interaction with the students of Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) during a special session, the prime minister elaborated that Pakistan had hosted more than 4 million Afghan refugees on its soil for the last 40 years under the Geneva Convention, despite the fact that it was not a signa-

tory to that.

He said more than 1 million foreigners had been categorized as illegal who had been staying in Pakistan without legal and valid documents. They were being encouraged to return back to their native countries, he said, adding if they wanted to return to Pakistan with the required legal documents and valid visas, there would be no restriction. Replying to a question regarding an incident involving Afghan nationals, the caretaker prime minister said that he had already given direction to the relevant authorities of the interior ministry to ensure dignity of the repatriated women and children as there might be vulnerable groups.

The prime minister said that Pakistan had entertained on its soil for decades those Afghans that had been registered as refu-

gees and compared the treatment meted out to immigrants' boats in the Mediterranean Sea.

To a query, he maintained that in various terrorists' incidents, certain groups were involved and referred to a suicide attack in a mosque in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in which the suicide bomber was identified from DNA tests as Afghan national. He clarified that all Afghans were not terrorists but involvement of certain groups in illegal activities was a part of the problem, adding it was the prime responsibility of the government to protect the lives of its people which was also a constitutional obligation.

The caretaker prime minister said that governments' policies were framed after institutional inputs from different institutions and departments. Replying to a student's question, he

said that the caretaker government was a product of a constitutional order after the former leader of the house and leader of opposition in the previous National Assembly adopted a constitutional procedure and agreed upon his nomination. He said that the previous parliament had passed a law in which the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was mandated to announce an election date.

"It is the mandate of the ECP and not of the Caretaker Prime Minister to set a date for the general elections," he said, adding if he was mandated under the constitution, he would have given the same.



ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting of the Caretaker Federal Cabinet.

## Geo-political importance of Balochistan not hidden from anyone, says caretaker CM

Domki says interim Govt endeavouring to restore peace of the past; around 40 precious minerals resources discovered so far, which are enough to meet 50 to 100 years needs of country; facilitation centres established for immigrants repatriating to their country on voluntary basis

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has stated that the geo-political importance of the province is not hidden from anyone.

The Chief Minister was speaking to the participants of National Security Workshop (NSW) here on Monday. He said that the interim provincial government is giving priority to the law and order, education, healthcare and their basic infrastructure in the

province.

Referring to the initiatives taken by the government, the Chief Minister said that the anti smuggling wing has been activated for prevention of the smuggling in Balochistan.

In addition to this, joint check posts have also been established all over the province, he added.

While on the other hand, marked reduction has been made in prices of the edibles following measures taken for control of the prices. Regarding the repatriation of illegal immi-

grants, special centers

have been established for their assistance in the border areas, adding he informed. He also said that every possible assistance is being provided to the immigrants repatriating to their country voluntarily. The action would be started for repatriation of the illegal immigrants after the given deadline, adding he asserted.

About potential of the province in natural resources, the Chief Minister mentioned that the reservoirs of around 40 precious minerals have been

discovered so far in the province. These resources are

enough to meet the 50 to 100 years needs of the country.

The Chief Minister said that massive economic activities for the investment and means of employment for local population could be generated in the mineral resources sector.

He said that it is the endeavour of interim government to restore exemplary peace of the past and provide protection to the life and property of the masses. He said that Balochistan is the custodian

of historic traditions and great hospitality.

Meanwhile, the Additional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem briefed the participants of NSW about the overall law and situation of the province as well as about its geographical importance, ongoing development process, issues of governance, CPEC projects besides other important matters related to the province.

The participants also posed questions about different matters which were duly responded in detail.



QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki addressing participants of National Security Workshop (NSW) to Chief Minister's Secretariat

## Caretaker govt has no political agenda: Solangi

Locals helping undocumented immigrants will be dealt with iron hand: Bugti

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Monday said that the caretaker government was strictly adhered to its constitutional role of holding free, fair and transparent elections in the country.

"We are not a political government, and we do not have any political agenda. Political parties do not need us for establishing contacts with each other. The Election Commission is in contact with all the political parties," the minister said while addressing a press conference after a meeting of the Federal Cabinet presided over by Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

Solangi was flanked by ministers for Interior, Culture & Heritage, and National Health Services.

Sharing the major decisions taken by the Federal Cabinet, the minister said

the forum approved the Repatriation Order under sections 3 and 14B of the Foreigners Act of 1946 on the recommendations of the Ministry of Interior. It was aimed at sending back illegal immigrants to their countries, he added.

Solangi said the prime minister had issued special directives for ensuring repatriation of illegal immigrants in a dignified and respectful manner.

Women and children would also be provided special care during the repatriation process, he said, adding directives had been issued that no state agency would exceed its authority at any stage of the process.

The minister said the prime minister had directed to establish a special system for not only preparing the database of individuals being repatriated under the Repatriation Order, but also monitoring the entire process.

## Fierce clashes in Gaza as Israeli forces expand ground offensive

Monitoring Desk

GAZA/JERUSALEM: Fierce air and artillery strikes rang out in Gaza early on Monday as Israeli troops backed by tanks pressed into the Palestinian enclave with a ground assault that prompted more international calls for civilians to be protected. Israel's military said it had struck more than 600 militant targets over the past few days as it expanded ground operations in the Gaza Strip, where Palestinian civilians are in dire need of fuel, food and clean water as the war enters its fourth week.

"IDF troops killed dozens of terrorists who barricaded themselves in buildings and tunnels, and attempted to attack the troops," a military statement said. Israel began a major push into Gaza on Friday and reiterated calls for civilians to move from the north of the tiny coastal enclave to the south as it tries to root out Hamas militants.

## Electricity price likely to be increased by Rs 1.30

ISLAMABAD (INP): The price of electricity is likely to increase as the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) is considering a proposal to increase the price of electricity by one rupee and 30 paise. The proposal would put an additional burden of 22 billion 56 crore rupees on consumers.

The increase is being proposed to cover the cost of electricity theft and line losses, as well as to increase electricity consumption.

## Special anti-polio campaign kicks off in 10 districts of Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The special anti-polio campaign started in 10 districts of Balochistan on Monday.

According to the Emergency Operation Center (EOC), the campaign started in Awaran, Dera Bugti, Gwadar, Usta Muhammad, Hub, Jaffarabad, Khuzdar, Lasbela, Naserabad and Sohbatpur.

The special polio immunization campaign, however, has been postponed in four high risk districts of the province including Quetta, Chaman, Pishin and Killa Abdullah.

## Political Party's sit-in outside Parliament to be addressed through negotiations: Bugti

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Interior, Senator Sarfraz Bugti Monday emphasized the need for negotiations to resolve ongoing sit-in outside the Parliament, led by the political party BNP-M and civil society members.

Speaking here at the Senate, he said that while the BNP-M had initially been granted permission for a press conference and a token protest at the Islamabad Press Club, adding they subsequently moved their demonstration to the Red Zone, where

they continued to stage their sit-in.

