

# Independent

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## PM sees killing of Palestinian children as 'holocaust'

Says govt committed to ensure children's inclusive development, safety, education & health

ISLAMABAD (INP): Interim Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar says a professional army never targets civilians and children, expressing deep concern over the tragic events evolving in Gaza, particularly the "holocaust" of Palestinian children.

During his address at the launch of "Zara Alert App" in Islamabad, PM Kakar reiterated the government's commitment to safeguarding children's rights. He urged all segments of society to actively contribute to the improvement of children's well-being, emphasising the government's continuous efforts towards their welfare.

Highlighting the importance of children as the future's assets, Kakar stated that the implementation of the app would

play a crucial role in safeguarding their rights.

He condemned the ongoing massacre of children in Gaza, stressing that the killing of innocent children by the Israeli army reflected a severe violation of international laws and human rights.

Expressing deep concern over the plight of Gaza's children, the interim prime minister urged an immediate halt to the holocaust.

He stressed the need to view the situation in Gaza through the lens of human rights rather than religious colours, predicting that the ongoing crisis in Palestine could become a crucial factor in future conflicts.

APP adds: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday said the government was

determined to ensure inclusive development, education, healthcare, participation, dignity and security for "all our children, as envisaged in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child".

He said the children were the most precious asset of any nation and the sole guarantee for its future prosperity.

Addressing an event in connection with the Universal Children's Day, the prime minister said the government was fully devoted to the well-being and safety of the children.

The government and non-government organizations and the society as a whole should contribute towards the noble cause of safeguarding the children rights and to make their future safe and prosperous, he added.



ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar launches ZARRA mobile app on the eve of Universal Children's Day

## CM Baqir, Iranian Ambassador discuss bilateral trade, issues of mutual interest

KARACHI (INP): Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan, Reza Amiri Moghaddam called on Sindh Caretaker Chief Minister Justice @ Maqbool Baqir in Karachi on Monday.

During the meeting, matters pertaining to bilateral trade and other issues of mutual interests came under discussion.

Ongoing ruthless violence by Israel against the innocent Palestinians in Gaza was condemned by

both sides on the occasion. Chief Minister Maqbool Baqir said that the border market between the two countries has been opened and the annual trade between the two countries has reached two point four billion dollars.

Both leaders agreed to enhance trade volume and discussed need to make a banking formula system and issues related to trade and cordial relations between two countries.

## SPPB recommends to roll out plan of telemedicine for inmates in Sindh Prisons

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Caretaker Minister for Home and Prisons Brig. @ Haris Nawaz has said that one of the many correctional facilities is to use telemedicine to treat inmates. The facility needs to be adopted in prisons to save money, improve inmates' health, and lessen the risk of taking prisoners to outside hospitals.

This he expressed while presiding over a meeting of the Sindh Prisons Policy Board (SPPB) at IG Prison office, according to a communication here on Monday.

The SPPB adopted the proposal regarding the implementation of telemedicine systems in all the prisons. IG Prison informed that telemedicine system was proposed to be started initially at Central Prison Sukkur as a Pilot

Project. He further informed that telemedicine desks would be established at all hospitals including NICVD, SIUT, etc. It was decided to send all the recommendations of the SPPB to the government for approval and implementation.

The chair while stressing the need to provide inmates with a safe, humane, and appropriately secure prison environment in order to ensure their successful reintegration into the community said, "Prison authorities have a responsibility to ensure that the supervision and treatment of prisoners is in line with the rule of law, with respect to individuals' human rights, and that the period of imprisonment is used to prepare individuals for life outside prison following release.

## Govt determined to provide best facilities to Hajj pilgrims: Aneeq Ahmed

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed, Monday said that government was determined to provide the best facilities to Hajj pilgrims as facilitating religious rituals and worship was among the responsibilities of the state.

He was addressing to inaugurate ceremony of Bankers Training regarding Hajj portal for Hajj 2024 here, said that for the first time in the country not only a significant decrease had been witnessed in Hajj expenses but the ministry was striving to ensure maximum facilities to pilgrims throughout their entire pilgrimage. He said that Hajj expenses had declined to Rs10,75,000 this year from Rs 117,50,000 of the previous year while negotiations were

underway with airlines for reduction in airfare.

In case of cut down in air ticket the corresponding amount would be transferred into accounts of Hujaj-e-Karam, he added.

Another innovative facilities being introduced this year was launch of an App for Hajj that would provide updates to pilgrims from filing of the Hajj application to their return from the Hijaz-e-Muqadas, the minister informed. The "Road to Makkah" program, a facility being offered by Saudi government to Hajj, was earlier limited to Islamabad only but this year it will be extended to Karachi airport as well, Aneeq Ahmed said adding that MORA was striving to expand the facility to other major airports of the country for better facilitation of pilgrims.

## Free, transparent election to resolve country's problems: Bilawal

NOWSHERA (APP): Chairman, Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari here Monday said that a free, fair and transparent election would resolve all the country's problems.

Addressing a big party workers convention here, Bilawal Bhutto expressed the hope that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) would ensure a free and transparent election.

He said that his party has empowered farmers, labourers and poor women through different projects

including Benazir Income Support Programme.

Bilawal praised the KP people's sacrifices in the fight against terrorism, saying the complete elimination of terrorism was a must for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan.

He said that democracy could only strengthen with democratic values and political tolerance rather than creating division and hatred in society.

Bilawal Bhutto said that Quaid-e-Awam Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Shaheed and Benazir Bhutto Shaheed sacrificed their lives but never compromised on principles. He said people still remember the so-called popularity of opposition parties as evidenced by the election in 20 NA seats results.

## Sindh Prisons embrace telemedicine for inmate healthcare; focus on reintegration, rehabilitation

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Sindh Minister for Home and Prisons, Brig. (Retd.) Haris Nawaz, Monday highlighted the significant strides towards implementing telemedicine within correctional facilities to enhance inmate healthcare while reducing costs and minimizing risks associated with external hospital visits.

Chairing a meeting of the Sindh Prisons Policy Board at the IG Prison office here, Brig. Nawaz emphasized the pivotal need for this initiative.

Under the directive of the Sindh Prisons Policy Board (SPPB), a proposal was greenlit for the introduction of telemedicine systems across all prisons.

The initial phase is slated to begin with the Central Prison Sukkur, serving as a pilot project. Plans are underway to set up telemedicine desks at various hospitals, including NICVD and SIUT.

The recommendations of the SPPB will be forwarded to the government for final approval and execution.



KARACHI: Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan, Reza Amiri Moghaddam called on Sindh Caretaker Chief Minister Justice @ Maqbool Baqir in Karachi.

## Sarfraz Bugti says Govt wants to solve Chaman sit-in issue through negotiations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Interior Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti on Monday said that the government wanted to solve the Chaman sit-in issue through negotiations.

Responding to concerns raised by senators regarding the sit-in staged by local residents and businessmen against the recently implemented border regulations, the minister said, "We held a detailed discussion with the representatives of the sit-in,

and our preference is to resolve the issue through negotiations."

The minister said that it was not possible to allow around 40,000 people to the cross border daily without proper travel documents.

The government wanted to implement a unified document regime in line with previous practices, he added.

Bugti said the Afghan nationals would only be permitted to enter Pakistan through legal documents.



KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Leader, Aseefa Bhutto Zardari paid a visit to the residence of Salman Iqbal, CEO of ARY News to express her condolences on the tragic passing of his daughter, Sumaiya Salman in Karachi.

## PPP confident for ECP to hold upcoming transparent polls: Nayyar Bukhari

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan People's Party Secretary General Nayyar Hussain Bukhari Monday expressed confidence that PPP would establish itself as a formidable parliamentary force in the upcoming elections of 2024 and said that the Election Commission of Pakistan will utilize its all available resources to conduct a transparent election in the country.

Talking to a Private news channel, he said that the Election Commission of Pakistan will hold general elections honestly as it is a constitutional obligation and linked to the country's political stability. He affirmed that his party's candidates would wholeheartedly contest the upcoming elections and pledged their commitment to follow

Bhutto's policies.

Furthermore, he assured that PPP was fully prepared for the forthcoming electoral contest. He also demanded a 'level playing field' for his party to contest the next general elections, adding, PPP has its ideology and believes in the power of people, and democracy.

Replying to a question, he said that constructive criticism is the right of every political party which should be promoted instead of hurling abusive remarks ahead of the general polls. "Pakistan needs a government that has the mandate to make difficult long-term decisions to fix the economy of the country in the next five years after the elections", he added.

## Senators Dar & Mandviwalla to continue as Leader of House, Chief Whip: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, and Information and Broadcasting Muratza Solangi on Monday informed the Senate that Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar had endorsed Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar as Leader of the House and Senator Saleem Mandviwalla as Chief Whip with status of Minister of State.

## Measures underway to provide quality health care facilities: Minister

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Caretaker Minister for Health, Social Welfare, Public Health Engineering and Rural Development, Dr Saad Khalid Niaz on Monday said that the government was taking all out measures for improving the condition of public sector hospitals and providing quality healthcare facilities to the people.

The minister during the visit to the National Institute of Cardiovascular Disease (NICVD) also urged the doctors and allied health care staff to provide better medical services to the people by exhibiting more responsibility in pursuance of initiatives of the Sindh government, said a statement issued here.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti chairing a meeting of ministerial committee on enforced disappearances.

## Caretaker CM receives Dr. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin at old terminal

KARACHI (APP): Head of Dawoodi Bohra Community Dr. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin along with his family members arrived at Old terminal on Monday.

The Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (R) Maqbool Baqir, former Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab, Deputy Chairman Senate Saleem Mandviwalla and members of Bohra Community received Dr. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin.

Upon the invitation of the government and the community members, Dr. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, head of the worldwide Dawoodi Bohra community arrived in Karachi on Monday 20 November from Sri Lanka.



NAUSHERA: Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing to workers convention in City.

## Election code of conduct ready for release

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission has prepared election code of conduct and decided to release along with the election schedule.

Election Commission has prepared code of conduct in consultation with political parties and the suggestions of political parties were also included.

It is said in code of conduct that political parties will not speak against ideology of Pakistan and Pakistan's sovereignty and independence.

Political parties will avoid mocking election commission during election campaign.

## After Gabool, another former PPP Karachi MPA set to join PML-N

KARACHI (INP): Former Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) MPA and minister Akhtar Jadoon is likely to join PML-N during former premier Nawaz Sharif's visit to Sindh province, sources said on Monday.

According to details, the PML-N delegation led by Sindh president Bashir Memon met with Akhtar Jadoon at his residence to offer condolence on the demise of his sister.

The PML-N delegation also invited former PPP Karachi MPA Jadoon and his companions to join PML-N, say sources.

## SHC blasts police performance in missing persons' case

KARACHI (INP): A Sindh High Court (SHC) bench expressed disappointment over police performance while hearing petitions for the recovery of missing persons on Monday.

A bench of the high court blasted investigation officers over lack of progress in case and warned punitive action against the IOs over failure in tracing the missing citizens.

Justice Naimatullah Phulpoto warned to add the investigation officers in the list of accused involved in the enforced disappearances. "The court will deem the IOs among culprits who helped in disappearance of

citizens," high court judge warned. "You were given one month time, what you bring today," the court asked the IO. "Previous investigation officer has been transferred, I have handed over inquiry some days ago," the officer replied.

"The investigation conducted in the case, will be on record. People's patience now coming to the brim," the bench remarked.

The court summoned report from the investigation officer and other institutions till December 18.

The high court also ordered federal and provincial governments to submit fresh reports.

## PPL finds hydrocarbon reserves in Sindh's Sujawal district

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) has discovered oil and gas reserves at Shah Bandar Block in Sujawal district of Sindh.

"We are pleased to disclose that Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) has made a gas and condensate discovery from exploration well Jhim East X-1, in Shah Bandar Block, located in District Sujawal, Sindh Province," read the company's notice to the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Monday.

The exploration well Jhim East X-1 was drilled to a depth of 2,545 meters to test the hydrocarbon potential of Upper Sand of Lower Goru Formation.

"During testing of Lower Goru Upper Sand, the well flowed 13.69 million standard cubic feet per day of gas and 236 barrels per day of condensate at a wellhead flowing pressure (whfp) of 2,668 psig at 32/64" choke," added the notice.

PPL shared that the well is being further evaluated to get the necessary information about its performance. It added that the well was drilled and tested by utilizing indigenous expertise.

## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Familiar message

Only the state has a monopoly on the use of force, while armed action by non-state actors is out of the question. Moreover, intolerant behaviour against minorities and other disadvantaged groups cannot be countenanced, while religious, sectarian and linguistic differences need to be overcome. This was the gist of the message the army chief gave to an assemblage of divines who had gathered at GHQ on Friday. The COAS also reiterated the salient features of the 2018 Paigham-i-Pakistan fatwa that over 1,800 clerics belonging to all confessional backgrounds had endorsed to shun militancy and extremism. It is assumed the conclave was arranged in the context of the rising terrorist violence across Pakistan, in which large numbers of security personnel, as well as civilians, have been martyred. It is hard to disagree with the message of this meeting, and it needs to be amplified further.

However, it appears that the army chief was preaching to the converted. Pro-state ulama are not the problem; extremist preachers who wish to dismantle the state and replace it with their own polity are the main hurdles to peace.

Along with kinetic operations, it is the facilitators of militancy in Pakistan who must be confronted. For example, amongst the sectarian groups and hard-right outfits in the country, many are sympathetic to the aims of terrorist groups like the TTP and IS-K.

Yet these outfits remain active, free to organise and operate. While sectarian death squads that were very active up till a decade ago may have been neutralised by the state, their political and ideological supporters remain free to preach their toxic views.

Hence the establishment's wish to deradicalise the nation will remain unfulfilled as long as these elements are operating at will. Secondly, a catharsis is needed within the establishment. For decades, the state encouraged jihadi actors, firstly in Afghanistan and then held Kashmir.

Changed geopolitical realities, and the fact that many of these groups went rogue and brought their battle to Pakistan, forced a U-turn, first during the Musharraf era, and then again after the APS Peshawar atrocity. Therefore, the establishment needs to acknowledge that mistakes were made when it supported jihadi actors, and learn from its errors.

Yet beyond the kinetic, legal and administrative actions against extremism, the underlying factors that fuel militancy must also be examined. While there have been numerous cases of 'educated' militants, it is mostly the dispossessed and the disadvantaged that become cannon fodder for terrorist groups. When an uncaring, distant state does nothing for their welfare, many feel that religious militancy is the only solution. Therefore, were the state to ensure rights, education, jobs and above all respect to deprived segments, it could go a long way in quelling militancy.

