

# Independent

dailyindkhi@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

Karachi

Ph: 0300-3898091 Vol: 05. No. 318 Jamadi-ul-Awal 08, 1445 AH Thursday November 23, 2023 Pages 04 Price Rs. 12.00

## People's rule will be established after winning Feb 8 election: Bilawal

CHITRAL (APP): Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari here Wednesday said that people's rule would be established after winning the February 8 General Election.

He said leaders of opposition parties have disappointed people and masses of KP were looking now to PPP for resolutions of their problems.

Addressing a big party convention here, he said that veteran leaders of opposition parties failed to address the masses' problems during their tenures as prime minister and they should now sit at home and allow young leadership to address the country's prob-

lems. He said the people of KP would reject all those political parties who failed to deliver despite remaining in power for nearly 10 years in KP.

He said people also knew about a Punjab-based political party that plunged the country into a price hike affecting the lives of the common man.

He said the country suffered due to politics of confrontation and hate-based politics by two opposition parties that deceived the masses on the name of so-called change and respect for votes.

Bilawal said that people wanted employment and not agitation. He said Sindh prov-

ince had made progress due to the continuity of PPP regime policies and recorded development projects completed there.

He demanded full implementation of the 18th Constitutional amendment and NFC share to provinces. Bilawal said the people of Chitral were close to his heart and their problems would be addressed after coming into power.

He said Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Shaheed and Benazir Bhutto Shaheed laid down their lives but never compromised on the rights of the people and democracy.

He said the February 8 election would bring success to PPP.



CHITRAL: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addresses to his workers during Workers Convention held in Chitral.

## PM vows to ensure equitable distribution of resources in all provinces

### Directs payment of hydel projects' outstanding arrears to KP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday directed for ensuring payment of all hydel projects related arrears to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. He said that equitable distribution of all resources among the provinces was the responsibility of the Federal Government.

The prime minister chaired a meeting to review reforms in the power sector and welfare of the bereaved families of Shuhada, who lost lives in the fight against terrorism, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The meeting was attended by Caretaker KP Chief Minister Justice (ret'd) Arshad Hussain Shah, Caretaker Provincial

Minister for Tribal Affairs Dr Aamir Abdullah, WAPDA Chairman Lt. Gen. (ret'd) Sajjad Ghani and other senior officials.

The prime minister was apprised of the progress on the payment of income to the provincial government from the hydel projects. The prime minister directed WAPDA to remove all the hurdles in this regard and ensure payments on priority basis. He also desired early resolution of all the outstanding issues between the provincial government and the Central Power Purchasing Agency.

The Federal Government would ensure protection of the rights of the people of all provinces, including the KP, he added.

During the meeting,

the caretaker prime minister was apprised of the steps taken in the ongoing power theft operation in the province. The prime minister appreciated the provincial government, personnel of power distribution companies, WAPDA and other departments taking part in the anti-theft drive.

The meeting was informed about the progress on the ongoing hydel projects and the construction of water reservoirs in the country, particularly in KP province.

The caretaker prime minister observed that Pakistan was gifted with immense water resources which should be properly utilized and directed for fast tracking of all such projects on urgent basis.

## Sindhi, Imam-e-Kaaba discuss Pak-Saudi educational collaboration

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dr. Salih bin Abdullah al Humaid Imam e Khatib at Masjid al Haram met with Caretaker Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhi the other day.

The minister welcomed the Imam e Kaabah with the highest of honors and said that the love and respect of people of Pakistan for Saudi Arabia has no limits, said a press release issued here Wednesday. He said the relationship between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia is the strongest relationship that Pakistan has, adding, both countries share cultural, religious and historic ties.

He said that Saudi Arabia is like a second home for the people of Pakistan. He said that due to Makkah and Madina, the love and respect for Saudi Arabia cannot be measured. Madad said that we

appreciated deeply the role played by Saudi Arabia in addressing the global issues of the Muslim Umma.

Madad said that he had put special focus on the teachings of Islam especially Seerat-e-Nabi (PBUH). He said that only through true teachings of Seerat-e-Nabi, we can educate our nation and ensure that they follow the right track.

He said that due to his instructions, a special research centre would be formed through collaboration of Saudi and Pakistani Universities which would focus on the Seerat of Nabi (PBUH) especially on the issues of politics, social reform and law.

The minister said that he had prioritized the quality of education, reduction of out of school children and research on Seerat Nabi (PBUH) since taking over as the education minister.



ISLAMABAD: Dr. Salih bin Abdullah al Humaid Imam e Khatib at Masjid al Haram met with the Caretaker Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Mr. Madad Ali Sindhi.

## Pakistan and Kazakhstan to establish State media offices in each other's countries

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Wednesday said that Pakistan valued its relations with Kazakhstan and was working on strengthening them in diverse fields.

During a meeting with Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, Yerzhan Kistafin important issues including bilateral relations, strengthening cooperation in the media sector, promoting public relations and regional situation were discussed.

Murtaza Solangi and the ambassador agreed to establish offices of state media organizations of both countries in Pakistan and Kazakhstan.

"There is a need to promote public relations and exchange of cultural delegations between the

two countries," he said and stressed for further promoting the cooperation between state media institutions of two countries.

He said that the PTV and Radio Pakistan were the main source of access to information on both sides.

The issue of signing an memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of Pakistan and the Ministry of Information and Social Development of Kazakhstan was also discussed in the meeting.

In this regard, it was also agreed to hold a Zoom meeting between the Information Ministers of Pakistan and Kazakhstan.

A memorandum of understanding for media co-operation was signed between Associated Press of Pakistan and Kazakh Information Agency in 2018.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yerzhan Kistafin meeting with Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi.

## SC declares Imran bail plea in cipher case maintainable

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) while declaring bail plea of chairman PTI in cipher case maintainable has issued notice to federation, interior ministry and other respondents besides seeking reply from them.

The court chided the investigation officer of FIA for appearing without any notice.

Justice Sardar Tariq Masood remarked who has called you. Go behind and sit there.

Chairman PTI Bail plea in cipher case came up for hearing before a 3-member bench of SC presided over by Justice Sardar Tariq Masood Wednesday. Justice Yahya Afridi and Justice Ayesha Malik are part

of the bench. The counsel Suleman Safdar read out FIR in the court.

Justice Sardar Tariq Masood inquired this matter relates to what period.

The counsel Suleman Safdar replied this matter relates to 2022.

Justice Sardar Tariq Masood remarked you have spent one year on it. There is death sentence in some clauses, life imprisonment in some clauses and 2 years imprisonment in some clauses. Suleman Safdar read out inquiry report and charges against chairman PTI. Suleman Safdar said allegation has been leveled that chairman PTI asked Azam Khan to give wrong colour to cipher.



ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting on preparations with regard to COP-28.

## Commissioner for expediting action against profiteers in Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Commissioner Karachi, Muhammad Saleem Rajput on Wednesday asked the officers concerned to expedite action against profiteers and ensure implementation of government fixed prices of essential items.

On the directives of the Commissioner, the City Administration charged 97 shopkeepers with a Rs 696000 fine for violation of notified prices of essential commodities on Wednesday.

According to the report, over 16.8 million rupees in fines were imposed against 4444 profiteers while 128 shops were sealed during 21 days of the campaign against hoarders and profiteers in the city.