Bugti underscored the prominent role of seasoned Politician Akhtar Khan Mengal in the protest, considering his party's involvement in various governmental capacities over the last decade.

Senator Raza Rabbani, addressing the issue during the Senate session, highlighted the protesters' concerns, particularly regarding the chronic problem of missing persons and alleged death squads operating in Balochistan.

## Conference on repatriation of illegal immigrants & strategy of Govt.

Decision of repatriation of illegal immigrants in interest of country's security & betterment: Achakzai

Says interim Government fully prepared to send foreigners back to their homeland

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has categorically stated that the decision about repatriation of the illegal immigrants to their respective countries has been taken in the interest of country's security and betterment.

The Minister Information was addressing the conference on the issue of repatriation of the illegal immigrants here at the civil secretariat on Monday.

The prominent religious leaders including the central khateeb, Maulana Anwarul Haq Haqqani and others participated in the conference.

ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest of the event Caretaker Interior Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti cut the cake along with Ambassador of Turkiye to Pakistan Mehmet Pacaci, Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori and others during the celebrations of the 100th Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Republic of Turkiye, at local hotel in Federal Capital.



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar addressing at ceremony of Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony.

## Two soldiers embrace martyrdom in Awaran District

RAWALPINDI (APP): Two soldiers embraced martyrdom during an exchange of fire with terrorists in the general area Khoro, Awaran District of Balochistan, on Sunday. According to an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) press release, the troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location and resultantly two terrorists were sent to hell, while two got injured.

However, during an intense exchange of fire, Naib Subedar Asif Irfan (age 37 years, resident of District Okara) and Sepoy Irfan Ali (age 22 years, resident of District Sargodha) having fought gallantly, embraced 'Shahadat'. Sanitization of the area is being carried out to eliminate any terrorists found in the area.

The security forces are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve.

## Governor emphasizes on promotion of inter-faith & religious harmony

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has emphasized upon promotion of the inter-faith and religious harmony in the province.

The Governor was addressing the inter-faith and religion harmony held here at the Sikandar Jamali auditorium in civil secretariat on Monday.

The caretaker provincial Minister for Information, Jan Muhammad Achakzai, Sardar Zainul Abidin, prominent religious scholar and leaders besides representatives of civil society, and people belonging to different walks of the life.

The Governor said that we have to ensure the rights and powers of all the citizens on the equal basis without any discrimination.

He said that the constitution of Pakistan ensures

giving equal rights to all citizens with freedom of expression and religion.

He expressed pleasure over holding of the inter-faith faith and religion harmony.

The Governor said that Allah almighty is the creator of all human beings.

He said that this is a fact that our first identity is as a human being and there is no room of any discrimination and religious, race, linguistic divisions.

He said that we have learnt from our elders not to make enmity with anyone on the basis of colour, religion and race.

He stressed that we have to promote religious harmony, brotherhood and respect in order to make the country and province hub of peace.

This is also necessary for facing the challenges of present era, adding he stressed.

## Decision to deport illegal foreigners in line with sovereign laws, int'l norms: FO

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Foreign Office on Monday said the decision to deport the illegal foreigners residing in Pakistan was in line with the sovereign domestic laws and international principles.

Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, in response to a statement by the United Nations High Commissioner (UNHCR), said the decision was "in exercise of Pakistan's sovereign domestic laws, and compliant with applicable interna-

tional norms and principles."

The UNHCR had appealed to the Pakistani authorities to suspend the deportations as a November 1 deadline looms. "We have seen the press statement by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan (IFRP) applies to all illegal foreigners residing in Pakistan, irrespective of their nationality and country of origin,"

she said in a statement. Baloch said all foreign nationals legally residing or registered in Pakistan were beyond the purview of this Plan. "The Government of Pakistan takes its commitments towards protection and safety needs of those in vulnerable situations with utmost seriousness," she said. She mentioned that the country's record of the last 40 years in hosting millions of the Afghan brothers and sisters spoke for itself.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Balochistan National Party Sardar Akhtar Mengal along with Pakistani human rights activist Amina Masood Janjua and others participate in the protest protest of the missing persons outside Parliament House in Federal Capital.

## Justice Mansoor issues dissenting note in NAB amendment case

ISLAMABAD (APP): Supreme Court (SC)'s Justice Mansoor Ali Shah on Monday issued 27-pages dissenting note in judgment pertaining to the NAB amendments. Justice Shah wrote that judiciary could review a legislation only when it contradicted with fundamental human rights.

It said that examining the legislation by keeping the interest of the legislators in front was tantamount to undermining the parliament and democracy. The note said that the court had to give judgments according to the constitution and law even if it goes against the public sentiment.

The balance between the institutions could be maintained only if there was a mutual relationship of re-

spect, it said, adding that the judiciary should show tolerance as long as the constitutional limits were not violated.

Justice Mansoor said that the petitioner had failed to prove that the NAB amendments were against the public interest, adding, "I dismiss the petition as lacking in merit in view of Article 8(2) of the Constitution." He said that the court could not interfere in the internal affairs of Parliament. The petitioner's counsel has completely failed to prove the NAB amendments against fundamental right. Despite repeated questioning, the petitioners could not explain how fundamental rights were affected by the NAB amendments.

## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### In waiting

With the Election Commission seemingly committed to holding elections by the last week of January, it is puzzling that the political parties still appear to be showing little interest or initiative in preparing for the exercise.

One unconfirmed report in a local daily, published this Saturday, has even claimed that the ECP has set aside Sunday, Jan 28 for the general election, and is expected to inform the Supreme Court accordingly. While the published claim was not substantiated by the ECP — which has publicly taken the position that an official date can only be announced once final delimitations have been notified — it nonetheless appears to be a reasonable target for political parties to plan around.

This gives the parties less than three months to finalise and announce their manifestos, launch their campaigns, interview candidates and issue tickets, and also to start mobilising their cadres to prepare voters for the big day.

Three months is not a lot of time, yet our politicians seem unable to shake out of their languor. What do they know or suspect that is preventing them from going into election mode? Where are their workers' conventions, corner meetings and rallies? Where are the conspiracy theories and the wheeling and dealing that provide an endless stream of political commentary before every election?

The entire system seems to be suffering from some form of self-inflicted paralysis, waiting for something to give. One could conjecture from the inaction that, despite the ECP's assurances, the parties don't truly believe elections are around the corner.

This uncertainty may be what is preventing them from opening their war chests and launching their campaigns in earnest. Campaigns do end up burning a lot of cash and no party would want to start spending before it knows for certain its 'investments' will not go to waste.

However, what our political leaders seem to be overlooking is the possibility that if they start moving according to the timeline the ECP has provided, the pressure to hold the much-delayed elections within the provided time frame will automatically start to build.

It will become much more difficult for the authorities to back out — if that is the fear — when political parties have already sunk their resources into the process. In such a scenario, the latter would resist and take action if their legitimate interests in the upcoming elections were threatened by any further delay.