## Decorating Karachi



Dr Noman Ahmed

In a recent meeting, Sindh's caretaker chief minister expressed his resolve to 'beautify' Karachi. Addressing bureaucrats, heads of civic agencies and architects, he spoke about the poor state of the entrance to the city from the airport. It is important to note that the so-called beautification has come about on many occasions with almost negligible results. Despite spending hundreds of millions of rupees, no enhancement in the aesthetics of the urban built environment could be achieved. These attempts should be reviewed in an objective and dispassionate manner before moving ahead with interventions also likely to meet with failure.

During Farooq Sattar's tenure as mayor, the Karachi Beautification Committee, comprising municipal managers, civil society members and architects, was created. One of its tasks was to conduct design competitions for traffic roundabouts — thematic and general monuments were to be crafted for an artistic environment. As a result, dozens of structures were built, but with the exception of a few such as Allah Wali Chowranghi at the Tariq Road and Shahrah-i-Quaideen intersection, most were eyesores wrapped in concrete and steel. A conspicuous flaw was the absence of trees and foliage. Experts say Karachi was nicer without them. In contrast, the simple yet pleasing New M.A. Jinnah Road roundabout is worth emulating; lined with appropriately spaced palm trees it's a precious piece of urban

landscaping.

Another attempt was made during Niamatullah Khan's term. Many municipal agencies were merged to form the now defunct City District Government Karachi. Parks and playgrounds in various localities were among CDGK's feats: some 300 parks were renovated, 24 model parks were developed in different neighbourhoods, including Gulshan-i-Iqbal, North Nazimabad, F.B. Area, Metroville-1 and Nazimabad, and older large-scale parks, such as the Safari Park and Zoological Gardens, were restored considerably.

Positive land-use conversion of the old Sabzi Mandi into a park with executive assistance from military authorities was a step in the right direction. I.I. Chundrigar Road was also revamped by a committee led by the State Bank governor, but the move made little impact due to limited support from powerful stakeholders for this crucial artery.

More recently, in July 2023, a face-lift of Sharea Faisal was announced; with a hefty budget of Rs195.71m, the project aims to improve facilities for pedestrians, landscaping and installation of artistic works along the Metropole Hotel-Jinnah terminal corridor. A wall is being constructed at Moria Khan Goth and another Gaza-like façade is under consideration. Perhaps, the wall's purpose is to 'hide' the mundane and provide a pleasing impression to those entering Karachi from the airport.

Meanwhile, locals are struggling to convey to city authorities that the wall will ruin business and retail activities as it will sever the visual connection between shops and customers. One hopes that good sense prevails and a tree-clad metallic fence is installed at this junction. Also, numerous over-

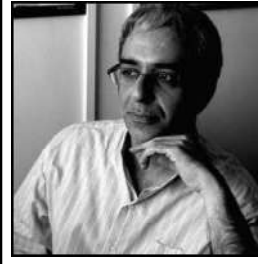
head pedestrian bridges are in a shambles and the absence of railings and balustrades makes them perilous for users. Concerned agencies must repair them before an accident occurs.

Another variety of bizarre structures built in the name of beautification are the mighty gate complexes found at the entrances of gated communities, defence establishments, universities and educational institutions. Cheap copies of existing monuments in distorted proportions abound; for instance, Bab-i-Khyber is possible in Karachi instead of KP. A dubious real estate developer along the M-9 Motorway is marked by a giant gated complex created to display the financial strength and political clout of the developer.

If our chief minister cares for Karachi, he should expedite the process of preparing the Greater Karachi Region Plan 2047. The process began during the previous government but is facing snags. It must be an appropriate plan that can tackle the aesthetic challenges and offer a range of solutions, incorporate the feedback of beneficiaries and affectees of all developmental works, and be a binding statute.

An empowered and independent urban planning agency should be established to implement it as the present situation of Karachi's management is proof of essential prerequisites being a long way away. These challenges are not insurmountable with the induction of competent planners, architects, engineers, demographers, sociologists, cartographers, IT specialists, field surveyors and others in the proposed agency. The capacity to take on these assignments can be shored up. -- Courtesy Dawn

## South remembers



Zarrar Khuhro

In the world of WhatsApp, Muslim and Arab countries have taken a serious stance against Israel. In that little chamber — isolated from fact, reason and logic — the emir of Qatar has threatened to cut off global LNG supplies if the West keeps supporting Israel the way it always has and likely always will.

More recently, Turkish President Erdogan sent a medical task force, accompanied by a special forces unit and dared the Israelis to shoot at them.

Nothing of this sort actually happened, or is likely to happen outside the world of WhatsApp. In the real world, Saudi Arabia is annoyed the screams from Gaza are interfering with its ongoing coming out party, while the UAE — which spearheaded normalisation with Israel — is pretending nothing is happening.

Iran, for all its bluster, reportedly isn't happy with Hamas taking such action on its own, and as far as Jordan and Egypt go, the less said the better. That leaves Turkey which, despite Erdogan's rhetoric, hasn't yet taken anything that even remotely resembles concrete action.

Instead, we see that states further physically removed from the theatre of murder have shown greater moral fibre: Belgium openly condemned Israel's collective punishment of the Palestinians, while also expressing support for the International Criminal Court's role and its ongoing investigation into the Palestine crisis.

Norway's parliament has called on its govern-

ment to be ready to recognise a Palestinian state, and Spain's lone Belarra, minister for social rights and leader of the leftist Podemos party, has not only called for an end to the genocide but also for Spain to end all diplomatic ties with Israel.

But the strongest response so far has come from Latin and South American states: Bolivia has cut ties with Israel while Chile, Colombia and Honduras have withdrawn diplomats from Tel Aviv. Brazil's left-wing President Lula has said that Israel is "killing innocent people without any criteria".

Even Argentina, which hosts the largest Jewish community in South America, called Israel's attack a "violation of international humanitarian law". Meanwhile, US President Joe Biden carries on quoting 'evidence', that has long since been debunked, in support of Israel's barbarous actions.

What explains the support for the Palestinian cause in so many Latin and South American countries? The Palestinian diaspora has played a part, given that some 700,000 people of Palestinian descent live in that continent — the progeny of those expelled by Israel — with the largest contingent in Chile.

This diaspora has been politically active, has deep cultural roots, and has made common cause with indigenous groups and left-leaning political groups. The links go beyond South America. In fact, one South American activist recalls that during his exile in Germany, it was a Palestinian who taught him the German word for 'refugee'.

Another reason is that the Cold War and its legacy conditioned leftist leaders in the region to support the Palestinian cause; Fidel Castro was the first Latin American leader to snap ties with Israel.

Then there is the shared experience of being ground under the boot heels of empire, an experience that is personal for many of these leaders who have seen the US attempt to depose them and destabilise their countries — ushering in murderous right-wing regimes — in order to serve its imperial interests.

So, you may say that on one level at least it is a shared history and experience that draws them closer. Having suffered colonialism and West-backed dictatorships, the people of these countries un-derstand the Palestinian struggle.

