

# Independent

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Quetta

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## Pakistan, UAE reaffirm resolve to further strengthen economic, strategic cooperation

**PM Kakar expresses profound gratitude for the UAE's firm support to Pakistan in the economic and financial domain; Terms the signing of MoUs as a historic event that will usher in a new era of Pak-UAE economic partnership; Pakistan's support for a just and durable solution to the Palestinian question anchored in international law and in line with relevant United Nations and OIC resolutions.**

ABU DHABI (APP): Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates on Monday reaffirmed their resolve to further strengthen economic and strategic cooperation.

This reaffirmation was expressed during a meeting between Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and the UAE President, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan here.

Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) was also present on the occasion.

The two leaders under-

lined that Pakistan and the UAE had historic and deep-rooted fraternal ties which had stood the test of time.

They also witnessed the signing of Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) between Pakistan and the UAE pertaining to investment cooperation in the sectors of energy, port operations, waste water treatment, food security, logistics, minerals, and banking and financial services.

The MoUs will unlock multi-billion dollars of investment from the United Arab Emirates into Pakistan and will help realize various initiatives envisioned under the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC). The prime minister termed the signing of MoUs as a historic event that will usher in a new era of Pak-UAE economic partnership.

During the meeting, Prime Minister Kakar expressed profound gratitude for the UAE's firm support

vestment from the United Arab Emirates into Pakistan and will help realize various initiatives envisioned under the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC). The prime minister termed the signing of MoUs as a historic event that will usher in a new era of Pak-UAE economic partnership.

During the meeting, Prime Minister Kakar expressed profound gratitude for the UAE's firm support

Continued on page 2



RAWALPINDI: Lieutenant General Fahd bin Abdullah Al-Mutair, Commander of the Royal Saudi Land Forces (RSLF) called on General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ.

## Avenfield, Al-Azizia reference case hearing adjourned till Nov 29

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice Islamabad High Court (IHC) Aamir Farooq remarked that the charge was not properly framed and NAB did not know what the evidence was.

Did National Accountability Court (NAB) try to prove that Maryam Nawaz is the beneficial owner?

The hearing of former prime minister and PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif's appeals against conviction in the Avenfield and Al-Azizia references has been adjourned till November 29.

Justice Mian Gul Hasan said during the hearing that show the portion of the judgment where the reference was ordered to be filed, they want to see what the Supreme Court (SC) had ordered to NAB.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice IHC Justice Aamir Farooq and

Justice Mian Gul Aurangzeb inquired that the facts before the references are very important. Where are the TORs of the JIT? Advocate Amjad Pervez said that a full investigation is needed on the said matter. A 5-member

Continued on page 2



QUETTA: Managing Director OGDCL Ahmed Hayat presenting a souvenir to Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan

## Special polio immunization drive begins in 33 districts of Balochistan province

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The special polio immunization campaign commenced in 33 districts of Balochistan province on Monday.

According to the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) for Polio Eradication, the polio campaign was already launched in other three polio high risk districts including Quetta, Pishin and Killa Abdullah.

Needless to mention here is that the anti-polio campaign is already continued in the polio high risk districts of the province.

The EOC sources said that it was the third day of campaign conducted in Quetta, Pishin and Killa Abdullah.

The anti-polio campaign was started in these districts on November 24, 2023.

According to EOC, it has been targeted to vaccinate over 2.5 million children below five years of age during the campaign being run all over the province.

More than 1100 teams have been formed to vaccinate the children during the campaign.

## Pakistan, UAE sign MoUs worth multi-billion dollars

ABU DHABI (APP): Pakistan and United Arab Emirates (UAE) signed several multi-billion dollars Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) in a range of areas here on Monday to boost economic and strategic cooperation between the two countries, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said in a video message.

The prime minister, who is on a two-day visit to the UAE, said with the signing of the MoUs, the bilateral economic and strategic relations had entered into a new era of bilateral cooperation.

Congratulating the people of Pakistan and the UAE, he said foundation of friendship with Pakistan that was laid by Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan in the 1970s, had been taken forward by his son Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to a new era.

Pakistan's Army Chief General Asim Munir and the federal ministers were present on the occasion while on the other side, all the important ministers of UAE were also present.

He expressed the hope that the MoUs that were signed by the two countries would turn into tangible projects very soon.

## Suicide bomber hits security forces' convoy in Bannu

RAWALPINDI (APP): Two innocent civilians have embraced martyrdom while three soldiers of Pakistan Army along with seven civilians got injured after a motorbike-borne suicide bomber hit the security forces convoy in Bakka Khel area of Bannu District.

According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, on November 26, a motorcycle borne suicide bomber, affiliated with Hafiz Gul Bahadur Group and later identified as an Afghan national, exploded himself on a security forces' convoy in general area Bakka Khel, Bannu District.

Sanitization operation was being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area.



ABU DHABI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar meeting with President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan

## Implementation on jobs' quota must be ensured: Governor emphasizes on launching comprehensive program to resolve issues of persons with disabilities

**Says persons with disabilities can equally play vital role for betterment of society using modern science & technology**

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has underlined the need to launch a comprehensive programme to highlight and resolve the issues of persons with disabilities (PWDs).

He also emphasized upon implementing the quota allocated for the disabled persons in the provincial and federal government departments.

The Governor was of the strong view that the persons with physical disabilities can also play important role for betterment of the society using modern science and technology.

He was speaking to a delegation of Coalition for Inclusive Pakistan Balochistan chapter who called on him under leadership of Ms. Sadaf Ajmal here at the Governor House on Monday.

During the course of

meeting, the matters were discussed about allocated quota for disabled persons in government jobs, subsidy for them in educational fees, provision of medical facilities to them, making the transgenders useful citizens of the society, facilitation in preparation of national identity cards and disabled certificates besides other matters.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor referred to the disabled persons and said that they are disabled, but not destitute at all.

He stressed the need to launch comprehensive programme at the provincial level to project and resolve the issues being faced by disabled persons.

He gave patient hearing to their issues and assured that these would be presented to the concerned federal and provincial government departments in written for their sustainable resolution.



QUETTA: A delegation of Coalition for Inclusive Pakistan Balochistan chapter led by Ms. Sadaf Ajmal meeting with Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

## 190m pound scandal: Imran Khan's further physical remand rejected

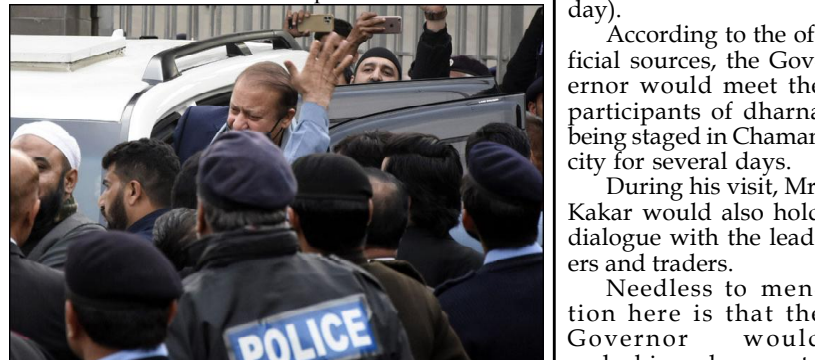
RAWALPINDI (Online): Judge Muhammad Bashir of the Special Accountability Court of Islamabad rejected request for further physical remand of the chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in the £190 million pound scandal.

Court sent Imran Khan to jail on judicial remand.

After the physical remand ended, the NAB officials requested for more physical remand, which was rejected by the court.

Chairman PTI's lawyer Sardar Latif Khosa, his wife Bushra Bibi, sisters Aleema Khan and Uzma Khan, besides NAB prosecutor were also present at the hearing yesterday (Monday).

On the occasion of the hearing, the situation outside the Adiala Jail became tense when the citizens outside the jail surrounded the vehicle of Bushra Bibi, (former first lady) and chanted slogans against the PTI Chairman.



ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister and leader of PML-N Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif leaving after his hearing at Islamabad High Court in Federal Capital.

## Dec 12 last date for Applications for Hajj 2024

ISLAMABAD (Online): The application process for Hajj 2024 under government scheme has been started. According to spokesperson of Ministry of Religious Affairs, the collection of Hajj application in 15 designated banks under official Hajj scheme will continue till December 12.

According to announcement of Ministry of Religious Affairs, almost 89605 Pakistanis will perform Hajj under government scheme next year.

In case of receiving more than prescribed number of applications, lucky draw will be held. Women will be able to perform Hajj without Maharram for the first time.

According to spokesperson, applications can be submitted on valid Pakistani passport till December 16, 2024. Hajj applications can also be processed on passport apply token.

Spokesperson of Ministry of Religious Affairs said that quota of 25000 has been allocated under sponsorship scheme.

## Pak deeply values its strategic and brotherly ties with KSA, says COAS

**Saudi Commander, Army Chief discuss matters of defence cooperation, military training; lieutenant General Fahd bin Abdullah Al-Mutair appreciates Pakistan Army's role in fighting menace of terrorism**

RAWALPINDI (APP): The COAS thanked the dignity and said that, "Pakistan deeply values its strategic and brotherly ties with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia."

Earlier on arrival at GHQ, a smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Army presented the guard of honour to the visiting dignity.

Meanwhile Lieutenant General Fahd Bin Abdullah Muhammad Al Mutair, Commander of the Royal Saudi Land Forces called on General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, at Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi today. During the meeting, both sides deliberated upon various areas of mutual interest, bilateral cooperation including defence and security.

The visiting dignity appreciated Pakistan Army's role in fighting the menace of terrorism and paid tributes to the sacrifices made in bringing peace to the region.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's High Commissioner-designate to Nigeria, Major General (ret'd) Sohail Ahmad Khan, called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## President for enhanced trade, cultural ties with Nigeria

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday called for further improving trade, economic and cultural cooperation with Nigeria, besides increasing the bilateral trade volume for the mutual benefit of the two countries.

The president expressed these views while talking to Pakistan's High Commissioner-designate to Nigeria, Major General (ret'd) Sohail Ahmad Khan, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

Talking to the high-commissioner designate, the president said that Nigeria was the largest economy in Africa, and Pakistan should explore opportunities for advancing

relations with it. He opined that economic diplomacy was the cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy and Pakistan attached great importance to its relations with Nigeria, especially in the field of economy.

President Alvi asked the newly appointed high commissioner to work for promoting cultural linkages and people-to-people contacts to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the two countries.

He also congratulated Major General (ret'd) Sohail Ahmad Khan on his appointment and expressed the hope that he would work to further enhance bilateral ties with Nigeria in all domains of mutual interest.



QUETTA: Caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai meeting with Inspector General of Police Balochistan Abdul Khaliq Sheikh

## Preparations finalized to observe PPP's 56th foundation day

QUETTA (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) is set to observe its 56th Yume-e-Tasees (Foundation Day) in Quetta on Thursday (November 30) for which the leadership and workers of the Balochistan Chapter finalized the preparations.

"The main function will be held in Quetta for the first time, where Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and other party leadership will address a grand rally," party sources told APP here on Monday.

They said that the Chairman PPP has directed all party leadership and workers to observe the Foundation Day enthusiastically by organizing public meetings across the country.

It is pertinent to mention here that Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto founded the Pakistan Peoples Party on November 30, 1967.

Seeing the manifesto of Quaid-e-Awam, people belonging to different classes including landlords, capitalists and chiefs joined the party, but the reality is that the PPP emerged primarily as a party of the exploited poor, labourers, farmers and students. The down-trodden class, which suffered from crushing deprivations, got consciousness and language to speak for themselves. Those with bare feet and torn clothes got the courage and strength so much so that for the first time in the political history of Pakistan, there were slogans of "Death to Capitalism" in the rallies.

## 190m pound scandal investigation's inside story emerges

ISLAMABAD (Online) The inside story regarding the investigation of the 190 million pound scandal between former Prime Minister and Tehreek-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan and the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) team has come to light.

Not only did Imran Khan behave threateningly in front of the NAB investigation teams, but he kept claiming to come out soon and become the prime minister again.

He answered most of the questions related to Al-Qadir Trust and the 190 million pound scandal. I don't remember now, he kept insisting on that to "call my lawyers", he kept threatening NAB directly, all his answers were recorded.

Sources said that on the occasion of the investigation of the 190 million pounds scandal, the Adiala Jail authorities have allocated a separate room. Chairman PTI was seated on a chair in front of the investigation team.

Sources said that former Prime Minister Imran Khan did not cooperate with the

NAB teams during the four-day investigation and his attitude was very arrogant during the investigation. Several questions were also asked about this scandal, but the former prime minister often avoided answering the questions and kept demanding questions and answers in the presence of his lawyers.

Sources said that the former prime minister kept calling it a big project of spirituality and Sufism on questions related to Al-Qadir Trust, he gave a long speech in response to every question and mentioning reprisals.

According to the sources, Chairman Tehreek-e-Insaf put all the debris related to 190 million pounds on Shahzad Akbar and a former military official, saying that on the occasion of the investigation of the 190 million pounds scandal, the Adiala Jail authorities have allocated a separate room.

Chairman Tehreek-e-Insaf complained that the cabinet had approved the entire agreement, but now they all backed out, however, the NAB team at that

time presented the minutes of the cabinet meeting, on which the former prime minister said that as the prime minister, I am not responsible for this whole issue. I was not solely responsible for the decision it was of cabinet as collective.

During the investigation, Chairman PTI also admitted to making many wrong decisions.

Sources said that NAB has been carrying all the record documents of the two cases along with the minutes of the past meetings.

On the other hand, investigative sources said that PTI chairman still considers himself as the prime minister, when he was shown the documents related to the scandal, he would say, "I don't remember", he would ask the names of the members of the investigation team and then threaten that soon he will get out of here and will see you all.

All the things they said during the investigation have been recorded which will be presented at the appropriate forum.



**KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister, Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar and Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, Chief Dawoodi Bohra Jamat inaugurating the New Building of School of Law held at Karachi University**

### Pakistan, UAE reaffirm...

*Continued from page 1* Pakistan in the economic and financial domain.

The UAE is home to 1.8 million Pakistanis, contributing to the progress, prosperity and economic development of the two brotherly countries.

Regional and global developments were also discussed during the meeting with particular reference to the deteriorating human rights and humanitarian situation in occupied Palestine.

The prime minister ex-

pressed Pakistan's support for a just and durable solution to the Palestinian question anchored in international law and in line with relevant United Nations and OIC resolutions.

The prime minister reiterated Pakistan's full support to the UAE's Presidency for COP 28, underlining its importance as an opportunity for meaningful progress towards effective and result-oriented global actions in key areas to mitigate climate impact including establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund.

### Avenfield, Al-Azizia....

*Continued from page 1* JIT was formed On May 5, 2017. The Supreme Court formed the JIT to assist.

Amjad Pervaiz in his arguments said that the JIT submitted the report on 10 July 2017 which consisted of 12 volumes.

After that, the parties were called for arguments. The lawyer further said that the final order of Panama was issued on July 28, 2017 according to which Nawaz Sharif was disqualified.

The court inquired as to what orders the Supreme Court had clearly issued. Did the Supreme Court issue orders to Chairman NAB?

Lawyer Amjad Pervez said that the accountability court was directed to decide on the reference in 6 months. NAB could have filed a supplementary reference when new evidence came to light, all three references were filed on the same day.

In July, the Supreme Court pronounced the verdict in the Panama case, while the NAB references were filed in September. On October 2017, the accused were charged in all three references. Later, the references were tried separately. However, we were not given a copy of Volume 10 by the prosecution. None of the documents from Volume 10 were brought on record. However, some questions were definitely answered during the cross-examination.