Therefore, it is not as if the only choice available to the parties is to wait. A grave injustice has already been done by the repeated violation of constitutional deadlines for elections.

Continuing to repeat the 'it is entirely up to the ECP to set a date' fallacy will only make parties culpable in denying the people their right to elect a government.

### Persisting theories



Huma Yusuf

How many conspiracy theories have you heard since Nawaz Sharif's return? There's the entrapment theory, the Sharif family schism theory, the counterpoint-to-Zardari theory, the coalition government theory, the election delay theory...

Pakistan is no stranger to conspiracy theories. They have been a key feature of our public discourse. The more the political instability, the greater their proliferation. That fact that we are accustomed to these should not, however, distract from the fact that they offer warnings about the state of our democracy and civil society.

Conspiracy theories are a combination of inaccurate information, wilful disinformation and rumour. They persist because they help to rationalise — however irrationally — a person's experience of state and society. The basis of most theories is that behind the structures of governance there exists a 'deep state', a small group of influential people who control government policy. In Pakistan, in the context of our 'hybrid democracy', this is not a far-fetched claim. Our local conspiracy theories therefore pertain not to the existence of a deep state, but to its motivations and goals.

Additional factors, too, fuel conspiracy fires, the lack of a free media foremost among them. The censorship and distortion of the media, and the public's awareness that media sources may not be wholly credible, elevate the validity of such

theories. The frequent use of back channels for political negotiations, the circumvention of rule of law by state institutions, and the preponderance of political puppets create more space for conspiracy theories. Precedent beyond the political arena also gives them a fillip: an obvious example was the revelation that US intelligence had located Osama bin Laden in Pakistan under the guise of a vaccination programme. This, after years of clerics' theorising that vaccines were foreign ploys to surveil or sterilise Muslims.

It also does not help that these theories often serve the interests of our beleaguered politicians. When they are thwarted in furthering their own agendas, or when they have little control over their actions or the policies they implement, politicians themselves exploit conspiratorial rhetoric to exert some influence over national narratives. Imran Khan offers the best example. Members of the public who peddle conspiracy theories also benefit in our politically distorted context; perversely, they give the marginalised a sense of empowerment.

If you are at the mercy of the system, but in your own community are able to exert authority and build legitimacy by explaining the vagaries of that system, you have found a voice — in that moment you are empowered. And so it is that conspiracy theories perpetuate, as we have seen lately.

Most Pakistani political stakeholders are complacent about the constant swirl of conspiracy theories, but should be wary. The political consequences are well known: erosion of democratic systems and an apathy to democracy among a public that believes that the real power brokers are inaccessible and self-serving. Conspiracies are also ultimately reductive, and promote an 'us vs

them' view of the political system and society. Research documents how conspiracy theories can lead to violence because the sense of disempowerment and apathy they engender can only be overcome by revolutionary or violent means (again, remember where the PTI ended up).

A strong civil society offers an antidote to conspiracy theories. As interlocutors between the public and its political representatives, CSOs are well positioned to call out conspiracy from truth. Indeed, their ability to do so directly impacts the success of their activities, which are primarily aimed at improving government policy, service delivery and accountability.

Ironically, some CSOs themselves have been undermined through conspiracy theories: speculations that they are anti-national and beholden to external actors because they receive foreign funding. But they also face criticism on other counts, for example, that they are partisan political actors pretending to act in the public good.

The same efforts required to debunk criticism of CSOs can help counter conspiracy theories and, ultimately, strengthen democracy. CSOs should build their capacity for fact checking and information gathering and dissemination. They should entrench in communities at hyper-local levels so that when they counter theories they do not disempower or discredit marginalised citizens. By improving their own transparency and building cross-sectoral, pan-agenda partnerships, they can comprehensively counter skewed narratives. As political instability persists, it is important to clamp down on conspiratorial fervour, and civil society must play its part. — Courtesy Dawn

### The killing air



Omar Mukhtar Khan

According to a recent World Air Quality report, Lahore recently bagged the dubious honour for the most polluted city of the world in 2022. With a population of some 15 million people, 6m foul-air-emitting vehicles, and surrounded by partially regulated industry using tyres and wood as fuel, this is not surprising. However, Peshawar's rating as the fifth most polluted city in the world does come as a surprise, especially when you consider a population of only 4m people, 1m or so vehicles, and limited industry.

The Air Quality Life Index informs us that the life expectancy of citizens of Lahore and Peshawar would increase by six to eight years if we meet the World Health Organisation's air quality guidelines. Further, research on the health impact of air pollution suggests that children, the elderly and immunity-compromised people are disproportionately affected by breathing polluted air.

A recent study by the International Growth Centre of the low-income areas of Lahore suggests that awareness around air pollution influences behaviour, and that people are more inclined to use masks or remain indoors during periods of high pollution.

Another study conducted by the Sustainable Energy and Economic Development programme in Peshawar tells us that almost 60 per cent of the air pollution comes from transport-related activities, followed by dust, industry

and household wood burning.

A similar study by Urban Unit, Punjab, suggests that almost 80pc of the air pollution in Lahore emanates from transport vehicles, and the rest from industry and agriculture. Interestingly, however, the focus of the government for reducing air pollution is on agriculture and industry and not transport.

The shift of the needle on air pollution in Peshawar and Lahore shall need top-level political commitment, strong advocacy, administrative measures and financial resources. An excellent example of collaboration to tackle air pollution comes from Peshawar where a civil society initiative, ie, the Peshawar Clean Air Alliance, and the Environmental Protection Agency are collaborating with the Bank of Khyber and North Western Hospital to promote awareness and research on the issue.

In the short term, the governments need to explore following steps. One, install standard air monitors covering the cities holistically and make results publicly available for informed decision-making by the public about their daily activities. Two, ensure the availability of Euro-IV or V-compliant fuel in Peshawar and Lahore, at least during the smog season. This step is expected to have an immediate impact on air quality during the worst-affected months from November to February.

Three, diesel-emitting public transport and three-wheelers are the worst polluters; enforcing a couple of diesel-free days every week on the main city roads would help greatly in this regard. Four, the government should enforce the use of buses for school pickup and drop-off, or at least carpooling. The same measures should be

taken for secretariat, hospital and factory staff.

Five, the government should explore odd and even number vehicle days on the roads, thereby reducing the number of vehicles on the roads on any given day.

Six, the government should launch a massive awareness campaign informing the public about air quality status in the city, the impact on health and its economic costs to citizens.

the government's efforts and the efforts expected of the people, the behavioural changes required, such as wearing masks, using public transport, etc.