Ideology plays a part too. In Colombia's case, it has been prioritised over strategic interests. By condemning Israel, Colombia has jeopardised its military deals with Tel Aviv, which suspended arms sales to Colombia.

However, before the 'pink tide' swept these states, the right-wing governments that had taken power had tilted towards Israel. Jair Bolsonaro was a prominent supporter of Israel, which has always been a close friend of regressive forces in South America.

Colombia's military — often accused of murder — was well armed and trained by Israel, and when in Venezuela Juan Guaidó attempted to take power in a US-backed coup, Israel was one of the few countries that recognised him as a legitimate ruler. As usual, Israel is not shy to make alliances with even the most anti-Semitic of countries, such as Alfredo Stroessner's Paraguay. A Nazi sympathiser, Stroessner made Paraguay a haven for Nazi war criminals and despite this, was courted by Israel for the simple reason that the left, with its emphasis on decolonisation and rights — was a greater threat to Israel than the Nazis. The world may have willingly forgotten, but the South remembers. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News

### ML-I project consistently remains on top of govt's priorities: Shahid Tarar

*Pakistan, China vow to successful implementation of ML-I project*

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Communications, Maritime Affairs and Railways Shahid Ashraf Tarar on Monday reiterated that the Main Line-I (ML-I) project has consistently been on top of the government's priorities.

In a meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong, the minister reiterated the current political will to translate these priorities into tangible on-ground developments.

"We are determined to expedite the implementation of ML-I and with the political will in place, we are poised to

transform plans into action." The discussions focused on enhancing bilateral cooperation in the realms of transport and communication, with a particular emphasis on advancing the crucial ML-I project.

During the meeting, both parties engaged in constructive dialogue on various topics of mutual interest, affirming the longstanding friendship between Pakistan and China.

Expressing admiration for the Chinese expertise and participation in the ML-I project, the minister commended the collaborative efforts

between the two countries. Jiang Zaidong highlighted the project's foundation on mutual understanding and underscored its integral role in fostering cooperation and development.

"We are fully committed to working with the Pakistani side, and our joint efforts aim to accelerate the realization of the ML-I project," he added. The meeting concluded with both parties reaffirming their dedication to the successful implementation of the ML-I project, a symbol of the enduring friendship and strategic partnership between Pakistan and China.

### LCCI President appointed as board member of Punjab Council of Arts

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President Kashif Anwar has been appointed as member Board of Governors of Punjab Council of Arts and an official notification has been issued in this regard.

Director General of Punjab Council of Arts, Information and Culture Department Punjab Dr. Syed Bilal Haider met Kashif Anwar at LCCI on Monday and congratulated him on his appointment.

Dr. Syed Bilal Haider said that the board of directors of Punjab Council of Arts was very important. Chief Minister Punjab was the Chairman of the boards of governors. He stated that by taking some measures, Pakistan's arts and culture could be turned into a billion dollar industry.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications, Railways & Maritime Affairs Mr. Shahid Ashraf Tarar hosting a meeting with Chinese Ambassador Mr. Jiang Zaidong at the Ministry.

### Pakistan exports textile products worth \$5.565 bln in 4 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan exported textile products worth \$5,565.079 million during the first four months of the current financial year (2023-24), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

The exports of the product however witnessed a decline of 6.33 percent during July-October (2023-24) when compared to the exports of \$5,940.992 million during July-October (2022-23).

### WAPDA launches project for 300 MW floating solar power generation

TARBELA (APP): The Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) Monday has embarked on a groundbreaking project aimed at producing 300 megawatts of cost-effective electricity through solar panels. A delegation from approximately 21 foreign companies keenly interested in securing contracts for the project conducted on-site inspections at the Ghazi Barotha Dam and Barotha Jail locations.

The project, set to be completed within 27

months, secured a substantial financial boost from the World Bank (WB), with a funding allocation of \$326 million. WAPDA has taken significant measures in advancing the initiative, focusing on the utilization of floating solar panels, also referred to as floating solar panels.

Detailed briefings on the project's specifics were presented by the General Manager and Project Director (PD) Tarbela Dam Zahoar Atiq, along with Waseem Raza, Chief Engineer of the Tarbela Expansion Project.

million to \$0.518 million, tents, canvas and Tarpulin by 1.09 percent, from \$37.355 million to \$37.763 million and towels, the exports of which grew by 6.67 percent, from \$316.860 million to \$337.987 million.

The textile commodities that witnessed negative growth include cotton cloth, the exports of which declined by 13.94 percent, from \$750.115 million to \$645.535 million.

### No change in local gold price, international rate declines by \$2

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold witnessed no change in prices on Monday and was sold at Rs.215,100.

The price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold and 10 grams of 22-karat gold remained stagnant at Rs.184,414 and Rs.169,046 respectively, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten-gram Silver also witnessed no change and was sold at Rs.2,550 and 2,186.21 respectively.

### International trade data FPCCI supports transparency, security & monitoring: Irfan

INDEPENDENT REPORT KARACHI: Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has said that it is very important to establish transparency, security and monitoring mechanisms in the global trade. It creates confidence among trading nations; and, ultimately enhances bilateral, regional and multilateral trade. He was addressing the high-profile session of the International Centre for Trade Transparency & Monitoring (ICTTM) as a key speaker.

Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh pointed out that Pakistan needs to adopt Advanced Data Analytics & Modeling for Foreign Trade Data (ADAMfd) — which is an

ICTTM initiative — in particular these have the scope to revolutionize and influence both historical & real-time trade data to decode world-wide trading patterns. ADAMfd platform will ensure transparency, security, and efficiency in international trade operations, he added. It is pertinent to note that Pakistan's apex body, FPCCI and ICTTM have crossed a significant milestone by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) — and, this partnership underscores a shared commitment to enhance the transparency and compliance in international trade, Mr. Sheikh added.



RAWALPINDI: A vendor displaying peanuts to attract the customers at Rawat.

### SCCI, Iranian diplomat agree to further strengthen Pak-Iran trade ties

PESHAWAR (APP): Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) President Fuad Ishaq and Consul General of Iran in Peshawar, Ali Banafsheh Khah have agreed to start a series of online meetings to bring Pakistan-Iran business community closer to each other and bringing duties/tariffs structure equal between Pakistan and Iran.

On the occasion, Fuad Ishaq emphasized the need to trade in local currency and sign free trade agreements with Iran,

Afghanistan and China. Consul General of Iran in Peshawar, Ali Banafsheh Khah held a meeting with President of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Fuad Ishaq here at the Chamber House, said a press release issued on Monday. On this occasion, Commercial Attaché Peshawar Consulate Hossein Maliki, Senior Vice President of the SCCI Sanaullah Khan, Vice President Ijaz Khan Afridi, Secretary General Sajjad Aziz and the translator of the Consulate of Iran were present on this occasion.



QUETTA: A school-going boy selling eggs to support his family at a roadside near Koyla Patkha.

### Zeba Hai assures APTMA of removing all irritants of EFS for promoting exports

LAHORE (APP): Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Member (Customs) Ms. Zeba Hai Azhar has assured the APTMA of removing all irritants in Export Facilitate Scheme (EFS) and other customs procedures, formalities to facilitate exporters by helping them focus on how to boost exports.