As per the district-wise breakdown of the ac-

tion against the profiteers in district South, 1028 shopkeepers were fined Rs. 4.25 million, 3 violators were sent to jail and 37 shops were sealed during the 21 days of the campaign.

The administration of the district central sealed 50 shops and imposed a fine of Rs 4.76 million on 543 shopkeepers who were found selling essential food items at excessive prices. Three violators were sent to jail in the district.

In District East 5 shops were sealed and 4 profiteers were jailed by the assistant commissioners concerned while a total fine of Rs. 2.19 million was imposed on 546 illegal profiteers. In the West district, 518 shopkeepers were fined a total of Rs. 1.22 million.

## Sindh gov't decides to ban sub-leasing of all Auqaf dept properties

KARACHI (APP): The caretaker Sindh government has decided to ban sub-leasing of all properties of the Auqaf Department.

The decision was taken in a meeting of the Auqaf Department held under the chairmanship of Sindh Minister for Law and Auqaf Muhammad Omar Soomro here Wednesday. The meeting was attended by Secretary Auqaf Munawer Ali Mahessar, Chief Administrator Muntaz Chana, Additional Secretary and other officers.

The minister instructed the officers in the meeting and said that the sub-lease of the property

of the Auqaf Department should be banned.

A committee has also been formed to review the rate of the property of the Auqaf Department across the province. The committee will include Additional Secretary Auqaf, Chief Administrator and Administrator Auqaf Karachi.

The committee will review the rents of all the properties of the Auqaf Department and submit a report within 10 days. We have to bring transparency in the Auqaf Department of Sindh, wherever there is abuse of authority, corruption or any kind of corruption in the department.

## Zardari assigns important task to PPP Punjab leadership

ISLAMABAD (Online): Former president Asif Ali Zardari is staying in Islamabad now a days.

Sources said Asif Ali Zardari has assigned important task to PPP Punjab leadership after their arrival in Zardari house.

Important tasks have been given to leaders of PPP central, South and North.

PPP leaders informed Asif Zardari about their contacts with influential persons of constituencies and election strategy.

## Two soldiers martyred in Razmak IED attack

RAWALPINDI (Online): Two soldiers martyred in an IED attack on Wednesday in North Waziristan.

According to ISPR, improvised explosive device (IED) exploded on a convoy of security forces in general area Razmak, North Waziristan District.

Resultantly, two soldiers; Lance Naik Ehsan Badshah (age: 33 years, resident of District Karak) and Lance Naik Sajid Hussain (age: 30 years, resident of District Kurram), embraced Shahada.

Sanitization operation is being carried out to eliminate any terrorists present in the area as the security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve.



Caretaker Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik Inaugurating the 14th Biennial Micro Biology Conference at Saleem Habib University Karachi.

## Minister advises students to keep themselves updated about developments in Microbiology

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik on Wednesday said that the Microbiology was revolutionized and it was not the same as it was around 30 or 40 years ago. Therefore all the students should keep themselves updated with regard to the developments taking place in the area of Microbiology, he said while addressing a three-day 14th International Biennial Conference hosted by Pakistan

Society For Microbiology (PSM) in collaboration with Salim Habib University (SHU) on the theme of "Disasters, Epidemic and Public Health Challenges for Microbiology" at SHU here Wednesday. Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik said that the field of Microbiology was developed tremendously, therefore the student should open their eyes and ears to excel in its specific areas.

Speaking about the Conference, he said that one of the objectives of such conferences was to provide

a platform for interaction between the senior and junior colleagues so as to facilitate the collaboration among them.

He said that it was fascinating to see diversity of topics chosen for deliberations in the conference and expressed hope that it would materialize in meaningful collaboration.

The minister highly appreciated the contribution of eminent Microbiologist of Pakistan Prof. Dr. Shahana Urooj Kazmi in the field of Microbiology.

## PMSA commemorates 'World Fisheries Day'

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) marked "World Fisheries Day" with a series of engaging activities aimed at raising awareness about the significance of fisheries among both its personnel and the local community.

Various initiatives were undertaken at Mubarak Village and Keti Bander, including the establishment of welfare and medical camps. These camps provided essential items to support the daily needs of the local fishing community, according to a news release issued here on Wednesday. Moreover, educational lectures were conducted, shedding light on

the importance of "World Fisheries Day" and its relevance in sustaining marine resources. The participation of PMSA officers and relevant staff in these events reflected their enthusiastic engagement and commitment. "World Fisheries Day", recognized by the United Nations (UN), holds paramount importance in highlighting the crucial role of natural elements in our ecosystem. The focus remains on fostering awareness, especially among coastal communities residing along the Pakistan Coast, regarding the significance of preserving and responsibly utilizing fisheries resources.

## SJC issues show cause notice to Justice Naqvi

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) issued a show cause notice to Supreme Court Justice Mazahir Naqvi after three consecutive days of continuous hearing and sought his reply within 14 days.

The meeting of the Supreme Judicial Council was presided over by Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Isa in which the complaints against Justice Mazahir Naqvi were reviewed.

According to the sources, a notice was issued to Justice Mazahir Naqvi in the light of the evidence that came out in the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior Sarfraz Ahmad Bugti chairing a meeting of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on ECL.

## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Devolution debate

As elections approach, there is some talk of 'revisiting' the 18th Constitutional Amendment as well as the NFC award formula. It had been reported in this paper that the PML-N was considering alterations to the 18th Amendment, though the party later claimed no such moves were afoot. In a related development, the prime minister's adviser on finance, while speaking at an event on Monday, said that the current NFC award formula needed to be revisited as it had "held us back".

Both these issues — the 18th Amendment and the NFC award — are interlinked and concern centre-province relations. This is not the first time such observations have been made; during the PTI's rule the then prime minister Imran Khan had made similar comments. The fact is that powerful elements within the establishment and bureaucracy favour a strong centre and do not want the greater devolution the 18th Amendment envisages. However, any rollback of devolution would entail disastrous consequences, foremost of which would be a clash between the provinces and the centre. Neither the 18th Amendment nor the NFC award is scripture, and can, indeed, be altered. But it is not the job of the caretaker administration to suggest or implement changes that would affect the very structure of the federation.

The 18th Amendment, passed in 2010, was adopted by consensus after lengthy deliberations. It restored the federal structure of the 1973 Constitution that had been disfigured by successive dictators, and fulfilled a long-standing demand for provincial empowerment. Therefore, any changes to this law, as well as the NFC formula, can only be carried out by an elected parliament after thorough discussion, and with the agreement of all federating units.

The rationale presented by forces that advocate for increased centralisation is that devolution leaves the centre without adequate finances. This assertion is debatable, for the reason behind Pakistan's financial woes is not devolution, but our financial mismanagement and profligate ways. Nevertheless, there is some substance to the claim that the provinces have failed to deliver. This is certainly the case with post-devolution administrations in Sindh and Balochistan, where indicators such as health and education remain unimpressive. But the answer lies in more capacity-building for the provinces and greater fiscal transparency, and not in rolling back devolution. In fact, for the true fruits of devolution to reach the people, all provinces should politically and financially empower their respective elected local governments. It should be remembered that Pakistan was created by its federating units, and pro-centralisation tendencies, such as the One Unit scheme, have only hurt the federation.

When the next parliament is elected it can discuss ways to improve the 18th Amendment and the NFC award. Bulldozing 'solutions' without democratic input will only damage interprovincial relations.