Nawaz Sharif's lawyer said that Chairman NAB sent the matter to DG NAB Lahore for investigation. We asked NAB why they are investigating after the verdict. This statement is in writing.

NAB filed the

### Court declares IPP leader Ali Zaidi as PO

KARACHI (Online): City Court Karachi has declared Istehkam-e-Pakistan (IPP) Leader Ali Zaidi as proclaimed offender.

The hearing was held on matter of mading escape of Hassan Niazi who was brought before city court.

Court declared Ali Zaidi proclaimed offender.

Court ordered to display sketches of Ali Zaidi and asked investigating officer for details of moveable and immovable property of accused. The other Court has set date December 9 for indicting Haleem Adil Sheikh.

### IMF technical delegation lands in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (Online): International Monetary Fund (IMF) technical delegation has arrived Pakistan to discuss policies with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for the sale of products.

Delegation will dialogue with FBR to tax policy to increase tax net and tax collections for a week, sources.

FBR and IMF technical delegation will take steps for amendments in the tax policy, the purpose of the amendments in the tax policy will be to widen the tax net and collect more revenue. Sources further said that the number of taxpayers will be increased to 60 lakhs by bringing 1 million more people into the tax net, the amendments that will be made in the tax policy along with the technical delegation will be implemented in the next budget.

Avonfield reference on September 8.

Justice Mian Gul Hasan Aurangzeb said that Nawaz Sharif was acquitted in a reference.

On this occasion, the prosecutor NAB said that the accountability court had acquitted Nawaz Sharif in the flagship.

The court asked the prosecutor NAB whether NAB has filed an appeal against the acquittal. To which he replied that the appeal has been filed but no notice has been given and the appeal is not scheduled for hearing today.

Amjad Parvez said that Judge Muhammad Bashir had given a decision on one reference while requested to transfer other references to another court. Judge Muhammad Bashir himself excused himself from hearing the case.

During the case, Chief Justice Amir Farooq remarked that the charge was not properly framed and the NAB did not know what the evidence was. Did NAB try to prove that Maryam Nawaz is the beneficial owner? In response to which the lawyer said that NAB has definitely made this effort but has not presented any evidence in favor of this allegation.

Later, the court adjourned further hearing till November 29.

Earlier, on the occasion of the appearance of PML-N leader, strict security measures have been taken around the Islamabad High Court. Heavy personnel including women personnel are performing security duties. In addition to 541 personnel of Islamabad Police, FC personnel are present when That Rangers personnel are also posted at the Islamabad High Court building.

### Pakistan, Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwaiti joint military exercise concluded: ISPR

RAWALPINDI (Online): Two weeks long multinational joint counter terrorism exercise Fajar Al Sharq-V was conducted at National Counter Terrorism Centre, Pabbi with participation of Special Forces contingents from the brotherly countries.

Exercise Fajar Al Sharq-V is a multinational joint exercise in Counter Terrorism domain among the Special Forces of Pakistan, Bahrain, Iraq and Kuwait.

The exercise is aimed at nurturing of joint employment and interoperability besides, harnessing the historic military to military relations among the brotherly countries.



**ISLAMABAD: Relatives of missing persons holds protest rally from National Press Club to Super Market, for the recovery of their relatives.**

### Violation to cause forces expulsion No Afghan allowed to support any candidate in next elections: Interior Ministry

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Interior on Monday cautioned the illegal and legal Afghan migrants to avoid supporting or providing funding to any candidate for political and electoral activities in Pakistan whereas violations would lead to deportation despite the latter's legal status.

According to the Ministry of Interior statement, Afghan nationals residing in Pakistan were cautioned that it was illegal to support or provide funding to any candidate for political and electoral activities in Pakistan. "Any Afghan citizen involved in such activities will be deported regardless of his or her legal status in Pakistan."

It said that Pakistani masses were cautioned not to provide employment to illegal aliens or assist such individuals in obtaining employment. "Information about any such illegal alien or the person providing employment to him should be provided to the Ministry of Interior for legal action on the helpline available on the website of the Ministry (UAN 051 111-367-226, HOTLINE 051-9211685)," the Ministry statement added.

### Petroleum products likely to slide down by Rs.7

ISLAMABAD (Online): The possibility of Petroleum Products becoming cheaper by RS 7 from December 1st in the country has been revealed.

The work regarding exchange in prices of petroleum products by Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has been initiated.

As a result of the decrease in prices in the global market, the summary sent by OGRA to the government is likely to make petroleum products cheaper in Pakistan as well.

The price of petrol is expected to reduce by RS 7 per liter and that of price of diesel is expected to reduce by RS 6 per liter.

However, the final announcement of prices of petroleum products for 15

days after December 1st will be made with the approval of Caretaker Prime Minister (PM).

According to report, further decreased in prices of crude oil has been recorded in the world market. The price of Russian oil per barrel has fallen below 60 dollars.

The limit of 60 dollars per barrel of Russian oil has been set by European Union (EU) but the price of Russian oil has also gone below the fixed limit in the market.

Likewise, British Brent deal decreased by 1% to \$80.58 per barrel and American West Texas Intermediate deal decreased by 2% to \$75.54 per barrel in the global market.

### Farhan, Shahzaib win 1st Pakistan padel tennis open tourney

KARACHI (APP): Farhan Mustafa and Shahzaib Aftab defeated Talal Shah and Fawad Faruq to win the first Pakistan Padel Tennis Open tournament title.

In the finals played on the glass court at Legends Arena, the duo of Farhan Mustafa and Shahzaib Aftab defeated their opponents by a margin of 6-2 in the first set and 6-3 in the second set after an interesting match.

In the 3rd position match played, Nameer Shamsi and Hassan Vaqar won against Umer Mahmood and Ahmed Saigal with scores of 6-2 and 6-3.

48 teams participated in the seven-day event organized under the auspices of Legends Arena and supported by Combaxx Sports and Delta Power. The teams were divided into 16 groups.

It should be noted that the game of padel tennis is a combination of squash and tennis and is an interesting game in which physical fitness and mental awareness are very important.

The game of padel tennis was started in Mexico

in 1969. Around 25 million players from 90 countries are playing this game with great enthusiasm.

Padel tennis is played on a glass court of 10x20 meters size.

Former World Squash Champion Jahangir Khan was the Chief Guest of the prize distribution ceremony of the tournament.

On this occasion, Combaxx Sports CEO Omar Saeed, MD Delta Power Nadeem Ahmad, Pakistan Olympic Association Media Advisor Asif Azeem, Combaxx General Manager Zubair Macha and Legends Arena Director Yousuf Ghaznavi were also present.

On the occasion, Jahangir Khan said that the interest of players of all ages in padel tennis is welcome and the organizers have taken an important step by organizing the First Pakistan Padel Tennis Open Tournament, which will help popularize this sport in Pakistan in the coming times. Rather, this initiative will prove to be very helpful in the promotion of this game and in grooming the players for international-level competitions.

### Pakistan, UAE show keenness to enhance strategic cooperation, strong bilateral ties: Ambassador

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to the UAE, Faisal Niaz Tirmizi Monday welcomed the Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar's visit to United Arab Emirates (UAE) said that both nations were keen to enhance their strategic cooperation and economic, commercial and development integration to shape a better future.

"A number of MoUs are expected to be signed during the visit of the Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar to United Arab Emirates particularly in the field of energy, banking sector, civil aviation and others", he said while talking to PTV news channel.

The two sides were also highlighting the abundant economic potential and distinguished opportunities that could be gener-

ated through strengthening of the strategic partnership between the two countries and increasing joint investments, stressing the importance of highlighting promising sectors to investors in both countries, he mentioned.

Energy, Aviation, ports, food security, and banking sectors would be the focus areas of PM's visit

in which the two countries would review the progress in bilateral relations after they ink a landmark trade agreements, he added.