In the long term, the government should focus on en-suring a shift to Euro-IV or V-standard cleaner fuel for the entire year; improving public transport connectivity all over Peshawar and Lahore so that people start using public transport more frequently; discouraging diesel-based public transport and allowing the retirement of these vehicles in the next five years; improving fuel and public transport standards, for which it needs to strengthen the vehicle emissions testing regime to ensure vehicles emitting hazardous pollutants are not allowed on the road; and embarking on a massive afforestation campaign, especially in Peshawar, in order to minimise dust-related air pollution.

We hear about air pollution every winter during the smog season but once the smog season is gone, the very useful noise around air pollution also subsides. It is time that people raised their voices so that all political parties make addressing air pollution an election campaign issue and governments take concrete steps to address air pollution before it is too late. — Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News

### Clean energy Pakistan's top priority: Caretaker Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali has said that clean energy was the top priority of Pakistan. He stated this while talking to the Ambassador of Denmark to Pakistan Jacob Linulf who visited the Power Division here Monday, said a press release.

The minister said that the world was witnessing a much-needed transition towards clean energy in the wake of climate change. Pakistan, being more vulnerable to impacts of the global climate change, has also to adapt to and mitigate the Climate

Change at the country level, he said.

He said that the government of Pakistan had recently approved the National Electricity Plan 2023 which provided guidelines, implementation mechanisms and tools for the realization of the National Electricity Policy goals for the power sector.

The Plan 2023 targets to have a share of 40 percent from renewables (including hydropower) by 2025 and 60 percent by 2030, he told. The minister said that Denmark's support based on their expertise and experience would certainly be beneficial for Pakistan

in making the transition towards cleaner and greener energy mix and in fulfilling Pakistan's commitments towards Climate Change targets and Sustainable Development Goals.

The brief of the update on Danish Energy Transmission Initiative (DETI) project was also discussed in the meeting. The ambassador expressed his aim to take the cooperation between the two countries to the next level.

The minister discussed the possible plan to expand sustainable energy, particularly focusing on wind and

solar energy.

Power Sector plays an important role in Climate Change mitigation and accordingly the government is giving top priority to just energy transition in Pakistan.

He said that the true success of the transition was to have the real impact in the area of sustainable energy. The aim is to gradually decrease the tariff and move towards utilization of indigenous resources, he expressed.

The minister stressed on the importance of mapping out a plan in collaboration with Denmark as it has already completed its energy transition.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali in a meeting with the ambassador of Denmark to Pakistan, H.E. Jacob Linulf and his delegation.

### PTCL Group adopts Red Hat hybrid cloud solutions to power digitalization

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's leading telecom and ICT services provider, PTCL Group (PTCL & Ufone 4G) announced today that it is leveraging Red Hat OpenShift, the industry's leading hybrid cloud application platform powered by Kubernetes and Red Hat Application Foundations.

These are a Hat OpenShift, creates a platform that streamlines execution across the application lifecycle.

This helps reduce Capex and Opex expenditure, improve efficiency with faster rollouts and automated pipelines, thus allowing businesses to accelerate and innovation for gaining a competitive advantage. The collaboration



comprehensive set of components for developing and modernizing software to strengthen the Group's digitalization ambitions. Red Hat Application Foundations can be used with applications that run on-premises or in the cloud when combined with Red

will not only help PTCL Group transition its legacy applications towards a more robust and scalable microservices-based architecture, but also provide advanced cloud services for its customers.

### Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Three ships namely, SSL Mumbai, Asia Inspire and Victoria Kosan, carrying Container, Palm oil and Chemicals, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Liquid Cargo Terminal and EngroVopak Terminal respectively during last 24 hours.

Meanwhile three more ships, AAI Evolution, Bellini and PVT Flora with Wheat, Gasoline and Chemicals are also arrived at outer anchorage of the Port during the same period.

A total of eight ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, Amala and Rhapsody left the port on today morning, while three more ships, SSL Mumbai, Woohyun Sky and Indian Goodwill are expected to sail on today afternoon.

Cargo volume of 81,402 tonnes, comprising 78,916 tonnes imports cargo and 2,486 tonnes export cargo carried in 33 Containers (0 TEUs Imports and 33 TEUs export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours. There are twelve ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them two ships, Discovery and Nordic Basel & another ship.

### PPL's AGM approves 15 percent cash dividend

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) on Monday approved financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, together with the auditor's report and also approved a final cash dividend of 15 per cent on both ordinary and convertible preference shares in its 72<sup>nd</sup> annual general meeting at a local hotel.

The total dividend

paid for the year was 25 per cent.

Presiding over the meeting, Chairman PPL Board of Directors Shahab Rizvi welcomed shareholders to the meeting. He appreciated management and staff's efforts in achieving extraordinary financial results as well as operational milestones during 2022-23 despite a challenging business

### Food Minister for creating awareness about water conservation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for National Food Security and Research Dr Kausar Abdullah Malik on Monday emphasized the pressing importance of disseminating awareness regarding water conservation among the masses in order to achieve sustainable growth in the agricultural sector and bolster overall economic development. Addressing the inaugural session of "PRE-COP28 Accelerating The Water-Food-Climates Nexus Transformation Pathways for Pakistan", he

said that every member of society has to play its due role in conserving precious water and its resources to maintain food safety and security in the country.

British High Commissioner Jane Marriott OBE, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands Henny Fokel De Vries, Ambassador of Poland Maciej Pisarski, Deputy High Commissioner Australia High Commission Danielle Cashen, Mission Director USAID Kate Somvongsiri and Director General International Water

### SBP maintains policy rate at 22% owing to global uncertainties

KARACHI (APP): Despite expectations of downward inflationary outlook in the coming months, the State Bank of Pakistan, Monday, cautiously decided to maintain the policy rate at 22 percent owing to recent volatility in global oil prices as well as the increase in gas tariffs. The Monetary Policy Committee of SBP, which met here to decide about the policy rate, noted that encouraging Kharif crop estimates, narrowing the current

account deficit, stabilising foreign exchange reserves, improved fiscal and primary balance and downward inflation expectations were some positive developments, said a statement issued here. The MPC expects inflation to decline significantly in October 2023 and onward, owing to downward adjustments in fuel prices, easing prices of some major food commodities, and a favorable base effect. "However, global oil prices remain quite volatile and the

conflict in the Middle East makes its outlook even more uncertain," the MPC observed and emphasized on continuing with the tight monetary policy stance in the light of these developments.

The MPC also noted that targeted fiscal consolidation in the first quarter, improvement in market availability of key commodities and the alignment of interbank and open market exchange rates may offset the impacts of oil and gas price hike.

### Gold rates dip by Rs.1,200

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.1,200 and was sold at Rs.212,100 on Monday compared to its sale at Rs.213,300 the previous day of trading.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.1,028 to Rs.181,842 from Rs.182,870 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.166,688 from Rs.167,631, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs.2,550 and Rs.2,186.21 respectively.