She visited APTMA Lahore office-bearers on

Monday to hold an interactive session on exports and other Customs related issues. She was accompanied by Ms. Rabab Sikandar, Chief Collector Customs Lahore, Ms. Azmat Tahira, Collector Customs Lahore, Mr. Saeed Wattoo, Collector Adjudication, Ms. Saima Inam, Collector Customs Sialkot, Asdaq Afzal, Sensor Collector Faisalabad.

## Punjab Governor says: Prosperous and sustainable future depends on modern knowledge and research

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman today attended the closing ceremony of All Punjab Universities Innovation Expo 2023 organized by the Punjab Higher Education Commission and provincial universities as a special guest at the Expo Center Lahore. Around 450 research projects were exhibited on this occasion.

Chairman Punjab Higher Education Commission Dr Shahid Muneer, Chairman APSUP, Chaudhry Abdul Rahman, Vice Chancellors of Universities, Deans of various departments of the

universities, local industry owners, officials, government policy makers, students and a large number of people belonging to different walks of life were present.

Addressing the ceremony, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that organizing such an exhibition is very important for our educational institutions to understand the modern industrial and contemporary needs and to develop the talent of their students and guide them accordingly.

He said that it is very gratifying that the students have come up with new

projects and ideas, adding that this platform will foster new opportunities for them. He said that the young population is the demographic dividend of the country, and we should capitalise on it. He further said that Pakistani youth are very talented.

Governor Punjab said that in 2013-18, the funding of research grants of universities was increased. The laptop scheme yielded good results.

This reduced the digital divide and created E-employment opportunities for the youth. He said that Pakistani youth have made a name for themselves in gaming apps in the world.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman addressing the closing ceremony of All Punjab Universities Innovation Expo 2023 organized by the Punjab Higher Education Commission and provincial universities.

## Naqvi approves package for families of martyred employees of all depts

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi, in principle, granted approval for a relief package equivalent to that provided to police martyrs to be extended to the families of officers or employees who sacrificed their lives while serving any government department.

The CM emphasized extending a comparable aid package to injured government employees. Directing the formation of a committee led by the Additional Chief Secretary, Mohsin Naqvi tasked it with reviewing cases and formulating final recommendations.

The 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Cabinet Standing Committee on Finance and Development, chaired by the chief minister, addressed the financial assistance case for the family of Excise Inspector Muhammad Rafi, martyred in the line of duty, and the injured Inspector Sanaulah Bhatti.

Prompted by the incident, the CM ordered an immediate review, approving an aid

package equivalent to the police martyrs package for the family of the late Inspector Muhammad Rafi and the injured Excise Inspector Sanaulah Bhatti. Notably, Inspector Rafi lost his life, and Inspector Bhatti sustained severe injuries and disabilities due to gunfire by drug dealers in Rahim Yar Khan.

Provincial Ministers SM Tanveer, Amir Mir, and Mansoor Qadir, along with Chief Secretary, Inspector General of Police, Senior Member Board of Revenue, Chairman Planning and Development Board, and secretaries of relevant departments attended the meeting.

## CM, Australian High Commissioner discuss bilateral cooperation

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: In a meeting held at the Chief Minister's Office, Australia's High Commissioner Mr. Neil Hawkins engaged in a productive meeting with Punjab's Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi.

The CM extended congratulations to the Australian High Commissioner and the people for Australia's 6<sup>th</sup> World Cup win. As a gesture, the High Commissioner presented a cricket ball signed by Australian captain Pat Cummins and Mark Taylor to the chief minister, said a handout issued here. During the conversation, the Australian High Commissioner commended Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi as a diligent and active leader, noting his continuous efforts, including visible work on parks and the upgradation of Lahore Zoo, Safari Park, and Gardens. Expressing pleasure over Naqvi's commitment, he pledged steps to provide kangaroos to Lahore Zoo and affirmed Australia's readiness to enhance cooperation with Punjab across various fields.

CM Naqvi emphasized the implementation of measures to combat smog, making masks mandatory for citizens and securing advanced technology through collaborations with friendly countries.

## Smog in Punjab: LHC orders to keep all educational institutions closed till end of January

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has ordered to keep all educational institutions closed on Saturday till end of January due to smog.

Court has directed to issue notification to close schools, colleges and universities.

Justice Shahid Karim has issued a written order on the petitions filed for elimination of smog.

It is said in written order that Punjab government is taking steps regarding working from home on 2 days in the week. The word of gym closure is suspended in the notification. In the written order of the court, it is said that the meteorological department should take departmental action against officers who do not take action against smog.



HYDERABAD: Residents of Dadu are holding protest demonstration against high handedness of police, at Hyderabad press club.

## A meeting of district voter education committee held

**Independent Report**  
LARKANA (APP): A meeting of the District Voter Education Committee Kashmore-Kandhkot was held here on Monday, under the chairmanship of District Election Commissioner Kashmore-Kandhkot Sattar Sardar, at the election commissioner's office.

The meeting was attended among others by the Members of the district voter's education committee. Addressing the meeting, the District Election Commissioner informed the participants about the constitutional duties and responsibilities of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in the forthcoming general election-2024.

He urged all the members present to make efforts to highlight the importance of voting in their communities.

At the end of the meeting, the participants appreciated the constitutional duties and responsibilities of the ECP and assured their full cooperation.

## KP CM emphasis need for development of merged districts

**Independent Report**  
PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Justice (ret'd) Arshad Hussain Shah here Monday said that merged districts need special attention to its development and redressal of its deprivations.

He said that all-out efforts would be made to steer the province out of this financial crisis.

The CM said this while presiding over an important meeting regarding financial issues of the province held here at Chief Minister's House on Monday.

The meeting discussed in detail the financial issues of the province, especially of the merged districts related to the federal government, and decided to take up those issues with the caretaker prime minister for redressal.

Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, IGP Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur, Additional Chief Secretary Planning and Development Syed Imtiaz Hussain Shah, Additional Chief Secretary Home Muhammad Abid Majeed, Senior Member Board of Revenue Ikramullah Khan, Secretary Finance Aamir Sultan Tareen and other relevant officials attended the meeting.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali administered the oath from Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel as caretaker Provincial Minister at Governor House.

## CS Punjab inaugurates e-Procurement System

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: The e-Procurement System developed by the Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) in collaboration with the Federal and Provincial Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) Boards, was inaugurated by Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman at Arfa Software Technology Park (ASTP) on Monday.

The system has been introduced by the Punjab government in departments to streamline the public procurement process.

The ceremony presided over by Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman was attended by key officials and stakeholders, including SMBR Nabeel Javid, Additional Chief Secretary Ahmed Raza Sarwar, Planning & Development Secretary Mazhar Sial, PPRA Punjab MD Waqar Azim, PITB Chairman Faisal Yousaf and DG e-Governance Sajid Latif.

Addressing the ceremony, the chief secretary highlighted that the e-procurement system was a significant step toward good governance, ensuring transparency, efficiency, and time-saving in government procurements.

# International News

## China welcomes Arab and Muslim foreign ministers for talks on ending the war in Gaza

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: China's top diplomat welcomed four Arab foreign ministers and the Indonesian one to Beijing on Monday, saying his country would work with "our brothers and sisters" in the Arab and Islamic world to try to end the war in Gaza as soon as possible.

The ministers from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority and Indonesia chose to start a tour of world capitals in Beijing, a testament to both China's growing geopolitical influence and its longstanding support for the Palestinians.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told the foreign

diploamats that their decision to start in Beijing shows their high level of trust in his nation.