"Pakistan warmly welcomes this brotherly gesture and has a keen interest to welcome significant investments from the Emirati brothers," he added.

The bilateral trade between the two countries was \$10 billion and it had a great potential to be in-

creased, he said, adding, over 1.8 million Pakistanis were serving in the UAE.

The United Arab Emirates still needed more skilled workers in different sectors, the ambassador highlighted.

However, we would be looking at more opportunities for Pakistanis in this regard, he added.

The Prime Minister would be leading the Pakistani delegation at the COP-28 summit, he said, adding, it was a timely summit for countries like Pakistan in terms of climate change.

Pakistan had played a leading role in all international discussions with regard to the environment, he noted.

Replying a query, the ambassador said we needed consistency in the economic policies whichever government came in power.

### Senate unanimously adopts resolution demanding improved security for humanitarian workers

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate on Monday adopted a unanimous resolution demanding that all governments, including the government of Pakistan, enhance measures to provide better security for humanitarian workers.

The resolution was tabled by Senator Sania Nishtar. The resolution said, "The Senate commemorates World Humanitarian Day on August 19 and recognizes the selfless efforts of humanitarian workers and organizations who strive to save and protect lives across the globe and to reduce human suffering".

The House also honors those frontline humanitarian workers who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

The House particularly shows appreciation for the humanitarian assistance extended to Pakistan by the global community during last year's devastating floods.

The Senate noted with alarm that humanitarian workers worldwide continue to remain vulnerable to violence and attacks, with major attacks numbering 235 in 2022 alone, including one in Pakistan, undermining the safety and security of those dedicated to saving lives and delivering assistance.



**HUB: Residents of Yousaf Goth are blocked road and burn tires as they are holding protest demonstration against prolong electricity and sui gas load shedding in their area, at RCD road in Hub**

#### NOTICE OF TENDER DW&CE/6002-Adv/101/E-6 24 Nov 2023

#### MILITARY ENGINEER SERVICES NOTICE OF TENDER

01. The office of DW&CE (PAF) Chakiala invites sealed tenders for the following Emergency Work in light of PPRa Rule 42-c (v) of 2004:-

Sl No	Name of Work	Agency	Amount of Work	Time Allowed (Months)	Date of commencement	Date of Completion	Percentage Progress of work in Hand	Departmental Performance Report on each Work by the Engineer in Charge
02.	(a) Provn of certain Facilities	(EE)	Costing Approximately Rs 59,000 Million					
	(b) Rehabilitation of certain Facilities	(EE)	Costing Approximately Rs 35,000 Million					
	(c) Provn of certain Facilities	(EE)	Costing Approximately Rs 59,000 Million					

03. The contractors are required to submit their applications for issuance of tender documents alongwith their complete credentials as shown at (Serial 9). The applications shall be scrutinized and the tender documents will only be issued to the firms who have sufficient experience in the relevant field and satisfy other special conditions required for the job and area. Tenders will only be issued to the scrutinized contractors. The tender must be received in the office of Accepting Officer by 1130 Hrs on 13 DEC 2023 and will be opened at 1200 Hrs on the same date.

NOTE:- Contractors shall provide certificate that they are not involved in any type of litigation with Government Department in the Court of Law and that no special report of Directorate of Inspection and Evaluation (E-in-C's Branch GHQ) is outstanding against them.

04. All contractors will certify in writing that they are registered with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC), and will submit a copy of their registration. Contractors not registered with PEC are ineligible to apply.

05. Contractor born on approved List of MES in categories 'A' and 'B' and also having experience of this type should only apply.

06. Contractors who desire may be present at the time of opening of tenders.  
07. The Accepting Officer reserves the right to accept or reject the tender. Rejected tenders will be dealt with as per Para 33(1) of PPRa Rules.

08. The interested parties can contact CMES (PAF) Faisal authorized representative for further details from 0715 to 1335 hours on all working days.

Sl No	Name of Work	Agency	Amount of Work	Time Allowed (Months)	Date of commencement	Date of Completion	Percentage Progress of work in Hand	Departmental Performance Report on each Work by the Engineer in Charge
09	Escuted during the Last 2 Years and in Hand							



**KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party Sindh President Nisarh Ahmed Khoro addressing a press conference**

## Education minister honors 30 students with NEF awards

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindh on Monday honoured 30 exceptional students with National Education Foundation (NEF) merit-based awards.

Emphasizing the critical role of quality and skill-based education in navigating the country through financial challenges, the minister underscored the importance of well-prepared educators in shaping a brighter future for children.

Addressing the award distribution ceremony as the chief guest, Minister Sindh commended the outstanding achievements of 30 students, each of whom was presented with a Merit Award of Rs 100,000.

The event drew the participation of heads of departments from the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, parents, students (children of Federal Government teachers), and members of the media fraternity.

Minister Madad Ali Sindh reiterated that education is the fundamental

right of every child and a cornerstone for national progress.

In the contemporary era, no nation can thrive without a commitment to quality education. Human Resource Development, central to government policy, relies on education as a fundamental force in shaping human social capital.

He expressed confidence that the initiatives of the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training will elevate the state of education in the country, fostering holistic development and economic growth.

Commending the National Education Foundation for its commendable efforts in providing free basic and skill-based education to the Khawajasara Community, Minister Sindh also praised the foundation and the Ministry for their impactful awareness and enrollment campaigns for out-of-school children (OOSC) in the ICT region.

During the ceremony, Managing Director Ms. Tahira S. Shaikh shared

that the National Education Foundation has awarded scholarships to over 6000 children of Federal Government teachers (ICT) since 1998.

The Merit Award is bestowed upon children of F.G. Teachers who have secured a minimum of 80% marks in their intermediate examinations and gained fresh admission into any degree program in public sector Medical and Engineering institutions or any public university recognized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) on a merit basis.

Ms. Shaikh highlighted that this award serves as recognition for students who excel academically, securing admissions through fierce competition and merit.

The Merit Award Ceremony stands as a testament to the commitment of the Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindh, and the National Education Foundation to nurturing excellence in education and fostering the academic growth of the nation's youth.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Mr. Madad Ali Sindh, graced the prestigious National Education Foundation (NEF) Merit Award Ceremony.

## Dr Saqib outlines strategy to make BISP an exemplary institution

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Dr Muhammad Amjad Saqib has said that serving 9.3 million needy families is a form of worship, highlighting the moral imperative of addressing poverty as a collective responsibility.

While addressing a gathering of BISP employees at Usmania Masjid Muzaffarabad, Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib outlined a comprehensive strategy aimed at making BISP an exemplary institution in the fight against poverty.

Dr. Amjad Saqib emphasized the importance of linking children from needy

families to technical skill areas, providing them with avenues for a brighter future.

Dr. Amjad Saqib stressed that BISP employees to establish an endowment fund dedicated to the welfare of needy families.

This innovative initiative seeks to create a sustainable mechanism for long-term support, showcasing BISP's commitment to transforming solutions.

During his visit to the BISP office in Muzaffarabad, Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib personally engaged with needy women, listening to their concerns and experiences.

## Senate Power Committee Meeting: Abro, Behramand Tangi exchange bitter words

ISLAMABAD (Online): In the meeting of Senate Power Committee, Chairman Committee Saifullah Abro and Sr. Behramand Tangi had bitter words.

Saifullah Abro said that your lawyer is faster, you are trying to save corruption.

Senator Bahramand Tangi said that I am a senator, I am not anybody's lawyer, I am walking out of the committee on your remarks.

Bahramand Tangi walked out of the meeting.

National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC) board members in the committee apologized for the letter written to the committee.

The committee directed action against the NTDC secretary for not providing the recording and materials of the meeting

day. The meeting of the committee was held under the chairmanship of the chairman of the committee, Saifullah Abro.