Mahir Ali

There is a degree of irony — or déjà vu — in recent reports that putative US presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr is losing some support because of his admiration for Israel even as it pursues a genocidal military campaign. Some 55 years ago, his father — who, unlike RFK Jr, had a convincing chance of winning the Democratic primaries and then the White House — was assassinated, purportedly by a Jordanian-Palestinian, Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, enraged by the candidate's pledge, if elected, to send 50 Phantom jet fighters to Israel.

That was in 1968, on the first anniversary of the Six-Day War that dramatically shifted American attitudes towards Israel. Bobby Kennedy was then seen as a progressive candidate. He vowed to pull US troops out of Vietnam, and appeared to sincerely empathise with African Americans still struggling for civil rights as well as the broader victims of poverty engendered by the American way of life.

Whether he might have made a decent president is hard to say, but he would no doubt have been a better option than the Republican nominee, Richard Nixon, whom his elder brother John F. Kennedy had narrowly defeated eight years earlier. There were suggestions the 1960 poll might have been rigged on the margins — JFK even joked about it. But much of that was forgotten when he was assassinated in Dallas 60 years ago today. That tragedy haunted

RFK, who feared that in his role as attorney general in the Kennedy administration, he might have stirred up sufficient resentment in his pursuit of organised crime to provoke a deadly back-lash. There were many other factors, though.

As a candidate, JFK had placed himself on the anti-communist extreme, but as president he turned down the option of providing air cover to the CIA-sponsored invasion of Cuba by anti-Castro exiles, which had been green-lit by the previous Eisenhower administration. In his departing address to the nation, Dwight Eisenhower pointed out the risks posed by the burgeoning military-industrial complex, but the former supreme commander had done little to curtail it. It was his successor who stood up to the generals and the CIA.

JFK accepted responsibility for the 1961 Bay of Pigs disaster, when CIA-trained infiltrators were decisively thwarted by Cuban revolutionary forces. More crucially, he turned down the gung-ho military commanders who advocated an assault on Cuba the following year, when it turned out that the USSR had deployed nuclear-armed missiles on the Caribbean island close to Florida.

Back-channel contacts in which RFK played a key role ascertained that Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev was as reluctant as JFK to risk a nuclear conflagration. Moscow did not hesitate to pull out its warheads as soon as Washington vowed not to invade the island, as well as to withdraw its missiles from Turkey's Soviet border. Thanks in large part to Daniel Ellsberg, we know that Kennedy was well aware of the global toll a nuclear conflagration would entail, and he wasn't prepared to go there. Whether his assassination in Dallas was blowback for any of his policy decisions or predilections remains a mystery. A recent poll sug-

gests that 65 per cent of Americans don't buy the single-gunman theory about the events of Nov 22, 1963.

That's not surprising, given the plethora of contradictory evidence, including the fact that Lee Harvey Oswald never owned up to the deed, and was himself murdered less than 48 hours later by Jack Ruby, a strip-club owner with underworld and FBI connections. In the absence of definitive answers, the unanswered questions keep piling up.

RFK Jr is convinced the CIA had a role in his uncle's assassination. That has never conclusively been proved, even though the sordid nexus between the agency, the mafia and anti-Castro Cuban exiles is reasonably well documented. There are also unresolved discrepancies in the official narratives about the 1968 assassinations of Martin Luther King and RFK, and some members of both families suspect that the actual killers went free. It's worth noting that a couple of those accused of Malcolm X's assassination in 1965 were only recently exonerated.

One of the factors RFK Jr is capitalising on is the visceral distrust of the government that went mainstream not long after his uncle was murdered, and multiplied within a decade with the Pentagon Papers that laid bare the history of deceptions about Vietnam, not to mention Watergate, which followed shortly afterwards. More recently, there was the nonsense about weapons of mass destruction that served as an excuse to invade Iraq — and echoes of that deception resonate through Israel's nonsensical allegations about Gaza's Al Shifa hospital. Distrust of the established order contributed to Donald Trump's triumph in 2016, and may serve him well again next year. RFK Jr is probably helping to pave the way. — Courtesy Dawn

## Climate finance gap



Jamil Ahmad

The upcoming UN Climate Change Conference in Dubai will be tackling tough questions on how to curb rising temperatures, control carbon emission spikes, develop efficient technological solutions, learn from the first Global Stock-take, and agree on a new roadmap to realise the Paris Agreement. Climate finance will be one of the toughest questions.

Globally, efforts to address climate change face a lack of financial resources to support developing nations reach the Climate Convention goals. The efforts are constrained by the absence of sufficient means of implementation, ie, financial resources. Already under debt distress, many developing countries are forced to spend most of their lean budgets on debt servicing, leaving little for sectors such as health and education, and diverting investment from climate action and environmental protection. Constricted fiscal space in these countries relegates the issue of global warming to the back-burner. So, they face serious challenges in combating climate change and expect injections of climate finance from multilateral funding avenues and bilateral donors.

While there's no clear definition of what constitutes climate finance, it is accepted as a concept accommodating different types of financial contributions from a variety of sources and mechanisms. The Green Climate Fund, the Global Environmental Facility, the Adaptation Fund, and other regional and international

financial institutions are set to mobilise and disburse funds. Bilateral arrangements from donors, public and private, supplement these funds. The Loss and Damage Fund, once operationalised, will be the latest addition.

Some of these funding mechanisms are not well-endowed, while others are not replenished in a timely manner to meet the rising needs of climate finance in vulnerable countries. At a time when climate change threatens lives, the inadequacy and inaccessibility of climate finance hinders the Global South from taking urgent action while climate costs rise sharply.

A recent study published in the journal Nature Communications, found that the climate crisis resulted in average global costs of \$143 billion per year for the last 20 years. For the year 2022, which saw multiple climate-induced disasters across the world, the direct cost estimate was \$280bn due to storms, heatwaves, floods, droughts, and wildfires. Pakistan alone suffered a loss of \$40bn in the same year due to heavy floods. The indirect costs of the long-term impact associated with extreme weather events — not considered in the study — would significantly push up these figures.

Vulnerable countries in Africa and Asia, in dire need of climate finance, are left exposed to the disproportionate adverse impacts of global warming, with 2023 being the hottest year recorded. Last year, the United Nations Environment Programme's estimates for adaptation costs were in the range of \$160bn to \$340bn per year by 2030 and \$315bn to \$565bn by 2050 for developing countries. But the financial needs of developing countries for adaptation have now soared to \$215bn to \$387bn by 2030, and projected to rise

significantly by 2050, going by UNEP's 2023 Adaptation Gap Report, released earlier this month.

In the same period, PwC's 2023 State of Climate Tech report reveals that "climate tech investments from venture capital and private equity fell 40 per cent in 2023".

Meanwhile, the financial gap — the difference between allocations by developed countries versus the actual requirement for adaptation — has widened. UNEP's adaptation report put the gap between \$194bn and \$366bn per year. Clearly, the \$100bn pledged by developed countries, and the doubling of "collective provision of climate finance for adaptation" agreed to at the Glasgow Climate Pact in 2021, will be insufficient. To boost climate finance, UNEP's report identifies several innovative ways, including through "increasing and tailoring finance to small and medium enterprises", and "a reform of the global financial architecture, as proposed by the Bridgetown Initiative".