### Tractor assembling witnessed 6.71pc growth in two-months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Local tractor assembling, during the first two months of the current financial year, grew by 6.71 percent as compared to the assembling of the corresponding period of last year. During the period under review, the local assembling of jeeps and cars decreased by 53.91 percent as about 14,328 jeeps and cars assembled as against the assembling of

31,085 jeeps and cars. As against the corresponding period of last year, domestic jeeps and cars assembling reduced by 39.01 percent in August 2023 as compared to the same month of last year. During the period from July to August 2023, about 6,217 tractors were locally assembled as against the assembling of 5,826 tractors of the same period of last year.

## Punjab approves 4-month budget; election to be on time: Amir Mir

**Caretaker Punjab cabinet approves Rs 2076.2b budget for another four months**

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Information Minister Amir Mir said on Monday that in its 31<sup>st</sup> meeting, caretaker provincial cabinet approved budget of Rs 2076.2 billion for the next four months i.e. November 2023 to February 2024.

Addressing a press conference after the cabinet meeting here, he added that Rs 351 billion have been earmarked for development expenditure, while Health sector would get Rs 208 billion, Education sector Rs 222.2 billion, Services sector Rs 218.5 billion, while Rs 83 billion allocated for wheat loan and Rs 80 billion for debt repayment to federal institutions. The budget also includes Rs 400 million for the evacuation of foreigners residing illegally in Punjab after October 31.

Amir Mir said that elections would be held on time. Out of 50,000 polling stations in Punjab, 7,000 have been declared sensitive. During the election, more than 260,000

police cops and more than 145,000 Rangers and Army men would perform their duties. Accusations by political parties are common before elections, he responded to a question.

He mentioned that previously, the caretaker government had presented the budget for the last four months in June, which was approved for expenditure until October 31.

In the preceding four-month budget, Rs 325 billion were allocated for development, of which Rs 131 billion have been utilized. In the upcoming four months, Rs 10 billion would be spent on agricultural projects, Rs 2 billion on information technology projects, Rs 10.2 billion on construction and repair of roads and buildings, and Rs 50 billion for social protection initiatives. This budget covers the period from November 1, 2023 to February 29, 2024, he maintained.

He told media men that a meeting between the Chief Election Commissioner and the

Chief Minister along with cabinet members took place to review election preparations.

The Chief Election Commissioner expressed satisfaction with the performance of the caretaker government of Punjab, citing that Mohsin Naqvi's government as an exemplary model for caretaker chief ministers in other provinces. He reiterated that elections would be held on schedule, and both the Punjab government and the Election Commission would collaborate to ensure transparent elections.

The upcoming elections in Punjab would encompass 141 constituencies of the National Assembly and 297 constituencies of the Punjab Assembly, with 50,000 polling stations established in Punjab. Additional security measures would be implemented at sensitive polling stations.

The Punjab government would provide staff to address any shortage reported by the Election Commission.



LAHORE: Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi signing documents of provincial budget with a total outlay of Rs 2076.2 billion for another four months.

## Court sends Parvez Elahi to jail on judicial remand in illegal appointments case

**LAHORE (APP):** A local court on Monday sent former chief minister Punjab Chaudhry Parvez Elahi to jail on 14-day judicial remand in a case of illegal appointments in the Punjab Assembly.

Earlier, the Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) Punjab officials produced Parvez Elahi before duty Judicial Magistrate Amir Raza on expiry of his physical remand term.

The ACE requested the court to extend Parvez Elahi's physical remand for another 10 days. The ACE's prosecutor argued

that the candidates were appointed in violation of the merit in the Punjab Assembly, during Parvez Elahi's tenure. He submitted that the case was registered after inquiry.

He submitted that physical remand was required for recovery of Parvez Elahi's mobile phone, and its forensic audit. He also submitted that all preparations were in place to take Parvez Elahi to his house in Gujrat in connection with investigations but his health deteriorated and he was taken to the doctor.

## Dera police repulse terrorist attack on police station

**DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP):** The district police have repulsed a terrorist attack on a police station late Saturday night.

According to police, about 40 unknown militants stormed Hathala police station with modern weapons late at night.

The police promptly and effectively retaliated and an exchange of fire continued for around 40 minutes.

As a result, the attack was successfully repulsed by the valiant police personnel however the terrorists managed to escape while taking full advantage of the darkness. No casualty occurred due to the attack.

## Kashmiris to commemorate Jammu Martyrs Day on Nov 6 with due respect and honor

**MIRPUR (AJK) (APP):** Adequate arrangements are being made to observe Jammu Martyrs Day on both sides of the line of control in Jammu and Kashmir and rest of the world on 6th of November with due solemnity and reverence to commemorate the supreme sacrifices of lives given by the Muslim inhabitants of Jammu on this day of November 6th in 1947 while migrating to then newly-born homeland Pakistan.

At least seven lakh of Muslim residents of Jammu city and surroundings were mercilessly killed during a

week-long ruthless genocidal maneuvered and executed by the despotic ramed dogra ruler's force and gangsters besides the armed Hindu fanatics in the first and second week of November 1947.

These martyrs included 2.50 Muslim inmates of Jammu city and adjoining areas who were martyred by the dogra forces and their armed gangsters 6th of November 1947 while they were moving for migrating to the adjoining Sialkot city of the newly-born separate homeland of the Muslims of the subcontinent - Pakistan.

## LHC seeks more arguments on petitions about sugar pricing

**LAHORE (APP):** A Lahore High Court (LHC) division bench on Monday adjourned the hearing of petitions, challenging the Punjab government's notification authorising the cane commissioner to fix sugar prices, till November 7.

The court sought more arguments from parties on the next hearing. The bench, headed by Justice Ali Baqar Najafi, heard the petitions filed by

sugar mills against the notification. During the proceedings, the counsel for sugar mills argued that the cane commissioner could control sugar prices only whereas price controlling and price fixing were two different things. The market forces determine the prices of sugar and the cane commissioner did not have any power in this regard, he added.



LAHORE: Punjab Governor Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman distributing National Christian Award amongst the participants on their best performance in various fields.

## CJ, PHC stresses for impartiality of judges

**ABBOTTABAD (APP):** Chief Justice, Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ibrahim Khan here on Monday stressed for the impartiality of Judges to ensure justice to the people.

He said at the reception hosted by the District Bar Association in his honor, Justice Ibrahim emphasized the fundamental importance of the rule of law and the separation of powers in their system.

The ceremony was attended by judges from

the High Court and lower courts, members of the Pakistan Bar Council and the KPK Bar Council, as well as senior and junior lawyers, police officers, and administrative officials.

The CJ pointed out the vital role judges for stegthening judiciary system of the country.

He stated that judges could not conceal anything from lawyers and that they were ready for accountability while operating within the realm of the law.

## Man died of electrocution in Pindigheb

**ATTOCK (Online):** A man has died of electrocution in village Kunnt in the limits of Pindigheb Police station on Monday, Police and hospital sources said.

According to the sources, 25 years old Muhammad Khalid was working on the roof of his under construction house when he accidentally touched the electricity line passes through roof resultantly he received electric shock.