"China is a good friend and brother of Arab and Islamic countries," Wang said in opening remarks at a state guest house before their talks began.

"We have always firmly safeguarded the legitimate rights and interests of Arab (and) Islamic countries and have always firmly supported the just cause of the Palestinian people."

China has long backed the Palestinians and been quick to denounce Israel over its settlements in the occupied territories. It has

not criticized the initial Hamas attack on Oct 7 — which killed about 1,200 people — while the United States and others have called it an act of terrorism. However, China does have growing economic ties with Israel.

The Saudi foreign minister, Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, called for an immediate cease-fire and the entry of humanitarian aid and relief to the Gaza Strip.

"There are still dangerous developments ahead of us and an urgent humanitarian crisis that requires an international mobilization to deal with and counter it," he said.



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi attends a family photo session with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi, Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry, Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Maliki and Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Secretary-General Houssein.

## US Defense Secretary Austin meets with Zelensky in Kyiv to show steadfast support for Ukraine

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin made an unannounced visit to Kyiv on Monday in a high-profile push to keep money and weapons flowing to Ukraine even as U.S. and international resources are stretched by the new global risks raised by the Israel-Hamas conflict.

Austin, who traveled to Kyiv by train from Poland, met with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Defense Minister Rustem

Umerov and was scheduled to meet with Chief of Staff Gen. Valerii Zaluzhnyi.

In Kyiv, Austin said Ukraine's effort to defeat Russia's invasion "matters to the rest of the world" and that U.S. support would continue "for the long haul."

Zelenskyy said Austin's visit was "a very important signal for Ukraine."

"We count on your support," Zelenskyy said, thanking Congress as well as the American people for their backing.

This is Austin's second trip to Kyiv, but he's making it under far different circumstances, as the world's attention is drawn to the Middle East and signs of fatigue set in with the almost 21-month Russia-Ukraine war.

Austin's first visit occurred in April 2022, just two months after the start of the war. At the time, Ukraine was riding a wave of global rage at Moscow's invasion.

## Al Shifa Hospital a 'death zone': WHO

**Monitoring Desk**  
UNITED NATIONS: A joint UN team, led by the World Health Organisation (WHO), discovered evident signs of shelling and gunfire at Al Shifa Hospital in Gaza, designating it a "death zone".

The hospital, with 24 health workers and 291 patients, including 32 critically ill infants, is no longer operational, resulting in recent patient deaths.

Due to time limits associated with the security situation, the team spent only an hour inside the hospital, describing it as a "death zone", and the situation as "desperate".

"Signs of shelling and gunfire were evident. The team saw a mass grave at the entrance of the hospital and was told that more than 80 people were buried there," said a WHO report released on Sunday.

"Patient deaths have occurred over the previous two to three days due to the shutdown of medical services," it said. "Lack of infection control measures and antibiotics has resulted in severely infected wounds, particularly in trauma patients," it added.

The report expressed deep concern, urging immediate efforts to restore functionality to Al Shifa and other hospitals.



U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, right, speaks to employees of the U.S. embassy in Kyiv.

## Seoul warns North Korea not to launch spy satellite and hints 2018 military deal could be suspended

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: South Korea's military warned North Korea not to go ahead with its planned spy satellite launch, suggesting Monday that Seoul could suspend an inter-Korean agreement to reduce tensions and resume front-line aerial surveillance in response.

North Korea failed in its first two attempts to put a military spy satellite into orbit earlier this year and didn't follow through with a vow to make a third attempt in October. South Korean officials said the delay was likely because North Korea is receiving Russian technology assistance and that a launch could happen in coming days. "Our military will come up with necessary measures to protect the lives and safety of the people, if North Korea pushes ahead with a military spy satellite launch despite our warning," a senior South Korean military officer, Kang Hopil, said in a televised statement.

South Korean Defense Minister Shin Wonsik said in an interview with public broadcaster KBS on Sunday the launch was expected later this month and that South Korea and U.S. authorities were monitoring North Korea's moves.

The U.N. Security Council bans any satellite launches by North Korea because it views them as a disguised test of its missile technology.



South Korean military officer Kang Hopil speaks at the Defense Ministry in Seoul, South Korea.

## NATO's Stoltenberg concerned by secessionist rhetoric in Bosnia

**Monitoring Desk**  
SARAJEVO: NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said on Monday the alliance was concerned by secessionist rhetoric in Bosnia, as well as by Russian influence in the country, after months of Serb leaders increasingly saying they want to split away.

Bosnia emerged from a 1992-1995 war with a federal structure uniting a Serb-dominated republic with a federation of Croats and Bosniak Muslims. The leader of Serbian entity, Milorad Dodik, has increasingly said in recent months that he aims to secede and

join neighbouring Serbia.

"We are concerned by secessionist and divisive rhetoric as well as foreign interference including Russia," Stoltenberg told reporters in Sarajevo, his first stop during a tour of the Western Balkans region. "This undermines the stability and hampers reform," Stoltenberg said, adding that all political leaders must work to preserve unity, build national institutions and achieve reconciliation. Nearly three decades after the war that claimed 100,000 lives, the deadliest of the wars that followed the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

## Kremlin notes Argentina President-elect Milei's comments on Russia, but hopes for good ties

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: The Kremlin said on Monday it had taken note of statements about Russia from Argentina's President-elect Javier Milei who has said he wants to pull back from relations with Moscow, but still hoped the two countries could maintain strong ties.

Milei, a right-wing libertarian who on Sunday won almost 56% of the vote in the election's second round, has previously said he would retreat from ties with countries including Russia, China and Brazil, citing disagreement with their governments' policies.

Milei has also expressed support for Ukraine in its conflict with Russia and has said he sees the United States and Israel as Argentina's main partners.

## Nearly 200 Gaza evacuees to arrive in Turkey

**Monitoring Desk**  
ANKARA: Nearly 200 evacuees from Gaza are set to arrive in Turkey on Monday, including dozens of patients who will receive medical treatment there, Turkey's health minister and foreign ministry spokesman said.

Health Minister Fahrettin Koca said 61 patients, accompanied by 49 relatives, had arrived in Ankara on Monday afternoon after being brought out to Egypt on Sunday. Footage showed Koca at the Esenboga airport in Ankara greeting the people who

## Turkish ship, 12 crew missing in storm

**Monitoring Desk**  
ANKARA: A Turkish cargo ship and its 12 crew are missing in a storm off the northwest coast of the country, Turkish authorities said on Sunday.

The Kalkamettler vessel sent out a distress signal at 10:29am, according to a subdivision of the ministry of transport, which added that it gave off its last signal off the northwestern city of Eregli. "Our efforts to contact the vessel and its crew have been unsuccessful," the General Directorate of Maritime Affairs said.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi in a group photo with a delegation of children representing four provinces, as well as, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir nominated by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## President for constructive role to improve children lives in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday called upon the relevant Government organizations, civil society, human rights groups, media, UN agencies, community, parents, teachers, Ulama and children themselves to come together and play their constructive role in the national effort to improve the lives of children in Pakistan. "Children in Pakistan are vulnerable to several challenges like stunting, malnutrition and lack of access to quality education and health facilities," the president said in a message on the occasion of Universal Children's Day.