The Global Stock-take report emphasises the scaled-up mobilisation of climate finance for developing countries, while aligning the current financial flows with a pathway towards low-carbon emissions. The Paris Agreement also calls for a New Collective Quantified Goal for 2030 for climate finance. Controlling global warming will be well-nigh impossible without a robust framework that unlocks adequate, timely and accessible climate finance for effective climate action and protection of vulnerable communities by developing nations. Policymakers at COP28 must tackle the central question of climate finance to save the Paris Agreement from falling further behind, and to save lives. — Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News

### Dr Saif says: Plan finalized to transform optical fiber cable network into global digital gateway

ISLAMABAD (INP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Dr Umar Saif on Wednesday said that the government had finalized a plan to transform Pakistan's optical fiber cable network into a global digital gateway.

The implementation of the proposed project would benefit Pakistan by millions of dollars, he disclosed while speaking in a high-level meeting.

The meeting was attended by representatives of key organizations, including Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), Special Communication

Organization, Pakistan Telecommunication Company Ltd (PTCL), TransWorld, and CyberNet. He said that all the necessary resources and facilities had been provided for the digital gateway initiative.

Dr Saif said that the existing optical fiber cable infrastructure, existing from Karachi to Gwadar, could be connected to global marine cables.

It would facilitate digital access to regions spanning the Middle East, Central Asia, China, and Europe at competitive rates, he added.

The minister said that the Special Investment Facilitation Council platform would

also be helpful in the project.

He informed about the ongoing discussions with global entities such as Google and Meta, indicating that soon Pakistanis would hear about positive developments regarding global network connectivity.

At present, Pakistan has nearly 180,000 kilometers of fiber optic cable and 6,000 mobile towers.

With ongoing projects aiming to increase the installation of optical fiber cables to 300,000 kilometers and 20,000 mobile towers, the expansion is poised to enhance connectivity, providing consumers with improved Internet services.

### Railways minister orders achieving revenue target

LAHORE (APP): Railways Minister Shahid Ashraf Tarar has directed the administration to ensure achieving the revenue targets, set for development of the facility.

Presiding over a session at the Railways headquarters here on Wednesday, he praised the administrative efficiency for increase in revenue and number of freight trains. He emphasised expediting completion of processes of outsourcing of railways hospitals.

The minister also provided an update on the project to shift railway installations to solar energy. He instructed to accelerate the process of installing meters by power distribution companies in various railway residential units, including the Mayo Gardens. The minister expressed satisfaction over the ongoing

operation against encroachments and sought a report from all divisions after 15 days to assess the progress and ensure no re-encroachment.

The minister ordered the administration to link the performance of officers with the anti-encroachment activities. He applauded management efficiency in reducing accidents and issued orders to restart complete inspection of tracks in all divisions. Updates were also given on the construction of executive washrooms at railway stations.

In this meeting, Chairman Railway Muzaffar Ali Shah and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Railways Aamer Ali Baloch were present. The minister also conducted a visit to the Royal Palm Country Club, where he received a briefing on the club's operations and other professional matters.



ISLAMABAD: The Dutch Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Henny Fokel de Vries meeting with Minister of Commerce and Industries Dr. Gohar Ejaz.

### Sufficient gas available to meet consumers needs in capital: SNGPL Spokesperson

ISLAMABAD (APP): Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) has sufficient gas to meet the needs of consumers in the capital, said a spokesperson of the SNGPL on Wednesday.

A spokesperson Shahid Akram said that to address the issue of low gas pressure in the Islamabad region, the company is connecting multiple large-diameter pipelines to the

system. He said that regional complaint centres are operating 24/7 to swiftly resolve consumer complaints. He said, that due to the rapid response of these area complaint centres, individual and area complaints have substantially decreased in the region, and valued consumers are enjoying the facility at normal pressures.

He further said that a

"Situation Room" had been established at the regional office I-9 Islamabad for monitoring gas pressures and resolving complaints through dedicated teams.

The spokesperson said that an effective load management strategy has been devised and implemented throughout the region, including Islamabad, Attock, Wah, Taxila, Fateh Jang, Murree, and Kahuta.

### 3-day AGM and conference of PSDE organized by PIDE Panelists deliberate on country's taxation, public debt management policies

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: The economic experts participating in panel discussions on Wednesday highlighted different aspects of the country's existing taxation and public debt management policies and recommended corrective measures to strengthen the national economy on a sustainable basis.

The discussion was held on different topics titled "Is Taxing More the Only Solution?" - "Evaluating Pakistan's Public Debt Management Policies and Practices" - "Growing Pakistan: FDI, Domestic Investment and Foreign Aid" - "Aid and Development in South Punjab", and "Understanding the Economy of South Punjab," a news release said here.

It was 2nd round of a

three-day Annual General Meeting (AGM) and conference of the Pakistan Society of Development Economists (PSDE) on the theme "Breaking the Aid-Debt Chains", organized by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) in collaboration with Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU) at the latter's Jinnah Auditorium in Multan.

The panel discussion on "Is Taxing More the Only Solution?" was moderated by Mahmood Khalid, Senior Research Economist at PIDE and participated by panelists FBR Member Customs, Legal and Accounting Mukarram Jah Ansari, former Member at the Planning Commission Asim Saad, NDU Professor Abdul Jalil and PIDE Se-

nior Research Economist Omer Siddique.

Dr Mahmood Khalid said the current focus on taxing more ignored the burden it imposed, adding "Our complex tax system and regulatory landscape contribute to a high regulatory burden. Pakistan ranks low in ease of paying taxes, discouraging firms from growth and formalization.



PIDE's approach suggests improving the system first

before considering additional taxation."

Mukarram Ansari explained Pakistan's fiscal model, highlighting an annually rising tax collection target given to the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).

"Two-thirds of the collection is from customs and withholding agents. Taxing at the import stage, however, hampers busi-

nesses due to restricted cash flow."

Abdul Jalil criticized Pakistan's projection as a nation of tax evaders, emphasizing the need to build a narrative of growth.

He stressed that tax collection does not cause growth, citing China and India's examples of promoting growth first. Omer Siddique posed the question of whether taxing is a panacea for our ills.

He said that even though taxes created distortions and disincentivized economic activity but were essential. He highlighted PIDE's research on the heavy taxation burden on the retail sector.

For charting a way forward, the FBR Member Customs recommended fixing how FBR worked, separating the regulator from the tax collector.

### SECP bans advertisements promoting illegal investments

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has imposed a ban on advertisements promoting illegal investment schemes on Wednesday.

This follows a recent spate of cases involving fraudulent investment platforms that have fleeced unsuspecting investors of large sums of money.

In a notification issued today, the SECP directed all media outlets to refrain from publishing or broadcasting any advertisements promoting illegal investment schemes.

### AJK PM invites intending entrepreneurs to enjoy investment opportunities

MIRPUR (AJK): (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq, while highlighting the bright investment opportunities in Azad Jammu Kashmir, has said that the government was ready to provide maximum facilities to the intending investors seeking investment of their capital in the region.

Prime Minister Haq made these remarks while talking to CEO Hashu Group Murtaza Hashwani who called on him in the federal metropolis on Wednesday.

Speaking on this occasion, the PM said that the AJK offers massive investment opportunities in different fields including the hydel power generation, tourism, mining sector. He said that steps were being taken to improve the road infrastructure in Azad Kashmir in order to promote tourism.