# International News

## Xi stresses Chinese women to start 'new family trend'

**Monitoring Desk**  
**HONG KONG:** Chinese President Xi Jinping said women have a critical role and must establish a "new trend of the family", as the nation grapples with an aging population and record decline in the birth rate.

Xi in comments, published by the state news agency Xinhua on Monday, said the role of women had been part of a discussion with the new leadership team of the All-China Women's Federation, which operates under the Communist Party.

Doing a good job in women's work is not only related to women's devel-

opment, he said but also related to "family harmony, social harmony, national development and national progress".

It is necessary to "actively cultivate a new culture of marriage and childbearing and strengthen guidance on young people's view on marriage, childbirth and family," he said.

Factors including high childcare costs, career hindrance, gender discrimination and not wanting to get married have deterred many young Chinese women from having children.

The number of births is closely tied to

marriage rates because official policies make it hard for single women to have children.

China's National Bureau of Statistics in January reported the first population drop in six decades and the country's population is rapidly ageing.

In the last two years, authorities across China have unveiled measures to lift the country's birth rate including financial incentives and boosting childcare facilities.

The state media has often linked population development to the strength and "rejuvenation" of the country.



Rescue workers and police officials stand next to damaged coaches following a collision between two passenger trains in Vizianagaram district in the southern Andhra Pradesh state, India.

## Mexican president blasts critics after deadly hurricane

**Monitoring Desk**  
**MEXICO:** The death toll from a devastating hurricane this week in the Mexican beach resort of Acapulco has risen to 39, the government said on Saturday, as President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador accused his opponents of exaggerating the scale of the disaster.

Hurricane Otis pounded Acapulco with winds of 165 miles per hour (266 kmph) on Wednesday, flooding the city, tearing roofs from

homes, stores and hotels, submerging vehicles, and severing communications as well as road and air connections. The government, which previously reported 27 deaths with four others missing, has so far released little information about the dead and injured.

Looting has continued and residents in hard-hit neighborhoods, struggling to find food and water, have accused the government of not delivering sufficient aid.

## Two killed, 18 hurt in Florida gunfight

**Monitoring Desk**  
**FLORIDA:** Gunfire erupted in the midst of Halloween festivities early on Sunday around a clutch of bars and clubs in the Florida city of Tampa, leaving at least two people dead and 18 others injured, police said.

Videos posted on social media site X showed a chaotic scene of crowds of people running through the streets with the sound of at least a dozen shots ringing out. The videos showed police scrambling to give aid to costumed victims bleeding on the sidewalks.

The images came as a grim reminder of the last year's tragedy in Seoul when a stampede during Halloween festivities left nearly 160 people dead.

However, police said a fight between two groups broke out around 3am in the historic neighborhood of Ybor City, where hundreds of people filled the streets.

As soon as the shooting began, people ran for their lives and the clubs and bars were closed.



China's Central Military Commission Vice Chairman Zhang Youxia and Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu arrive for the Beijing Xiangshan Forum in Beijing, China.

## Looking for loved ones amidst Gaza debris

**Monitoring Desk**  
**GAZA:** Bombarded Gazans searched for loved ones and heard news of family members killed as communications gradually returned to the enclave on Sunday after a near total blackout as Israel's troops and armour pushed into the besieged enclave.

The fighting intensified on Friday night as Israeli forces waged ground operations in Gaza in what Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu described as the second phase of the war aimed at "crushing Hamas".

Shaban Ahmed, a public servant who works as an

engineer and has five children, described the Israeli attacks as "doomsday".

"This morning, Sunday, I discovered that my cousin has been killed in an air strike on their house on Friday," Ahmed, who stayed in Gaza City despite an Israeli warning to evacuate south, told Reuters.

"We only knew today, Israel cut us off from the world in order to wipe us out, but we are hearing the sounds of explosions and we are proud the resistance fighters have stopped them at meters distance," Israel's chief military spokesperson has declined to say

whether Israel was behind the telecommunications blackout but said it would do what it needed to protect its forces.

Israeli air strikes have been pounding Gaza City since Oct 7, and according to Ahmed, the strikes on Friday from air, sea and the ground continued non-stop for hours.

The health ministry in Gaza said on Sunday a total of 8,005 people there had been killed since Oct. 7.

Palestinians were struggling to find loved ones in the bloody chaos as the growing humanitarian crisis squeezed Gaza.

## Deaths in India train collision rise to 13

**Monitoring Desk**  
**ANDHRA PRADESH:** At least 13 people were killed and around 50 injured when two trains collided in southeast India, officials said on Monday, updating an earlier toll of eight.

The accident occurred late on Sunday after one of the passenger trains overshoot a signal between the towns of Alamanda and Kantakapalle in Andhra Pradesh state.

A preliminary investigation found that "human error" had led to the collision, the railway ministry said in a statement.

"Thirteen passengers

have been killed and 50 others are injured. Rescue operations are going on," top local government official Nagalakshmi S. told reporters.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he had spoken with the country's railway minister about the "unfortunate" derailment. "Authorities are providing all possible assistance to those affected," Modi wrote on social media.

India has one of the world's largest rail networks and has seen several disasters over the years, the worst in 1981 when a train derailed while crossing a bridge in Bihar state.

## China fetes American veterans of World War II known as 'Flying Tigers'

**Monitoring Desk**  
**BEIJING:** China on Monday feted two American veterans of World War II as Washington and Beijing look to past collaboration for inspiration on improving today's strained ties.

Mel McMullen, who is in his late 90s, and Harry Moyer, who turned 103 on Monday, are among the few surviving members of a U.S. Army Air Force command that helped China battle Japan and became popularly known as the Flying Tigers.

## UK to hold emergency response meeting on threat of terrorism

**Monitoring Desk**  
**LONDON:** Britain will convene a meeting of the government's COBRA emergency response committee on Monday to discuss the domestic security risk from the Israel-Hamas conflict.

Antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents have surged in Britain since a deadly rampage by Hamas gunmen in Israel on Oct. 7 sparked retaliatory attacks on Gaza. Massive pro-Palestinian demonstrations have been held in London and other major UK cities, while Jewish groups have held vigils for hostages who were taken by the militants.

There are two higher categories of threat level - severe, meaning an attack is highly likely, and critical, meaning an attack is highly likely in the near future.

## Hundreds of Serbian police deploy in border zone with Hungary after deadly shooting among migrants

**Monitoring Desk**  
**BELGRADE:** Hundreds of Serbian officers were dispatched Saturday into a border area with Hungary, where they detained several people after a shooting between migrants killed three people and injured one, police said.

Reports of violence and gun battles have become common near the border between Serbia and European Union member nation Hungary. Thousands of migrants have been camping in the area, looking for ways to cross with the help of people smugglers.

Interior Minister Bratislav Gasic, who visited the area, pledged that "we will not move from here until every person responsible for any criminal act or incident is removed."