Has any senator ever asked for his own work? The committee has directed to submit an evaluation report on the bunting conductor project of Dahaso Dam. Senator Dilawar Khan said that if something has gone wrong, how will it be treated.

The committee has directed MDNTDC and NES-Pak to look into the matter and take a decision.

Senator Haji Fida Muhammad said that why the Minister of Energy and the Secretary are absent from the Energy Committee, the officials of the Ministry of Energy said that the Minister of Energy is out of the country and the Secretary is in an online meeting.



A group of Students and Faculty Members of National University of Science and Technology (NUST), Islamabad visiting Senate Museum at Parliament House, Islamabad.

## IHC allows Fawad meet his wife separately in prison

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) allowed former federal minister Fawad Choudhry to meet his wife in separation in prison. A hearing was held on Fawad Choudhry's request for permission to meet the facilities, lawyers and family in the jail. Chief Commissioner Anwar ul Haq submitted the implementation report of Fawad Choudhry to the court. The court also ordered Fawad Choudhry to provide medical facilities as per the jail manual. The dignity of the petitioner should be kept in mind, said Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb speaking to the Deputy Superintendent of Adiala Jail said that Asif Zardari and Benazir Bhutto were also prevented.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the APHC in a statement issued in Srinagar said that BJP regime is using its military and police establishment to wage a war on the oppressed people of Kashmir to intimidate them into submission.

The APHC said the

life, property, honour and dignity of Kashmiri people are not safe due to the presence of hundreds of thousands of Indian troops and in the territory.

It said the Indian government has deprived the people of Jammu and Kashmir of all their fundamental rights.

The statement said human rights violations by the troops have been going on for the last several decades but after 05 August 2019 the Indian state terrorism and atrocities have witnessed an alarming upsurge in the territory.

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has called for application for recognition of Business Incubation Centers (BICs) aims to facilitate young and budding entrepreneurs through administrative, consulting, and networking services with provision of in-expensive startup spaces.

According to HEC official sources, the applications are invited from higher education institutions (private sector) to recognise their BICs.

As per details, the institution should have an operational BIC in line with the minimum requirements as per HEC BIC Policy 2021. They also have an HEC-recognised/funded BIC under the consortia model.

Furthermore, the institutions must have proven and tangible research commercialization and entrepreneurial ecosystem.

It is worth mention here that recognition of BICs does not involve any funding and financial commitment from the commission.

The official sources added that HEC encouraged development of innovative companies, startups, and spin-offs to stimulate and support economic growth through rigorous incubation process.

The BICs are active players for creation of new jobs, and revival of innovative communities.

The commission is offering two routes for interested universities to establish their BICs.

The proposals for establishment of BIC at Public Sector HEIs are invited through Call for proposals.

The public sector HEIs having HEC recognized and fully functional ORIC interested in establishment of Business Incubation Center can apply of establishment of BIC.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of National Heritage and Culture of Pakistan, Jamal Shah addressing during an event regarding the celebrations of 300th Anniversary of the birth of "Magtymguly Fragi" at local hotel.

## No substitute of mother's milk for babies: Murtaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi, stressing the need to create awareness about breastfeeding, on Monday said that there was no substitute of mother's milk for ensuring the overall health of infant babies.

Winding up debate on a motion by Samina Mumtaz Zehri about the regulation of production and sale of baby formula milk and related products and awareness among young mothers, he said Pakistan Standard and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA), a subsidiary of the Ministry of Science and Technology,

monitored the quality and standard of imported milk.

He explained that formula milk was rarely produced in the country.

The minister said that Pakistan had to spend \$ 30.5 million on the import of around 15000 tons of formula milk every year. Pakistan ranked fourth in the world, he added. He said the Senators discussed the important features of the formula milk and added the mother might not be able to breastfeed the baby in the specific situation.

He said in case of mother's death, a baby had to be fed by formula milk

so it could not be completely banned.

Earlier moving the motion, Samina Mumtaz Zehri called for promoting minimum six-month breastfeeding to enhance the immune system of babies. She suggested that formula milk should be banned and discouraged in the country. Some 16 companies were manufacturing formula milk and none was unfortunately a Pakistani company. She said that formula milk companies always managed doctors and paramedics with monetary benefits, to eventually suggest their products for infant babies.

Dr Bilal said that PMDC has a pivotal role in ensuring the quality and standardization of medical

and dental education, professional practice, and ethical standards in the country. He said that all necessary steps will be taken to revise existing rules and regulations of PMDC including the syllabus for MDCAT, curriculum for undergraduate medical dental education, and accreditation standards for the accreditation of medical and dental institutes.

He emphasized that it will be ensured to standardize the MDCAT, NRE and NEB exams to stringent quality assessments, updated curricula, and modern teaching methodologies to produce competent and globally competitive healthcare professionals which are safe for society.

During his visit, he

sued directives to expedite the decoration and furnishing of the Police Community Center.

ISLAMABAD: According to details, Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir

emphasized the welfare initiatives undertaken for officers, officials, and their families within the Islamabad Capital Police. He highlighted that the construction of the Police Community Center aimed to benefit not only the police officers and officials but also their families in the future.

On the occasion Capital Police Officer Headquarters and SSP Headquarters were also present. ICCPO Dr Akbar Nasir Khan is-

ISLAMABAD (Online): Under Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) Education Foundation, it has been revealed that

crores of rupees of scholarships abroad have gone missing. According to documents, scholarship money of students studying at

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This was discussed in an online training session on COP28 and the Role of National Media, organized by Resilient Future International - an Islamabad-based research and training company. Journalists and university students participated in the training session, a news release said.

Aftab Alam Khan, the lead trainer, has pointed out that while more than 5000 journalists are expected to attend COP28, many journalists from poor countries may not be able to attend due to financial constraints. He has emphasized the need for media houses and donors to support Pakistani journalists in attending such

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Aftab Alam Khan noted that national media can play three roles during COP28, a) reminding the world about the continuous sufferings of flood-affected people, especially women, children, transgenders, elderly and disabled b) supporting the demands of meaningful Loss and Damage Fund and drastic cuts in greenhouse gases (GHGs) and c) to keep the nation aware of the proceedings of the climate conference.

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## Entire occupied Jammu and Kashmir turned into open-air prison: APHC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has said that India has illegally and unconstitutionally turned entire occupied Jammu and Kashmir into an open-air prison since August 5, 2019.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the APHC in a statement issued in Srinagar said that BJP regime is using its military and police establishment to wage a war on the oppressed people of Kashmir to intimidate them into submission.

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life, property, honour and dignity of Kashmiri people are not safe due to the presence of hundreds of thousands of Indian troops and in the territory.

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This sentiment aims to foster a supportive and caring environment within the police department.

ISLAMABAD (APP): According to details, the Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Islamabad Muhammad Sarfraz Virk, visited Poly Clinic Hospital to see Constable Abdul Waheed, who was undergoing treatment, a public relations officer said.

He said that Constable Abdul Waheed was deployed on duty, during which he was hit by a motorcyclist, due to which his leg bone was broken. During the visit, CTO Islamabad presented a bouquet of flowers to the injured constable and inquired

about his health and treatment progress.

The CTO Islamabad said that officers and officials are valuable assets of the police department, highlighting a sense of camaraderie and unity within the department.

CTO Islamabad asserted that everyone within the department is like a family, ensuring that no officer or official would ever feel alone during challenging times.

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## Quality of medical education to be enhanced: SAPM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Medical Education and Patient Care and Minister of State Prof. Dr. Aamir Bilal said on Monday the quality of medical and dental education will be enhanced at par with international standards, considering local needs and ground realities. He was chairing a high-level meeting at the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) head office for the promotion of medical education and quality health care in the country. He said there will be no compromise on the minimum standards and quality.