He said that Azad Kashmir has a lot of potential for tourism and hydel-power generation.

Referring to the investment friendly and peaceful atmosphere in the region, the PM said that the liberated territory was the best place for investment.

## Chief Minister KP says: Cheap energy resources to be developed immediately

PESHAWAR (APP): Secretary, Secretary Energy and other relevant officials attended the meeting. The chief minister issued directives to concerned authorities to prepare an immediate plan to generate maximum power in minimum time. Nature has blessed the province with immense resources that need to be fully utilized, he said.

For this purpose, the Energy Department should work day and night, the caretaker chief minister said, adding, Emergency

foundations need to be worked to make the province self-sufficient in power generation.

The speed of work on the ongoing hydropower projects in the province should be accelerated, he said.

Significant progress in this regard should be ensured in the coming months, the Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa said.

Hydropower plants can not only meet the needs of electricity in the province.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Federal Minister for Human Rights Khaili George meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali.

### Minister for Human Rights calls on KP Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Human Rights Khaili George on Wednesday called on the Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali here at Governor House.

In the meeting, the general situation of the province, especially the situation of human rights, was discussed.

They also discussed all human rights requirements for the honorable return of Afghan refugees from across the country, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

### Shaukat Yousafzai arrested at BKIA

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and former provincial minister Shaukat Yousafzai was offloaded from plane at Bacha Khan International Airport (BKIA) here on Wednesday.

Yousafzai, who previously served as the information minister in both PTI provincial governments, had been in hiding since the riots on 9th May.

### ECP organizes 'Voter Education' seminars

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Following the directives of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), a comprehensive series of seminars on election-related matters has been launched on Wednesday in various girls' colleges across the district.

Commissioner, Zeeshan Khan, emphasized the importance of voting not only for good governance within the country but also for creating awareness about the correct and transparent voter lists.

He informed the participants about the 8300 service, which facilitated citizens in verifying their voter registration status.

Zeeshan Khan provided insights into the functioning and role of the Election Commission of Pakistan, shedding light on the preparations involved in the election process, including voting and result tabulation.

As part of this initiative, a seminar was also organized in Government Girls Degree College Malikpura, drawing significant participation from students.

During the seminar, the students presented reports highlighting the significance of voting in a democratic society. District Election



LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi being briefed about progress on Walton Road and ADA drain remodeling & upgradation, Cavalry underpass and Centrepoint to Walton Road CBD Punjab Quaid District projects.

### Pending salaries of WSSC sanitation workers to be paid soon: CEO

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Sada Hussain Shah, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Water and Sanitation Services Company (WSSC) has said that the funds would soon be released to pay the pending salaries to the sanitation workers.

"It is our priority to pay the pending salaries of these sanitation workers as soon as possible, after which they will end the strike as their only demand for the payment of salaries will be resolved," he said.

Sada Hussain Shah added that the issue of salaries and release of grant has been discussed with the Provincial Secretary of

Local Government during a recent meeting held in Peshawar, we hope that the salaries of the employees will be paid immediately after the grant is provided.

Earlier, sanitation workers and staff of Water and Sanitation Services Company (WSSC) DIKhan announced a complete strike and boycott of work for an indefinite period in protest against non-payment of salaries from the last two months.

The employees of WSSC appealed to the caretaker provincial government to take notice of the non-payment of their salaries for the last two months.

### Four killed, one injured as roof caves in SARGODHA

(APP): Four people, including three girls of a family, were killed and one was injured in a roof collapse incident here on Wednesday.

The Rescue 1122 said the incident occurred at Syduwana village in which Hafza Bibi, 32, Mehnaz Fatima, 7, Minahil Fatima and Hanja Fatima, 3, died on the spot while Saleem, 48, sustained injuries.

The Rescue 1122 reached the spot and shifted the bodies and injured to the DHQ hospital.

### Court extends interim bail of sisters of Imran

LAHORE (Online): Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Lahore has extended interim bail of Aleema Khan and Uzma Khan sisters of chairman PTI in May 9 arson cases.

Judge Arshid Javed of ATC took up for hearing the petitions of Asad Umar and sisters of chairman PTI and others.

Asad Umar and Zareen Qureshi did not appear in the court.

The lawyers of Asad Umar and Zareen Qureshi presented exemption from attendance pleas on their behalf which were accepted by the court. During the hearing of the case the investigation officer said the accused are not joining investigation.

### Kashmir's EU Week to begin in Brussels next month

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Kashmir's EU (European Union) Week is all set to begin in Brussels, the European headquarters early next month under the auspices of Kashmir Council Europe (KC-EU).

The scheduled Kashmir's EU Week will commence from December 05-15 in the European Headquarters Brussels", disclosed Chairman of KC-EU Ali Raza Syed while talking to APP over telephone from Brussels on Wednesday.

The events include seminars, conferences, a media conference, debates and a photo exhibition at European Press Club Brussels and the European parliament. There would also be several meetings

with the European officials, members of European parliament and representatives of civil society and human rights organizations during the Kashmir EU Week starting on December 5 (Tuesday).

Chairman Kashmir Council Europe Ali Raza Syed said, "The week long programs of Kashmir's EU week are being organized by Kashmir Council EU for many years and purpose of such programs is to highlight Kashmir issue including miseries of oppressed Kashmiris and beauty of the Kashmir's culture in Europe."

He said, as currently people in all over the world stood against the state terrorism and atrocities on the common citizens.



LAHORE: Former Senator Waqar Ahmed and Engineer Ameer Muqam meeting with President PML-N Shehbaz Sharif.

### LDA demolishes illegal constructions

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Development Authority (LDA) demolished various constructions during a crackdown on illegal buildings and commercial use of residential buildings in the provincial capital, here on Wednesday.

According to a spokesman for the authority, the operation was launched in Awan Town, Sabzazar, Allama Iqbal Town, Qazi Town and adjacent areas, resulting in demolition of multiple illegal commercial properties.

The LDA teams partially demolished illegal shops in Awan Town, removed shutters of illegal

shops in Qazi Town, and demolished Neelam Ghar [auction house], illegal sheds at plot No. 766H, Sabzazar scheme. In plot No. 14A, Marghar scheme, commercial encroachments were cleared. An illegal showroom was sealed at plot No. 15H/I, Sabzazar scheme. Support nets were removed from plot No. 22D and 58C, Sabzazar scheme. Boards were removed after sealing plot No. 1050 and 1051, Ravi Block, Allama Iqbal Town.

An illegal under-construction restaurant was demolished at plot No. 1, Kamran Block, Allama Iqbal Town.

## International News

### We must think how to stop 'the tragedy' in Ukraine: Putin

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin told the Group of 20 leading economies on Wednesday that it was necessary to think about how to stop "the tragedy" of the war in Ukraine, and said Moscow had never refused to participate in peace talks with Kyiv.

they were shocked by the ongoing "aggression" of Russia in Ukraine. "Yes, of course, military actions are always a tragedy," Putin told the virtual G20 meeting called by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the current chair.

"And of course, we should think about how to stop this tragedy," Putin said. "By the way, Russia has never refused peace talks with Ukraine."