Police actions are aimed at "curbing irregular migration and raising the level of security in this part of the country, where clashes among migrants are

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"We have to make sure that British systems are safe and secure from the threat of terrorism as the government always does," higher education minister Robert Halfon told Times Radio.

Britain's MI5 intelligence agency currently regard the threat to the country from terrorism as substantial, meaning an attack is likely.

There are two higher categories of threat level - severe, meaning an attack is highly likely, and critical, meaning an attack is highly likely in the near future.



KARACHI: President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing during an event on the Spirit of female Entrepreneurship and Medical Leadership of female doctors organized by Sehat Kahani.

## President for promoting tele-medicine and tele-health services in Pakistan

Says doctors should bridge up awareness gap to overcome health challenges

KARACHI (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has called for promoting tele-medicine and tele-healthcare platforms to improve the outreach of healthcare services to low-income areas of the country. He said that digital platforms could enhance the reach of health services to far-flung areas, besides providing timely advice to people and helping promote preventive healthcare solutions in Pakistan.

Addressing the event, the President said that nations failed due to lack of education and health facilities, adding that Pakistan needed to focus more on disease prevention rather than curing the diseases. He also regretted that 28 million children were out of school in the country.

The President highlighted that women in our country faced different hurdles in society towards their participation in mainstream economic activities. He stressed the role of institutions in creating greater opportunities to empower and educate women. President Dr Arif Alvi appreciated Sehat Kahani's active role in transforming society with better opportunities for female doctors.

He also acknowledged Sehat Kahani's role in providing a pathway for women to serve their country, besides lauding their focus on tele-medicine and tele-health care services. The President said that communication was the key to bringing betterment to society. He also emphasized initiating conversations at home as a step towards the solutions of issues such as mental health and well-being and other health-related issues. He said that the government launched a helpline through an application titled 'Hamraaz' to meet the challenge of mental health and the people, who were facing mental illness or any depression condition could use it. He said that Hamraaz was launched during the tenure of the previous government. The President also presented shields to the doctors in the field of medicine, from various specialisations, serving all across Pakistan.

## Gwadar Port, CPEC playing great role in region's growth, change: Janjua

LAHORE (APP): Gwadar Port and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) are playing increasingly important roles in the region's growth and change.

HI (M) Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Nasser Khan Janjua expressed these views in an interactive session on "CPEC-Global perspective & Place of Pakistan" here at PCJCCI (Pak-China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry) Secretariat on Monday.

Janjua said, "Gwadar is the gift of Allah to all of us; to the entire Asia and the world. We have to reap the benefit of this gift of God and we have to make things happen. CPEC is half of the dream another half resides in Afghanistan, Central Asian republics and Russia and another half goes to Europe."

Pakistan is connecting around 86 countries and especially Balochistan can become an "Industrial Hub" of Asia. He said that connecting Gwadar Port with the northwestern part of China is the goal of the CPEC, a large-scale infrastructure project framework.

Transportation, energy, communications, and even cross-industry collaboration are all included. With an expected investment of billions of dollars, the CPEC aims to modernize energy infrastructure, construct industrial zones, and connect various modes of transportation, he added. He said that Balochistan is richly endowed with natural resources. The province possesses many minerals including coal, sulphur, chromium, iron ore, barytes, marble, quartzite, and limestone. Balochistan has the largest reserves of copper and gold in the world and is also blessed with huge oil reserves. Though rich in mineral resources, so far Baluchistan's contribution to the economy of Pakistan has not been high, he added.

HI (M) Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Nasser Khan Janjua mentioned, "We can develop four cities on the coastal line of Balochistan and it will definitely help us in maintaining the economic stability of Pakistan. Balochistan can also boost

its export competitiveness and achieve sustained economic development by taking advantage of the trade and investment possibilities brought forth by Gwadar Port and the CPEC." He concluded by saying that Gwadar is not only the heart of CPEC, it is also the heart of Asia. It is a doorway, a gateway to Asia and combined with Chahbahar these are only two entries to Asia.

"So we should initiate rapid development in this region so that it can boost trade relations," he added.

Nasser Khan Janjua also expressed solidarity with Palestine and condemned Israel for violating Geneva Conventions grossly with relentless barbaric and inhuman bombardment on civilians. He said that the entire nation of Pakistan stands with the innocent people of Palestine and would support them to the last.

He also stressed on two state solution for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by establishing two states.

## Court gives one week time to federation to file reply on matter of audio leaks

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has given one month time to federal government to file reply on the matter of audio leaks.

Justice Babar Sattar remarked how is electronic surveillance being conducted. Who is doing it. Pakistan Communication Authority (PCA) is saying it has not given permission to any one. The audio of judge of Supreme Court (SC) and family of former chief justice leaked. Doing it without taking state into confidence is horrific decision. Who is competent authority with reference to audio tape.

It has been said in Prime Minister (PM) office

report it does not see daily matters of secret agencies.

Justice Babar Sattar of IHC heard the petitions against summoning of Najam ul Saqib son of former Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) by parliamentary committee in audio leaks case and summoning of Bushra Bibi in FIA on the matter of audio leak of Bushra Bibi with Zulfi Bukhari by clubbing the both.

Amicus curie Raza Rabbani filed written reply saying court should not see this matter. The matter should have been returned to committee. With the dissolution of assemblies, all the orders of committees become ineffective.

## Pakistan, US enjoying long-lasting educational ties: Masood

WASHINGTON (INP): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan has stated that Pakistan and United States have long-standing educational ties and have been making efforts to strengthen their partnership in critical areas.

Interacting with a group of 15 mid-career Pakistani professionals in Washington, from public and private sector, who are currently visiting the United States under Hubert Humphrey Fellowship Program and pursuing their studies in various disciplines in leading US universities.

He said it is a great opportunity for Pakistani students and professionals to visit the United States and benefit from globally

recognized seats of learning and hone their skills for better service delivery.

On Pak-US relations, the Ambassador said that the two countries have recalibrated their relations after post-withdrawal period and have been making efforts to strengthen their partnership in critical areas.

The Ambassador urged the public sector professional to keenly observe study and learn best practices, being followed by the US public sector institutions for improved service delivery.

The Program brings mid-career professionals from developing countries, including Pakistan, to the United States for a year of study and professional experiences.



QUETTA: Former Federal Minister Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

## Over Rs. 1.2 billion recovered from defaulters; 278 connections suspended; 7 transformers removed as QESCO drive continues

Independent Report QUETTA: At least 278 electricity connections were disconnected and seven transformers were removed on non-payment of the utility bills and arrears as the campaign against defaulters and pilferers remained continued in the province on Monday.

According to the spokesman of QESCO, the power connections of the defaulters were removed in different areas of the province.

While on the other hand, seven transformers were removed in Loralai, Pishin and Khaliqabad areas of the province.

In all, 53 more shunt and tempered meters were also removed in the Quetta city.

The QESCO spokesman said that in all 1369 applications have been submitted for legal action against the power pilferers in different police and levies stations.