Besides, he said children were facing various protection challenges like child trafficking, child marriage, child labour, corporal punishment, child abuse, children in conflict with the law, and harmful traditional practices.

Today, Universal Children's Day is being celebrated under the theme "For every child, every right" to reaffirm our commitment to safeguard the rights and well-being of children.

Pakistan is a signatory to seven core international Human Rights Conven-

tions, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Besides, Pakistan also ratified Optional Protocols to the UNCRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and pornography and the involvement of children in armed conflict. As a signatory to the UNCRC, Pakistan remains at the forefront to advocate, protect and promote child rights.

President Alvi said children were the most precious resource of any nation and the sole guarantee for its future. Pakistan is fully alive to its responsibilities towards its children and is making all efforts to ensure children's inclusive development, birth registration, education, health care, participation, dignity and security as envisaged in our Constitution and UNCRC.

He said Pakistan had promulgated a number of legislations including the ICT Child Protection Act, 2018, the Juvenile Justice System Act, 2018, the Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Act, 2020 and the insertion of "Child Domestic Labour" in the list of occupations of the Employment of Children's Act, 1991.

## Every child has right to grow in safe environment: CM Baqar

KARACHI (APP): On World Children's Day, the Sindh government reaffirms the right of every child to grow, learn, play, and flourish in a safe, responsive and friendly environment, free of distress, hunger, fear and oppression.

This was stated by Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (R) Maqbool Baqar while speaking at the World Children's Day programme organised by the school education department in collaboration with UNICEF Pakistan at a local hotel.

The programme was attended by Sindh Caretaker Minister for Education Rana Hussain, Secretary of School Education Dr. Shereen Narejo, Representative, UNICEF Pakistan Abdullah Fadiel, Representative, UNICEF Pakistan,

children and young people could claim.

Baqar said that as a party to the CRC and its two Optional Protocols, the Pakistan government was committed to upholding the promotion and protection of the human rights of all children and fulfilling its national and international obligations in that regard.

"On World Children's Day, my government reaffirms the right of every child to grow, in a safe, free of distress, hunger, fear, and oppression. The CM said that the Children were the most precious resource of any nation and the sole guarantee for its future.

"The PML-N supremo has linked his visits to the two provinces with an end to fissures among the party leaders there.

The Chief minister said that World Children's Day was a day to have fun and celebrate the children in our lives, while also standing up for their rights and giving them the chance to speak out on the biggest challenges they face.

"Sindh joins the world community today in celebrating World Children's Day 2023, which is an occasion for us all to reaffirm our commitment to the fundamental principles laid down in the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child as well as our national obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child," Interim CM said and added that the Convention on the Rights of the Child was an international human rights agreement that outlined the specific rights that children

## PM stresses upon further strengthening of Pak-UAE cooperation in energy, trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday expressed satisfaction at the robust and wide-ranging engagement between Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates, and stressed the need to focus on strengthening cooperation in energy, trade and investment.

The prime minister was talking to Ambassador of UAE to Pakistan Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi, who called on him at the Prime Minister's House, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The Emirati ambassador presented a formal invitation to the caretaker prime minister for attending the forthcoming COP-28 meeting in Abu Dhabi.

He said that Pakistan was one of the leading countries in climate change negotiations and the UAE was hopeful that Pakistan would play its part in ensuring the success of COP-28.

The caretaker prime minister congratulated the UAE for hosting the important global climate change conference and assured of Pakistan's active participation in the event.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of UAE to Pakistan Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar.

## Global Security: Pakistan ready to extend all sorts of int'l cooperation: Bugti

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has said that Pakistan was ready to extend all sorts of international cooperation for boosting global security.

This was stated by him while speaking to Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Jiang Zaidong, who called on him in Islamabad on Monday.

The two sides discussed matters of mutual interest including bilateral relations during the meeting and it was agreed to further enhance cooperation in the field of security.

Sarfraz Bugti said the decades-long friendship between Pakistan and China was an example for the entire world. He said the recent visit of Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar to China will further strengthen cooperation in various fields including security.

## Rs 40 billion recovered in six-week of anti-power theft campaign: Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Power and Petroleum, Muhammad Ali on Monday said the recovery of approximately Rs 40 billion had been actualized over the past six weeks during the current campaign against power theft.

Responding to a motion under 218 in Senate regarding the rise in the electricity and gas tariffs, he said that around Rs 40 billion had been recovered during the last one and half month directly or indirectly. The motion was initiated by JI Senator Mushtaq Ahmed.

The minister acknowledged the reduction in line losses and a higher recovery ratio during this period.

Affirming higher electricity rates than neighboring countries, he attributed this to past contracts, line losses, and unpaid bills. Despite these challenges, he emphasized the effectiveness of the aggressive anti-power theft campaign in mitigating losses.

The minister also discussed the lack of investment in electricity distribution and transmission, and the country's total transmission capacity of 26,000 MW, and the quarterly adjustments of electricity prices based on fuel costs.

and young people could claim.

Baqar said that as a party to the CRC and its two Optional Protocols, the Pakistan government was committed to upholding the promotion and protection of the human rights of all children and fulfilling its national and international obligations in that regard.

"On World Children's Day, my government reaffirms the right of every child to grow, in a safe, free of distress, hunger, fear, and oppression. The CM said that the Children were the most precious resource of any nation and the sole guarantee for its future.

"The PML-N supremo has linked his visits to the two provinces with an end to fissures among the party leaders there.

## Nawaz Sharif asks PML-N Sindh, KP leader to bury hatchet

LAHORE (INP): Former three-time prime minister and PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif has taken notice of the emerging differences among party leaders in Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, it was learnt on Monday.

According to sources, Nawaz Sharif has directed the PML-N Sindh and KP leaders to bury the hatchet at once.

The PML-N supremo has linked his visits to the two provinces with an end to fissures among the party leaders there.

## Children have first right on country's resources: Bilawal Bhutto

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Monday said that the children had the first right on country's resources and reiterated that investing in children's education, health and safety would be among the top priorities of his party's government after winning the upcoming general elections due on February 8 next year.

"Our children are the most valuable treasure and bright future of the country," he said in a statement issued by the party secretariat on the occasion of World Children's Day.

He expressed his best wishes that the future of children all over the world, including Pakistan, be filled with peace, love and prosperity.

Bilawal Bhutto said that PPP had always taken revolutionary steps for the protection and welfare of children.

"The 1973 constitution guarantees all the rights of children.

He said that Pakistan was one of the leading countries in climate change negotiations and the UAE was hopeful that Pakistan would play its part in ensuring the success of COP-28.

The caretaker prime minister congratulated the UAE for hosting the important global climate change conference and assured of Pakistan's active participation in the event.



KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister, Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar received the Mufaddal Saifuddin, Spiritual Leader of the Dawoodi Bohra Community upon his arrival, in Karachi.

## Senate terms quality education as fundamental right of every child

ISLAMABAD (INP): To promote literacy among the children in the country, the Senate on Monday adopted a unanimous resolution, seeking urgent steps and initiatives by the government. Moved by Senator Sana Jamali, the resolution highlighted the fundamental right of every child to access quality education, emphasizing the need for gender-neutral, geographically inclusive, and socio-economically equitable educational opportunities.

The resolution asked the government to take effective steps to promote the literacy for children and youth in general and girls in particular across the country, and also strengthen the non-formal education (NFE) system on an urgent basis to deliver the programmes.