Dr Bilal said that PMDC has a pivotal role in ensuring the quality and standardization of medical

and dental education, professional practice, and ethical standards in the country. He said that all necessary steps will be taken to revise existing rules and regulations of PMDC including the syllabus for MDCAT, curriculum for undergraduate medical dental education, and accreditation standards for the accreditation of medical and dental institutes.

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Dr Bilal said that PMDC has a pivotal role in ensuring the quality

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**Independent**

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**Unite against VAW**

November 25 marked the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The day also marks the start of the 'UNITE campaign': 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. According to the UN, an estimated one in every three women across the world has been subject to physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence or both at least once in their lifetime, making violence against women and girls (VAW) one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world. One must also reckon with the fact that violence against women is chronically under-reported, with many women who experience violence often not seeking help due to legal, social or cultural constraints. And yet, the behaviour of governments across the world would lead one unacquainted with the facts of gender-based violence to believe that it is not such a big deal after all. Only 0.2 per cent of government aid is focused on preventing violence against women and girls while 86 per cent of women and girls live in countries that lack legal protections against gender-based violence.

While there are several laws criminalizing violence, harassment and other forms of abuse against women in Pakistan, they have not had the impact in terms of reducing the crimes they seek to prevent that one would desire. Reports reveal that around 40 per cent of Pakistani women have experienced physical or emotional violence in their lifetime, with around 63,000 cases of gender-based violence reported over the last three years alone. Laws alone can only do so much. If women who experience physical or sexual violence at home or elsewhere fear being ostracized by their family, friends or community for speaking out or somehow being blamed for their situation, cases of gender-based violence will never reach the stage where the law can take action. A first step towards getting the most out of the laws that seek to protect women is to then challenge and change the culture that seeks to disempower women by legitimizing or rationalizing gender-based violence. This is not solely a gender-based violence issue but one of social justice as well, with poorer women less likely to be able to afford the costs that come with filing a case and hiring the legal help needed to prosecute it, highlighting the need to provide legal and financial resources to victims of gender-based violence.

There is also the issue that in cases that are reported and do end up in court, securing justice can be a tall order. According to the UNFPA, the conviction rate for cases that involve violence against women in Pakistan is a shockingly low one to two-and-a-half per cent. It is clear that the legal system needs to change the way it approaches gender-based violence cases in order for women in this country to truly be safe.



By Malecha Lodhi

Overshadowed by Israel's war on Gaza, the meeting earlier this month between Presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping didn't receive as much media attention as China-US summits usually do. But it yielded a welcome thaw in their long frosty relations.

Their meeting on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic (APEC) forum in San Francisco was their first face-to-face interaction in over a year, and ranged over bilateral and global issues and all the contentious areas that divide them. Both sides saw the summit as an opportunity to stabilise ties, which in recent years have sunk to an all-time low.

The meeting was preceded by a series of visits to Beijing by top American officials, including US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, CIA chief Bill Burns and National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan. Chinese Foreign Min-

ister Wang Yi also visited Washington in October. These multiple diplomatic engagements helped to bring down the temperature and also create a helpful environment for the California summit.

No big breakthrough was anticipated at the summit. And there wasn't one. However, agreement on several fronts marked a step towards easing tensions, holding out the possibility of building on the modest progress achieved for a more predictable and stable relationship.

Improvement in the tone of the relationship was significant, with positive vibes from both sides. Xi told Biden that the "planet was big enough" for both the global powers. Biden spoke of the need to responsibly manage the competition "so it doesn't result in conflict".

He also said that "a stable relationship between the world's two largest economies is not merely good for the two economies but for the world".

In his solo press conference, Biden later repeated a remark he made earlier this year that he saw Xi as a "dictator". This provoked an angry response from Beijing but did not detract from the diplomatic

advance made at the summit. The Chinese media described the meeting as "a new starting point" for bilateral relations.

China's foreign ministry spokeswoman called the summit "a positive, comprehensive and constructive meeting of strategic and far-reaching significance".

The three areas where the two sides were able to reach agreement were: to restore high-level military-to-military communication, establish a presidential hotline, and cooperate to restrict the production of fentanyl, a precursor chemical responsible for drug overdoses in the US.

Re-establishing military relations, suspended by Beijing since 2022, was, of course, the most significant. This means the resumption of China-US Defence Policy Coordination Talks, China-US Military Maritime Consultative Agreement meetings, and telephonic contact between theatre commanders.

If implemented without hurdles, this should help to reduce the risk of miscalculation, especially given the fraught situation in the South China Sea, where both sides have air and naval deployments.

The agreement on counter-narcotics involved China's commitment to check the production of fentanyl precursors to prevent their ending up with drug cartels and contributing to America's drug problem.

Biden is reported to have conveyed his appreciation for Xi's commitment, while also saying he would "trust but verify" Chinese actions in this regard. The creation of a counter-narcotics working group is expected to coordinate these efforts.

Cooperation in these areas and the mutual desire to strengthen communication channels may help to halt the slide in China-US relations. But while the talks were said to be wide-ranging and also covered the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, the summit didn't see differences between the two global powers narrowing over the major issues and disputes that drive tensions in their strategic competition — Taiwan, trade, technology curbs and military postures. Indeed, both sides used the summit to again spell out their positions and red lines on Taiwan.

Xi told Biden to cease arming Taiwan and reiterate that reunification was

inevitable. The Chinese foreign ministry readout later said Beijing expected the US side to now "follow through on its statement of not supporting Taiwan independence and support China's peaceful reunification".

Biden called for restraint by China on Taiwan while reiterating US support for its 'One China' policy. Western analysts noted that Biden seemed to step back from his tough rhetoric of a year ago, when he repeatedly referred to China's coercive posture on Taiwan, and in a departure from previous US policy, even said American forces would intervene militarily to defend Taiwan in the event of a Chinese invasion.

Taiwan, however, continues to be a dangerous flashpoint in the China-US confrontation. This was laid bare earlier this year when there was a near collision in June between a Chinese warship and a United States Navy guided-missile destroyer.

This underscored what the international community has long feared — an inadvertent drift into a conflict that neither side wants but may be unable to avert in a region bristling with heightened military activity. Thus, the renewal of high-level military contacts ac-

quires importance in enabling the two countries to reduce the risk of a full-blown crisis or conflict.

US-China competition has also intensified in the area of technology. Washington is engaged in a battle to maintain supremacy with an intense 'chip war' underway.

A year ago, it imposed sweeping measures to bar American companies and allied countries from exporting chips and advanced chip equipment to China to cripple its semiconductor industry, which manufactures chips and circuits for modern electronics ranging from supercomputers and smartphones to automobiles.

Despite the fact that these sanctions proved to be counterproductive, last month the US tightened restrictions on exports of advanced computer chips to retard China's efforts to develop artificial intelligence.

The US justified the new curbs as aimed at limiting China's use of these for military purposes. Beijing slammed them as a violation of "the principles of fair competition" and designed to thwart its technological progress. —Courtesy Dawn

**US-China thaw?**

**A call for change and development**

By Dr Abida Naurin

Reform, not begging, is the answer to all our economic and political problems. The question though is: which reform? The answers to this were discussed at a recent conference held by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Research for Social Transformation and Advancement (RASTA), and the Pakistan Society of Development Economists (PSDE).

Judicial reforms focus on the judiciary and providing justice to all, cutting down on frivolous cases without allowing long stays or excessive adjournments to provide speedy justice. Training and expertise are provided to judges to allow them to take on complex cases of the modern economy. Democracy needs to be supported by considerable enabling legislation to ensure proper party reform. For example,

elections need to be rethought with fresh ideas like NOTA and different systems of elections, and we need frequent elections, and the Senate should be directly elected.

Elections should be staggered. For democracy to thrive, the election system needs to ensure that the current capture of politics by just a few hundred families must be restrained. At the conference, political term limits were considered necessary. PSDP and executive authority to parliamentarians need to stop while parliament and the executive need to be clearly separated. MNAs need to be clear that they are coming into the legislature for law, not to enter a secret door code executive position.