However, 386 FIRs were registered against the power pilferers in all areas of the province under supervision of the company.

A sum of Rs. 180.72 million were recovered on account of detection and fine.

Similarly, Rs. 1.2 billion were also recovered from 56,546 defaulters so far.

The campaign against the power pilferers and defaulters would remain continued in the province in future as well, the spokesman maintained.



QUETTA: Central Anjuman-e-Tajran President, Abdul Rahim Kakar along with Abdul Qahar and others addressing All Parties Conference against customs and police, at Quetta press club.

## Senate voices concern for Gaza, calls for immediate ceasefire, humanitarian aid

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate on Monday expressed concerns over Israeli atrocities against innocent people of Palestine and urged for immediate ceasefire and providing essential humanitarian aid to alleviate their suffering.

The House reiterated the necessity for international bodies to uphold justice and support the establishment of a free Palestine.

The special session was requisitioned to debate the current situation in Palestine and the House started debate on a motion under rule 218 which was jointly moved by Senators of all political parties in the House. The motion condemned the Israeli atrocities and aggressive actions against the innocent Palestinians and willing violation

of Geneva Convention and UN Resolution on Palestine, and especially barbaric Israeli airstrikes on Al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza hence hundreds of innocent people, patients and Hospital staff were died.

It also reiterated the government of Pakistan to describe efforts made by Pakistan in this scenario. Taking part in debate, Leader of the House Senator Ishaq Dar brought attention to the urgent Gaza issue, underscoring his proactive efforts to address the matter. He revealed that he had dispatched a letter on October 19, advocating for a Senate session dedicated to the Gaza crisis.

The Senator emphasized the pressing need for immediate action, urging all stakeholders, including the

## Pak, Russia agree to strengthen cultural ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Russian Ambassador to Pakistan, Danila V. Ganich, met with the Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Jamal Shah and discussed matters of mutual interest related to the cultural relations between Pakistan and Russia.

Speaking on the occasion, Jamal Shah said substantial potential exists for collaboration between the two nations.



QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Information Jan Achakzai inspecting class room during his visit to Pak Girls High School

## PTI challenges Maulana Fazl to contest election against Imran

PESHAWAR (Online): PTI leader barrister Muhammad Ali Saif while reacting to Maulana Fazlur Rehman statement has challenged him to contest election against Imran Khan.

He held the popularity of Imran Khan has rendered Maulana Fazlur Rehman senseless.

He went on to say Maulana Fazlur Rehman himself is playing part of like Jewish agent. People have already rejected such hollow allegations.

The burial of politics of Maulana Fazlur Rehman will take place on election day, he underlined.

## Haneef Khalid a 'shining star of media community': Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi said on Monday that senior journalist Haneef Khalid was the "shining star of the journalist community" and recognition of his services was overdue.

Addressing a special ceremony at the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) to confer the Lifetime Award on Haneef Khalid, the minister said he started his over 50 years illustrious journalistic career as a reporter and desk editor.

Along with being a representative of the journalist community, Haneef Khalid was a "business ambassador" for the media industry and he performed that role in the best possible manner, he added.

## Five thieves held stolen rice cost of Rs, mln along with truck in Pishin

QUETTA (APP): Levies force arrested five thieves and recovered stolen rice worth of Rs, million along with stolen truck from their possession in aKariat Dheeraj Kalra area of Pishi district on Monday.

According to Levies sources, on special directive of Deputy Commissioner Pishin Captain Retired Jameel Ahmed Baloch, Levies Force team led by Assistant Commissioner conducted raid at a place and apprehended four alleged thieves named Bashir Ahmed, Najeeb Ahmed and manzoor Ahmed and

Hikmatullah and seized rice worth of Rs, million along with stolen truck.

The levies source said that these alleged accused had snatched a loaded truck with rice few days and they were also wanted of Khanuzai's Levies Station.

On the successful operation of the Levies Force, Deputy Commissioner Pishin Captain Retired Jameel Ahmed Baloch congratulated the Levies personnel for their performance and announced certificates of appreciation of them.

## PTDC planning to establish TIC at Gwadar airport for tourists

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) was planning to establish a modern Tourist Information Center (TIC) at New Gwadar International Airport to facilitate the foreign and local tourists about their destination.

Talking to APP here on Monday, a PTDC official said the establishment of TIC would provide comprehensive information to tourists thronging to Pakistan from various countries to enjoy the beauty of recreational sites of Balochistan.

An official said that TIC would not only play a pivotal role in promoting tourism globally but would also emphasize the need for state-of-the-art facilities. He highlighted the growing significance of Gwadar as a tourist destination, attracting visitors from across the country and around the world. He said that Caretaker Minister of State for Tourism Wasi Shah was committed to construct Tourist Information Center at Gwadar airport as soon as possible to provide all kinds of information and facilities to tourists. He further said that Wasi Shah made it clear that he would not tolerate any incompetence within his ministry.

## Prince Ahmed chairs CFP meeting to enable Govt to deliver services faster

QUETTA (APP)-Provincial Caretaker Minister of Excise and Small Industries Prince Ahmed Ali Ahmadzai on Monday the Provincial Cloud First Policy (CFP) Meeting in which the cloud-first policy was reviewed to improve service delivery and reduce the cost of taxpayer funds.

He said that the aim of the policy is to attract domestic and foreign investment in digital services and supporting IT investment and streamlining IT procurement in the province, which may allow departments to adopt a cloud model.

He said that the approval of the policy reflects the government's continuous efforts to digitize Pakistan, which has seen rapid growth in recent years, for public administration, the policy is a welcome step towards better performance and citizen service delivery.

Addressing the meeting, Prince Ahmed Ali said that the adoption of cloud-first policy by the government and public sector agencies would transform public sector services, saying that it has the potential to improve service delivery and reduce the cost of taxpayer funds.

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QUETTA: Secretary Health Abdullah Khan meeting with Caretaker Provincial Minister for Health Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan Jogezi

## CEC, CM Punjab jointly chair meeting about election

LAHORE (APP): Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja convened a meeting on Monday with Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi and cabinet members to deliberate on ensuring free, fair and impartial elections.

The meeting, jointly chaired by CM Punjab Mohsin Naqvi and CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja at the CM Office, was also attended by ministers. A comprehensive review was conducted, assessing the arrangements made by the Election Commission and gauging the readiness of the Punjab government for the upcoming general elections. Participants were briefed on the security measures in

place. The caretaker Punjab government and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) affirmed their commitment to ensure peaceful, impartial, and fair elections. It was decided that the Punjab government would designate a focal person for coordination with the ECP.

CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja underscored the proximity of general elections, emphasizing the collective responsibility to ensure that they are conducted freely and fairly within the stipulated time frame. The caretaker Punjab government will receive complete support in conducting transparent elections.



LAHORE: Caretaker Minister of Punjab Cabinet led by Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi meeting with Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja. ECP members of provinces are also present