It further asked for promoting skills-based and innovative learning models to provide right to education to out-of-school children and youth with a special focus on girls' education to facilitate life-long learning. The resolution stressed to take steps in order to promote gender equality in education and eliminate disparities by ensuring girls' and women access to quality education, besides eliminating any barriers, impeding their access to education.

It further called for launching comprehensive awareness campaigns to inform both urban and rural communities about the significance of education through outreach programmes, workshops, and community events in collaboration with the stakeholders and partners.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani in a meeting with the delegation of Pakistan Humanitarian Forum at Parliament House.

## Car lifter killed in encounter, female drugs smuggler held

KARACHI (INP): A car lifter was killed in exchange of fire with police while a female drugs smuggler was arrested besides recovery of narcotics in different localities of metropolis.

Police traded fire with a gang of car lifters at Super Highway near Chakar Hotel in Karachi in which one member of the gang was killed while his other accomplices managed to escape.

The police arrested a female peddler besides recovery of one kilogram methamphetamine (Crystal Ice). The detainee was involved in purchasing the Crystal Ice from Balochistan and supplying it in different areas of Karachi city.

## Irrigation department books 64 accused for water theft

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Irrigation Department, during its ongoing campaign for curtailing agriculture water theft, booked 64 accused in different areas of the province.

Following directives of Sindh Caretaker Irrigation Minister, Ishwar Lal, indiscriminate actions have been taken stringently against water thieves and irrigation officials have registered 23 cases of water theft, according to a statement issued here on Monday.

According to the details, 15 accused were booked in 4 cases in Akram Wah Division Badin and 8 accused in 5 cases in Phulleli Canal Division Badin while 14 others were booked in 6 cases in Goni Canal Division Shaheed Fazil Rahu.

Similarly, 10 accused were named in 3 cases in Akram Wah Division,

Tando Muhammad Khan while 17 more were nominated in 5 cases of water theft registered by Phulleli Canal Division, Tando Muhammad Khan, it stated.

Moreover, on the immediate notice of caretaker minister Ishwar Lal, the irrigation department also patched up a 30-feet-wide breach in the Sanhro Wah Khairpur while water supply was also restored to Khanwah minor from Nalaki minor of Rohri canal, the statement claimed.

All possible measures were being taken to ensure the supply of irrigation water to growers whose lands were situated at the tail ends of the canal network, the caretaker minister said while declaring a zero-tolerance policy against water theft and illegal closure of water so that no farmer would suffer from water scarcity.

## Turkish company AYSIS to start sanitation work in Saddar South Zone

KARACHI (APP): Managing Director Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Nasimuddin Mirani on Monday said that the Turkish company AYSIS will start sanitation work from the first week of December in Saddar South Zone.

Nasimuddin Mirani was told this while chairing a meeting with the Turkish company here on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, the MD Solid Waste directed to devise a plan so that the cleaning work can be performed in a better way.

He said that our priority is to provide relief to the citizens, so it is necessary to make an effective plan for the purpose.

The company officials said in the briefing that they have formulated a strategy for cleaning, in which they have given priority to taking garbage from the house so that the garbage does not reach the waste areas. They said that the company would ensure the disposal of waste and that the operation would be started in all the zones after the resources were available.

## Commissioner pays surprise visit to Rural Health Center, Basic Health Unit

HYDERABAD (APP): Commissioner Syed Muhammad Sajjad Haider paid a surprise visit to Rural Health Center Halani, Rural Health Center Mehrabpur and Basic Health Unit Bandhi and inspected the health facilities being provided to patients and also viewed the sanitation situation of hospitals.

The commissioner expressed anger toward the hospital administration over the bad sanitation situation at Rural Health Center Mehrabpur and directed the Medical Superintendent to improve sanitation conditions as early as possible. He also directed to provision of better health facilities to patients at the hospital.

The Commissioner instructed District Health Officer Naushehro Feroze to visit Rural Health Center Mehrabpur and take steps for improvement in sanitation and administrative situation and a report in this regard shall be sent to the Commissioner's office. During the visit to the Basic Health Unit Bandhi, the Commissioner expressed his satisfaction with the arrangements done at the hospital.

He also directed hospital administration for the provision of better health facilities to admitted and visiting patients.

He said that our priority is to provide relief to the citizens, so it is necessary to make an effective plan for the purpose.

The company officials said in the briefing that they have formulated a strategy for cleaning, in which they have given priority to taking garbage from the house so that the garbage does not reach the waste areas. They said that the company would ensure the disposal of waste and that the operation would be started in all the zones after the resources were available.



KARACHI: Patients are being examined by doctor during the free medical camp, at Nimat Begum Hamdard University Hospital located on Nazimabad area in Karachi.

## SRSO celebrates Universal Children Day in Sukkur

SUKKUR (APP): The Sindh Rural Support Organization (SRSO) organized a colourful programme in the USAID Government School Numaish Sukkur to mark World Children's Day on Monday. Students demonstrated their talent by creating digital heroes. The main component of the event was science projects.

A large number of students, notables, teachers, officials of the education department and parents attended the event.

Addressing as chief guest, District Education Officer Syed Safdar Ali Shah said children are our national asset and the future of Pakistan.

He said that World

Children's Day was not only a celebration of having an international treaty to endorse children's rights but a reminder for all of us that children were our future and we needed to do everything possible to ensure their well-being.

He said that the Sindh Government was paying attention to ensuring quality education in the schools.

He said that the provincial government also allocated a huge amount for education, particularly for girls' education and their health as well as adding that it was a matter of immense pleasure for him that SRSO and the Education Department had a keen interest in observing the Universal Children's Day.



KARACHI: A view of the broken passenger bus after accident at Kolachi road due to over speeding in Provincial Capital.

## DC Mirpurkhas advocates for Child Rights on International Children's Day

MIRPURKHAS (APP): Deputy Commissioner Mirpurkhas, Dr Rasheed Masood Khan, emphasized the importance of child rights on Monday, stating that their bright future is intricately linked to their protection.

The DC office reported that Dr Rasheed Masood Khan participated in an event commemorating International Children's Day in Mirpurkhas.

The event was organized by the Child Protection Unit of the Social Welfare Department, Mirpurkhas, with support from the International Rescue Company Social Orga-

nization.

The DC acknowledged the commendable efforts of the Child Protection Unit, IRC, and UNICEF in organizing the program.

A rally for awareness of World Children's Day was led by officials and stakeholders, including District Child Protection Officer Junaid Mirza, District Education Officer Dr Chaman Mansha Jeevan, and Director Information Ghulam Raza Khoso.

Numerous students, teachers, and officials actively participated in the event.

## Son of PPP's councillor killed in Jamshoro

HYDERABAD (APP): A young man was shot dead near the entrance of the Sindh University in Jamshoro district on Monday.

According to Jamshoro police, 28-year-old Mohsin Bhalai was on his way to Mehran University of Engineering and Technology (MUET), where he worked, when he was intercepted by the assailants riding on a motorbike.

Bhalai was the son of a councillor of Town Committee Jamshoro, Haji Allah Warayo Bhalai, who belongs to the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP).

The police said Bhalai had tied a marital knot some months ago.



KARACHI: Activists of Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists holds protest rally in the favor of their demands from Governor House to CM House, in Provincial Capital.