Executive positions for parliamentarians need to be severely curtailed. The conference also debated qualifications for MNAs and ministers; after all, all other jobs require specialization

so perhaps politicians too should be subject to some training and certification. There was a consensus on the need for a local government. It was agreed that the constitution was incomplete without local government. For local government to happen, however, PSDP funds should not be distributed by MNAs or MPAs. Local government laws must be written such that the big families do not capture these governments. Local government might not be possible without deep civil service reform, since currently the local administration is run by the federal civil service.

Permission-istan has destroyed the investment potential. The culture of NOC licences and controls needs to be limited or eliminated. PIDE has shown this sludge costs over 60 per cent of GDP. Business success needs to be celebrated, not considered corruption. Currently, businesses feel

victimized by both politicians and the bureaucracy. Policymaking remains erratic and of low quality, making it extremely difficult for businesses to plan and project long term, slowing down investment. A bureaucratic and political mindset of offering protection and seeking an overvalued exchange rate is stifling exports.

The energy sector mess that has lasted for decades now has halted the export sector. Unreliable and poorly considered currency rates, fiscal policies, and tax laws discourage investment. However, no one is considering this. Firms can't expand if they are always searching for the next opportunity to receive protection or subsidies. As a result, we have conglomerates that look for opportunities for protection or subsidies, whether they are building IPPs, producing phones or vehicles, or pursuing privatization arbi-

trage. As PIDE has demonstrated, 31 families continue to control the stock market. This indicates that there isn't a competitive market.

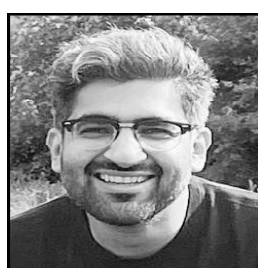
The CCP has demonstrated that regulation and policies encourage unfair economic practices and cartelization. How do we make sure that policymaking is less intertwined, and that corporate governance is improved? Every firm is tiny (extremely small, from a global perspective) and run by families. Large, expertly managed businesses are essential to economic expansion and exports.

This must be a policy objective. But to do this, you have to have a sink-or-swim mentality and operate in a competitive environment. Bank credit is what our businesses rely on too much. Is this because equity is often more expensive? Or is it because you're

in a situation where default is likely? Or is it because losing control of the firm may result from more equity in the market?

In addition, our businesses are quite apprehensive about entering the formal market because of the potential for government persecution and the uncertainty surrounding tax and paperwork policies. Our firms don't do R&D; very little is done to create new goods and look for new markets and government business is not conducive to research at all. But how can we change policy? The country has limited opportunities for investment due to a combination of poorly designed and excessive restrictions. Instruments are severely insufficient. Because of this, the sole option for investing is informal. In order to obtain higher profits, people turn to riskier real-estate investments and capital flight. —Courtesy The News

**Smog season**



By Umair Javed

Large parts of Pakistan are currently engulfed by toxic air, amounting to nothing short of a public health catastrophe. The onset of 'smog season', Pakistan and north India's substitute for autumn and early winter, seems to be worsening with each passing year, and cities in the region regularly top the charts for the worst air quality anywhere in the world.

For the first few smog seasons, public authorities chose not to pay much attention, instead highlighting their own 'data' that showed the air wasn't actually as poisonous as environmentalists were making it out to be. Once this make-believe data was thoroughly debunked, authorities gradually stepped into action with a range of seemingly haphazard measures.

Clampdown on stubble burning during the Kharif season has reportedly produced some results. Data shared by environmental policy specialist Dawar Butt shows that till Nov 20, crop fires in Pakistani Punjab were down by nearly 60 per cent compared to the average for this period between 2016 and 2020.

Some of the punitive and administrative measures taken by local officials have induced behavioural change in farming populations, thus contributing to lower frequency of crop burning.

However, clamping down on crop burning addresses a relatively small segment of the problem, given the widespread and multifaceted nature of poor air quality. The fact of the

matter is that crop fires only emerge ahead of winter sowing, while air quality is poor pretty much the year round. It becomes more visible during the last quarter of the calendar year because of changes in climatic and meteorological conditions.

To date, all existing work on toxic air quality in Pakistan has shown that vehicular emissions are a central part of the problem. Even when smog is not functionally visible, air quality indicators continuously show high levels of particulate matter and toxicity. This means that any interventions designed to clean up the air will also have to address these year-round causes, rather than just tackling time-bound issues.

A recent article by Pakistani scientists Abdullah Bajwa and Hassan Sheikh, based at Oxford and Cambridge respectively, in the journal Air does a comprehensive job of summarising the literature and evaluating the contribution of road transport to urban air pollution.

Their analysis of existing source apportionment studies shows that vehicular emissions are responsible for anywhere between a third to more than half of poor air quality, depending on the parameters of evaluation.

While existing research may be insufficient to provide more precise estimates, there is a general consensus among environmentalists that a) vehicle emissions are a major part of the problem, and b) within emitting vehicles, two- and three-wheelers are likely responsible for most of the issue.

As per the authors mentioned, "The emissions profile presented for Pakistan's urban automotive fleet identifies two-/three-wheelers, almost all of which are carburetted and a significant fraction are powered by 2SC engines, as the largest (36-64 per cent) vehicular pollu-

tion source. High sulphur content in fuel (especially diesel) and lube oil, poorly tuned and maintained engines that burn rich, and lack of exhaust after-treatment systems are recognised as reasons for Pakistan's disproportionately high vehicular emissions."

Given what needs to be done to clean up Pakistan's air, the scale of the task is daunting for several political and institutional reasons. It is true that many cities around the world have cleaned up their air, contributing to better public health outcomes for their citizens.

London, Chicago, Los Angeles, and a host of other Western cities have all done remarkably well on this front. Closer to home, the example of Chinese cities and their ability to improve domestic environmental conditions over the preceding three decades is frequently cited as an example worthy of emulation.

The issue of using China as a model for environmental policies is a complex one. Recent analyses by environmental economist Dr Sanval Nasim identifies exactly why: China is a high-capacity, well-resourced state, with a bureaucracy and local governance apparatus that can take a range of difficult, often very costly, steps to control local populations.

Given the political system in China, administrators have the capacity to absorb political and social blowback with little consequences. Simply put, they have a centralised, disciplined governance apparatus that can successfully ban old vehicles, sanction polluters, impose heavy fines etc.

While no system is entirely free from leakages, the Chinese have the ability to coordinate across multiple governing tiers and departments to produce desired outcomes. —Courtesy Dawn

**Invisible women**



By Dr Farzana Bari

The recently released UNDP 2023 Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI) reveals the shocking persistence of gender biases globally. The index tracks people's attitudes towards women across four dimensions — political, education, economic and physical integrity in both lower and higher HDI countries.

Covering 85 per cent of the world's population, the GSNI reveals that a staggering nine out of 10 men and women still hold gender biases against women, indicating that 90 per cent of the world's population holds at least one bias against women. Twenty-five per cent of the population believe it is justified for a man to physically harm his wife.

Nearly half of the respondents believe men are better suited for political leadership, and 43 per cent hold the belief that men make better business executives compared to women. Furthermore, 28 per cent people think that higher education is more important for men than for women. Despite the global and national-level commitments to gender equality, there is not a single country in today's world that can truly claim itself as a gender-just society. The GSNI claims that women spend twice as much time on average on domestic and care work as compared to men. Women's time spent on unpaid care work accounts for most of the recent variation in the gender gap in income. Women account for 28 per cent of managers and 31 per cent of top leaders in public

administration globally. Women hold just over a quarter of parliament seats and 22 per cent of ministerial positions. Heads of states or women in government have remained around 10 per cent since 1995.

The global presence of gender biases demands a more profound analysis of the underlying causes that perpetuate these biases and reinforce gender stereotypes, hindering the equal access to opportunities and resources for women to fully develop their human capital.