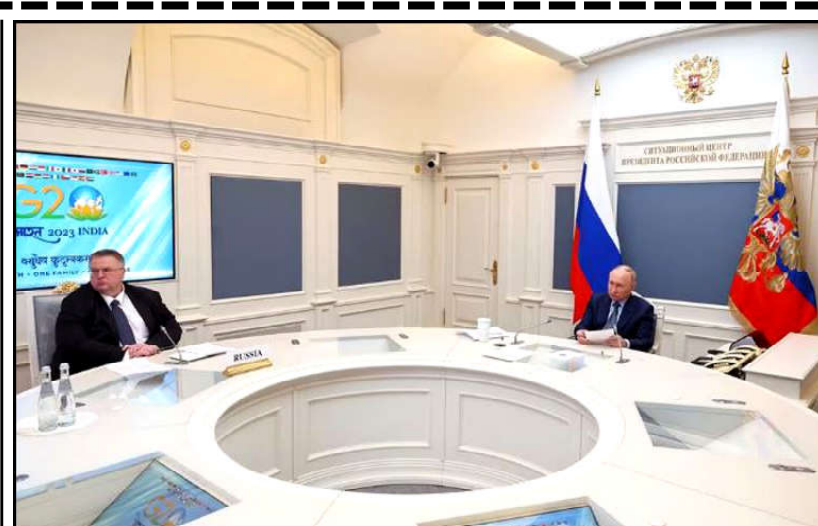
A senior Russian official said on Tuesday that Moscow could not co-exist with the current government in Kyiv and that it would continue what it calls its special military operation to "demilitarise" Ukraine.

Ukraine has vowed to fight until the last Russian

soldier has left its territory, and its Western allies have said they will continue to support Kyiv.

Along with Crimea, which Moscow annexed in 2014, Russia controls nearly a fifth of Ukraine's internationally recognised territory. Putin says that territory is now part of Russia. Ukraine's counter-offensive has failed to make any significant gains this year against well-dug-in Russian forces. Putin skipped previous G20 summits in New Delhi and Nusa Dua, Indonesia, sending Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov instead.

The Russian leader addressed the 2021 and 2020 summits from Moscow. He last attended a G20 gathering in person in Osaka, Japan, in 2019.



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk attend the G20 virtual summit via a video link in Moscow, Russia.

### South Korea boosts surveillance after North launches spy satellite

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: South Korea on Wednesday suspended part of a 2018 military agreement with North Korea after it defied warnings from the United States and launched a spy satellite.

The suspension of a clause in the agreement will see South Korea step up military surveillance along the heavily fortified border with the North.

North Korea said it placed its first spy satellite in orbit on Tuesday. Photographs in state media

showed what appeared to be leader Kim Jong Un watching the fiery launch of a rocket from a base.

Kim was later briefed on the satellite's operations at the control centre of the space agency in Pyongyang and viewed images taken above the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam of U.S. military installations, including the Andersen Air Force Base, the North's KCNA news agency said.

Kim stressed the need for more reconnaissance satellites on different orbits

to give his armed forces "abundant valuable real-time information about the enemy and further promote their responsive posture", it said.

The satellite would begin its reconnaissance mission on Dec. 1, after adjustments, KCNA said.

South Korea's military said North Korea's military reconnaissance satellite was believed to have entered orbit, but it would take time to assess whether it was operating normally.



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un watches conditions of a satellite at a satellite control center in Pyongyang.

### Hundreds of Rohingya come ashore in Indonesia, joining about 1,000 this week

**Monitoring Desk**  
JAKARTA: More than 200 ethnic Rohingya came ashore in Indonesia's Aceh province late on Tuesday, taking total arrivals of members of the Myanmar Muslim minority to more than 1,000 for the week, a leader of the province's fishing community said. During November to April, when the seas are calmer, many members of the persecuted minority leave Myanmar on rickety boats for Thailand, Muslim-majority Bangladesh, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Acehnese fishing community chief Miftach Cut Adek told Reuters that the latest arrivals, 216 mostly of them women and children, "weak and lacking nutrition", had arrived near Sabang, off the northern tip of Sumatra island, late on Tuesday.

### India PM Modi tells G20 Israel-Hamas conflict must not spread

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged leaders of the world's 20 big economies on Wednesday to do whatever necessary to ensure the Israel-Hamas conflict does not expand into a wider conflict as insecurity and instability in West Asia is worrying.

He was speaking at the opening of a virtual summit of G20 nations, of which India holds the presidency before Brazil takes over next month.

Modi hosted the summit to review progress on policy suggestions and

goals announced at the annual G20 summit organised in New Delhi in September, and to determine how to speed up progress towards objectives.

That meeting was overshadowed by Russia's war in Ukraine although members overcame deep divisions over it to produce a consensus document and move forward on issues like overhauling institutions such as the World Bank.

Modi's comments on the Israel-Hamas war came as the two sides agreed a ceasefire in Gaza for at least four days.

### Israel bombing Gaza's south to force exodus: Egypt

**Monitoring Desk**  
DUBAI: Egypt's foreign ministry has said that bombing targeting displaced people in south Gaza has "a clear objective", and that is to force the enclave's residents to leave. "Egypt has clearly declared its utter rejection of any enforced displacement attempt of Palestinians," the ministry's spokesman posted on the social media messaging platform X. He also said Egypt has drafted a new resolution to be submitted to the Security Council by the Arab and Islamic groups to deal with existing obstacles and imbalances of humanitarian aid entry to Gaza.

### Japanese political party visits China to bolster frayed ties

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: The junior coalition partner of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) sent a delegation to Beijing on a trip delayed from the summer amid strains between Asia's two largest economies. A Komeito party delegation led by Natsuo Yamaguchi on Wednesday met with Cai Qi, head of the powerful Secretariat of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee that oversees day-to-day affairs of the CPC.

The ruling parties of both countries should "accurately grasp each other's development and strategic

intentions," Chinese state media quoted Cai as telling the Japanese delegation.

Both sides should work together to promote "positive" and "friendly" mutual understanding, said Cai, also the five-ranked member of the CPC's seven-person Politburo Standing Committee, the highest tier of political power in China helmed by President Xi Jinping. The visit came on the heels of rare face-to-face talks between Xi and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, also LDP's leader, on the sidelines of an Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit.



Pope Francis meets with Palestinians whose relatives are stranded in Gaza, amid conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas, at the Vatican.

### UN peacekeepers no 'magic wand' for crises, their chief says

**Monitoring Desk**  
UNITED NATIONS: The presence of United Nations peacekeepers, whose shortcomings can frustrate local populations, is not a "magic wand" for conflict zones, said their leader Jean-Pierre Lacroix, who supports an expanded tool kit to protect civilians in increasingly complex territory.

From Lebanon to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), from South Sudan to the Western Sahara, some 90,000 so-called Blue Helmets serve under the UN flag, engaged in 12 separate operations.

These missions do not always meet with unani-

mous approval on the ground, as in Mali, where UN peacekeepers have been forced by the government to leave, or in the DRC where some inhabitants have expressed hostility.

Yet the peacekeepers protect "hundreds of thousands of civilians" daily, Lacroix, the UN under-secretary-general for peace operations, told AFP in an interview.

Sometimes such protection mandates "raise expectations that we cannot meet, because of the capacities that we have, because of the budget that we have, because of the terrain and the logistical constraint."

## Dr. Nadeem Jan meets British Minister of State for Health

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Health, Dr Nadeem Jan on Wednesday met British Minister of State for Health, Andrew Stephenson to discuss further bolstering cooperation in the health sector between the two countries. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, bilateral relations and increasing cooperation in various fields of health were discussed. Dr. Nadeem Jan appreciated continued support from the British government in diverse areas of the health sector in Pakistan.

The British Health Minister appreciated Pakistan's position in the nutrition sector. "We will continue the malnutrition program as per our vision. Apart from supplying nutritional supplements, we will also set up plants in Pakistan." Dr Nadeem Jan shared a partnership with the Kirk Foundation and Junaid Family Foundation. It has been agreed to build this plant in Pakistan through the transfer of technology. "With this initiative, we will not only be able to

fulfil our needs, but we can also export them to the world," He added.

Dr. Nadeem Jan extended an invitation to his counterpart to participate in the Global Health Security Summit being held on January 10-11 in Islamabad in which top health leadership and delegations from different countries will participate.

The minister said we would welcome if the British Government considered to co-host this historic summit. The British Health Minister expressed his happiness and said that he would respond to the offer soon.

Appreciating Pakistan's health security agenda, the British Health Minister ensured his full cooperation on the security agenda.

Dr. Nadeem Jan said reforms are being undertaken on a large scale in the health sector of Pakistan.

He said, "Universal Health Coverage is our top agenda. Concerted steps are underway to ensure universal health coverage."

He said that 500 basic health units across the country will be upgraded within two months.



RIYADH: SAPM, Jawad Sohrab Malik signs Letter of Intent (LOI) with Saudi based Global Conglomerate, Al-Bawani Holdings.

## PPP's manifesto centered on people's prosperity: Yusuf Raza

MULTAN (APP): Former Prime Minister and Central Senior Vice Chairman Pakistan People Party Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani here on Wednesday emphasized the Party's commitment to a level playing field for all, urging the Election Commission to ensure fair and transparent elections.

Highlighting PPP's dedication to democracy, Gilani asserted that individuals with a criminal background should be ineligible for elections. He announced the Party's determination to contest elections nationwide, particularly focusing on southern Punjab, aiming to address the country's crises through the power of the people. "PPP's manifesto is centered on prosperity for the people, ensuring

workers' rights, and prioritizing the development of the business community and industry," he stated.

He was addressing a Party meeting in anticipation of the PPP's Founding Day on November 30 in Quetta, where leaders and workers from across the country will renew their commitment to democratic values. The meeting also reviewed organizational performance and discussed election strategies.

Makhdoom Syed Ahmed Mehmood, former Governor Punjab and President PPP South Punjab, echoed Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's vision to transform political discourse by focusing on people's problems and solutions as it aimed to eradicate enmity in politics.

## Emirates world's first airline to operate A380 demonstration flight

**Independent Report** KARACHI: Emirates has become the world's first airline to operate an A380 demonstration flight using 100% Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF). Today's flight, proudly commanded by Captain Khalid Binsultan and Captain Philippe Lombet, took off from Dubai International Airport (DXB) with one of four engines powered on 100% SAF, helping demonstrate its potential as a drop-in replacement that matches jet fuel's technical and chemical requirements, while being a more sustainable alternative.

SAF can reduce carbon emissions by up to 85% over the fuel's life cycle when compared to conventional jet fuel.

The Emirates A380 demonstration flight comes as the aviation industry, international organisations, regulatory bodies and high-level officials driving policy-related decisions converge in Dubai for the Third International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Conference on Aviation and Alternative Fuels (CAAF/3). Dedicated collaborators from Airbus, Engine Alliance, Pratt & Whitney, Neste, Virent and ENOC have been working on the testing, technical assessments and data analysis for today's flight.

The 100% drop-in SAF used on today's flight includes renewable aromatics and closely mimics the characteristics of conventional jet fuel. This is the first time that drop-in SAF has been used on an A380 aircraft, with the expectation of full compatibility across the aircraft's existing systems.



LARKANA: Members of Young Doctors Association (YDA) are holding protest demonstration for demanding immediate release of their five-month house job salaries, outside the Administration Block of Chandka Medical Hospital in Larkana.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the Zameendar Action Committee of Balochistan called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

## Govt announces reduced Hajj expenses, enhanced facilities for pilgrims

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Dr. Aneeq Ahmed on Wednesday declared a significant reduction of 0.1 million rupees in government Hajj expenses while ensuring uncompromised facilities.

Notably, the pilgrims will receive a 30kg suitcase each and female pilgrims will receive scarves (Abaya) featuring the national flag, a first-time provision.

During a news conference at the Hajj Camp Karachi, Dr. Ahmed highlighted the introduction of a mobile application aimed at aiding pilgrims. This app will offer navigation assistance and keep pilgrims in constant contact with relevant officials. Initially available in English and Urdu, the app will later include various regional languages. Emphasizing improvements in the Hajj process, Dr. Ahmed revealed that Islamabad and Karachi

have been incorporated into Saudi Arabia's Road to Makkah project. This inclusion allows Karachi airport to complete the immigration process for Hujjaj, streamlining their journey. Moreover, the government has introduced a 20-day short Hajj package, striving to make Hajj more financially accessible to citizens. Efforts are underway to ensure Pakistani Hujjaj are accommodated in tents at Old Mina, as the distance

to New Mina poses challenges for pilgrims. Highlighting the allocation of Hajj seats, Dr. Ahmed mentioned that Pakistan has secured 179,000 Hajj seats, with half reserved for private Hajj operators. The Ministry of Religious Affairs will oversee these operators to guarantee the well-being of pilgrims, holding the ministry responsible for any issues faced by those performing Hajj through private operators.

## President approves conferment of Nishan-e-Pak on Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has accorded his approval to conferment of country's highest civil award Nishan-e-Pakistan on Dr Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin.

Dr Mufaddal Saifuddin is the 53rd Da'i al-Mutlaq and head of Mumbai-based Dawoodi Bohras, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release on Wednesday.

The president approved the conferment of civil award under Article 259 (2) of the Constitution and the Decorations Act 1975.

## PM to represent Pakistan in COP-28 high-level segment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar will represent Pakistan during the high level segment of 28th Conference of Parties (COP-28) being held in the United Arab Emirates on December 01-02.

The prime minister chaired an inter-provincial review meeting with regard to the COP-28. The meeting was attended by the caretaker federal ministers for finance, foreign affairs, climate change and planning, and relevant officials, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

PM Kakar said that climate change was an issue of national endurance for the countries like Pakistan and observed that Pakistan was playing a positive role in the global climate debate through climate diplomacy.

He said that despite its less than one percent imprints in the global climate change factors, Pakistan was amongst the countries hugely affected by the changes.

One third of the country's population was badly affected by the climate induced floods, he added.

## Pakistan signs LOI with KSA to boost employment opportunities for Pakistani workers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Jawad Sohrab Malik signed Letter of Intent (LOI) with Saudi Based Global Conglomerate Al-Bawani Holdings to Boost Employment Opportunities for Pakistani Workforce in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).

Jawad Sohrab Malik undertook a visit to the renowned headquarters of the Al-Bawani

holdings in Riyadh. Upon arrival, he received a warm welcome from Engr. Fakher Al-Shawaf, CEO and Chairman of Al Bawani Holdings. The SAPM was accompanied by key dignitaries, including HE Ambassador Ahmad Farooq, Community Welfare Attache, DG Emigration Akram Khawaja and Joint Secretary Emigration Aurangzeb, said a press release received here on Wednesday.

Al-Bawani Holdings, a diversified Saudi conglomerate, holds a substantial position among the top five general contracting entities in the construction sector. With an impressive portfolio of completing and delivering around 250 projects in Saudi Arabia, the company is presently engaged with world wide projects valued at billions of dollars. During the visit, SAPM Malik received a comprehensive briefing on Al Bawani's ongoing projects.



ISLAMABAD: Peoples Party (PPP) President, Asif Ali Zardari exchanging views with a PPP delegation from Punjab during meeting held in Islamabad.

## Heavy machines fall on miners, kills three at Lakhra

**Independent Report** JAMSHORO: Three miners died and five suffered injuries in different accidents while busy working in coalmines in Lakhra area, 11 kilometres from Jamshoro, the other day.

A heavy stone-cutting machine collapsed over six labourers during the process of digging out coal from a mine. The other workers rushed to rescue their colleagues and retrieved all labourers from under the machine, said sources.

Three escaped unharmed while 20-year-old Najeebullah, Farhad Rahim and Abdul Razzak suffered

injuries. Later, Najeebullah and Farhad died on their way to a government health facility in Khanoth, and Razzak was admitted for treatment.

In the other incident, labourers Haji Khan, Khan and Mohammad were injured when a generator collapsed on them during work at a mine.

They were also taken to Khanot hospital where Haji Khan died due to lack of required facilities and staff. Another accident occurred on 16 Nov; at PMDC Sharagh one miner Mr. Shakir died due to fall of mines.

## US has no favourite in Pakistan for political office: Miller

WASHINGTON (INP): United States (US) does not favour anyone for political office in Pakistan, said Mathew Miller, the spokesman for the US State Department said Tuesday.

"We do not take a position — a position on candidates for political office in Pakistan or any other country," he said while addressing a press briefing in Washington.

Miller confirmed millions of dollars in aid for the security forces in Balochistan. He detailed recent reports of aid packages for security forces in Balochistan so they could "serve" their community.

"We're going to provide \$4 million in assistance to expand the anti-terrorist force training facility — \$2 million to repair or replace 10 flood-damaged police stations; 2 million to construct 10 new police stations that incorporate the same model to improve service to women, girls, and all Pakistanis; and an additional \$250,000 in equipment to protect law enforcement officers in the course of conducting their work," Miller said. Commenting on the Afghan refugee issues, Miller said that the US government was in constant touch with Pakistan over the matter of return of Afghan refugees.

## Pak, Denmark agree to further enhance coop. in multiple fields

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Denmark, expressing satisfaction at the positive trajectory of bilateral relations, agreed to further enhance cooperation between the two countries in various fields.

The bilateral ties were discussed in the Third Round of Pakistan-Denmark Annual Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) held in Copenhagen, according to a press release on Wednesday.

Additional Secretary (Europe), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Shafiqat Ali Khan, and Denmark's Under Secretary for Foreign Policy Ambassador Anders Tang Friborg led their respective sides. Both sides extensively reviewed the entire ambit of bilateral relations covering political relations, trade, climate change.

## Man killed in Bajaur blast

PESHAWAR (APP): A man was killed when his vehicle was targeted with an improvised explosive device (IED) in Peshtoo area of Tehsil, Khar in Bajaur district on Wednesday morning.

The police said a powerful blast totally destroyed the vehicle and a man, whose identity could not be ascertained, was killed.

The police collected evidence from the scene and started investigation into the incident.

## IHC summons care taker PM, ministers in the case of non recovery of Baloch students

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has ordered care taker Prime Minister (PM) Anwar ul Haq Kakar, defence minister, interior minister, defence secretary and interior secretary to appear before it on next hearing in preparation of Baloch enforced disappearance commission recommendations case.

The court remarked during hearing of the case "according to recommendations of commission 55 missing Baloch students be presented otherwise care taker PM should appear before it."

Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani remarked "today there is 21st hearing of the case. Earlier the case was with Justice Athar Minallah who was chief justice. Commission was constituted under the order of court. Questions were presented in it. Enforced disappearance case was forwarded to federal government. Not only one but it was matter of 51 students."

He said matter was sent to PM. PM himself should have realized. We thought he would come and say they were our children. Had there been criminal case against them then they would have registered the case. Read the report which has been presented to us.

The court summoned Caretaker PM on November 29 on non recovery of Baloch students.

Additional Attorney General (AAG) Munawar Iqbal Dogal appeared in the court.

The court remarked "we tell you first of all what is this case so that situation becomes clear."

Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani remarked today is its 21st hearing. Earlier Justice Athar Minallah was chief justice. This case was with him.

Munawar Iqbal Dogal said the respective ministry sees it whatever the matter is or it is sent to sub committee.

Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani remarked the court has to do its job. It has to ensure its implementation. We are standing at the same place today on the occasion of its 21st hearing. We thought things would change slowly and people would return.

The court remarked it was and is responsibility of the state that state should have said people are in their homes now. We have been seeing this since the last several years.

IHC while rejecting ministers committee report set up for recovery of missing persons remarked we will issue notice to caretaker PM.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed addressing a news conference at Haji Camp.

## Shehbaz Sharif says Getting rid masses of inflation, other crises PML-N's top priority

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President and former prime minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has said that helping the masses to get rid of the inflation was top priority of his party.

He stated this while talking to former Senator Waqar Ahmed and President of PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Engr Amir Muqam who called on him in Lahore on Wednesday and congratulated Shehbaz for his acquittal in the Ashiana Iqbal reference.

Speaking on the occasion, Shehbaz Sharif thanked former Senator Waqar Ahmed and Engr Amir Muqam and discussed with them the overall situation of the country and preparations for general

elections. The PML-N President said that under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif, his party has always lived up to the trust and expectations of the nation. He said that political stability and collective efforts were needed for economic self-reliance and saving the people from confronting challenges was top priority of his party.

He further stated that saving Pakistan and its people from the economic crisis was a national agenda, Pakistan's economic interests require political stability to counter these crises.

Former Senator Waqar Ahmed also appreciated Shehbaz Sharif's efforts to save Pakistan from default during his 16 months as Prime Minister.



LONDON: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Dr. Nadeem Jan met with the British Minister of State for Health, Andrew Stephenson.

## Sirajul Haq says Former govts failed to reinstate student unions depriving students of rights

PESHAWAR (INP): Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Sirajul Haq has said that former governments failed to fulfill their promises of reinstating student unions, thereby depriving students of their rights.

Addressing a convention on student rights at Peshawar University on Wednesday, he highlighted the lack of understanding among rulers regarding the challenges in the education sector, pointing out that their own children study abroad.

Sirajul Haq pledged that, if JI came into power, it would allocate seven percent of the GDP to education, making girls' education compulsory. He said the JI would restore student unions. He criticized the previous administrations for neglecting the education of over 25 million children,

attributing this to the gift of poverty left by the ruling elite.

Emphasizing that children's education had never been a priority for past governments, he promised education for all, the establishment of women's universities in each division and significant investment in higher education.

The JI leader accused the rulers of being agents of the US, alleging their desire to ascend to power with American backing. He criticized mainstream parties, such as the PPP and the PML-N, for being in power for decades and damaging the country's economy and ideology. He expressed skepticism about their promises in the upcoming elections, urging the people of Pakistan to reject the ruling elite, feudal lords, and vote for capable leadership, which, he claimed.