The woman question is intertwined with the broader global systems of social and economic production processes that are historically based on exploitation and oppression along the lines of class, gender and race and other social divisions. Patriarchy as a pre-historic phenomenon has been changing with the mode of production and relations of production from primitive to slave, feudal, capitalist and socialist formations in human society. It is indeed not surprising that in the patriarchal neo-liberal capitalist world of the 21st century, progress towards achieving gender equality promised in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is frustratingly slow. As gender inequality is one of the organizing principles of capitalist production, it is impossible to achieve gender equality in class-based societies.

Political rights and civil liberties have been in decline worldwide. Global space for freedom is shrinking, and polarization, militarization, fundamentalism, extremism is on the rise. Increasing poverty and high unemployment accompanied by conservative backlash is putting democratic practices under stress in general and women's rights for equal participation in economic, politics

and civic spaces in particular. Gendered social norms are deeply rooted in the ideology of sexual division of labour (SDL), which assigns distinct roles to men and women in society. Men are expected to be the primary breadwinners, occupying positions in the public sphere, while women are assigned the primary role within the private arena of homes as mother, wives and caretakers. The public-private divide forms the basis for investing less resources to build women's human capital as they are not expected to be economically independent.

The gender role ideology serves as a smokescreen to not only invisibilize women's role in the public sphere but also undermine the economic value of women's reproductive labour within the domestic sphere. Reproductive labour is essential for the productive sphere. The unpaid domestic labour of women keeps the living wages of productive labour low for the capitalist class and contributes to increased profit margin and capital accumulation. Within this socio-economic formation, gender equality is no more than a rhetoric at the domestic and global levels.

The trajectory to gender equality proposed in the GSNI is education, recognition and representation. The index proposes two key blocs of action. The first block aims to shape gender-sensitive policy interventions and institutional reforms and the second block focuses on the significant role of the social context in shaping attitudes and behaviors.

While there is nothing wrong with this proposed way, it cannot be achieved through reformist interventions within systems of exploitation and oppression. Gender social norms are embedded in institutional arrangements and social practices. —Courtesy The News

## Dr Syedna Mufaddal inaugurates School of Law Building at KU

KARACHI (APP): The 53rd al-Dai al-Mutlaq and the leader of the worldwide Dawoodi Bohras Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin inaugurated the "H. H. Dr Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin Building—School of Law" at the University of Karachi on Monday.

The inauguration ceremony was held at the new premises and caretaker Chief Minister Sindh Justice @ Maqbool Baqar, the Chancellor and the Governor Sindh Muhammad Kamran Khan Tessori, ex-CM Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah, Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab, Provincial Secretary Boards and Universities Noor Ahmed

Samoo, KU Vice Chancellor Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi, the members of the Senate and the Syndicate of the University of Karachi, deans and chairpersons, notable dignitaries, members legal fraternity, and representative of Dawoodi Bohra community were also present on this occasion.

The CM expressed that the social services provided by the Dawoodi Bohra community extend beyond borders and nationalities, dedicated solely to human development.

"This a valuable gift for the students of Karachi and the entire nation of Pakistan. This state-of-

the-art facility not only symbolizes a commitment to academic excellence but also as a catalyst for intellectual growth, societal progress, and continuous harmonious coexistence of tradition and contemporary values in the landscape of Pakistani education."

Meanwhile, the Governor mentioned that the Bohra community is one of the most peaceful communities in the country and despite the difficult socio-economic conditions of Pakistan, they have continued their activities, which is not an easy task and they are playing a very important role in the health and education sectors besides other walk of lives.



KARACHI: Caretaker Chief Minister Sindh Justice (ret'd) Maqbool Baqar presides over the meeting to review law and order situation in the province.

## Hard work imperative for attaining glory in education: Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali on Monday said that hard work and professional dedication were imperative to achieve glory in all sectors including education.

Despite payment of about Rs 97 Billion to government schools under the head of salaries in the last four months, he said the children did not achieve the desired education results and many failed.

He was addressing students and teachers at University of Chitral. "It was very heartening for me when an M.Phil passed student asked for a Class-IV job," he said, adding

every effort including the construction of universities and investment in the education sector would be a futile exercise if quality education was not provided to students.

The governor said there was no dearth in talent in our students and we need to focus on their professional education training and career counseling. He questioned the reasons behind 100 per cent results of private educational institutions and poor results of public sector schools.

The Governor said funds for educational institutions showing poor results would be stopped. He said funds of

universities with no ranking would also be stopped. Haji Ghulam Ali said the education standard of Govt College Peshawar was very low in Peshawar in the past. The Governor said when he took over as district Nazim Peshawar, he was surprised after seeing in the newspaper that three students of Government College Peshawar had topped the examination in the province and became very pleased.

The governor said the students were the future of Pakistan and great responsibility rested on their teachers and parents to focus on their studies so that they could effectively shoulder the future responsibilities.

## Ministers attend central event of Baba Guru Nanak's birth anniversary

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Information Minister Amir Mir and Aqaf Minister Barrister Azfar Ali Nasir participated in the central event commemorating the 554th birth anniversary of Baba Guru Nanak, the revered spiritual leader of the Sikh community, held at Gurudwara Janam Asthan Nankana Sahib.

Nagarkirtan procession and other festivities.

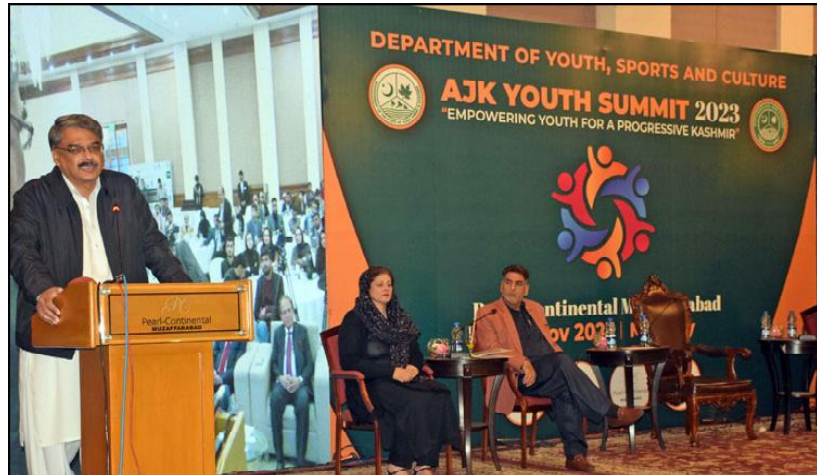
Expressing a warm welcome to pilgrims from around the world at Nankana Sahib, Minister Amir Mir extended congratulations on Baba Guru Nanak Dev's birthday. He emphasized that Pakistan is a bouquet of diverse religions, where Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, Christians, and Parsis bloom as its vibrant flowers. Amir Mir highlighted the beauty of religious diversity in the country and underscored that followers of all faiths enjoy absolute freedom in Pakistan. "The provision of essential facilities to both local and international pilgrims ranks as the top priority for the Punjab government," he stated. He urged the continuation of Baba Guru Nanak's message of peace, love, harmony, and goodness.

The ministers engaged with thousands of Sikh pilgrims hailing from across the globe, including the UK, Australia, USA, Canada, and India, said a press release issued here on Monday.

Minister Amir Mir meticulously inspected the arrangements at Gurudwara Janamasthan, focusing on cleanliness, security, and overall logistics. Both caretaker ministers actively participated in the



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori administering polio drops to child to inaugurate anti-polio campaign in the province.



MUZAFFERABAD: Prime Minister AJK Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq addressing during the "Kashmir Youth Summit 2023" in the Capital.

## LHC accepts petition about cases registered in May 09 incident for hearing

RAWALPINDI (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) Rawalpindi Bench Justice Chaudhry Abdul Aziz has accepted the petition filed for hearing regarding the details of the cases filed on May 9 incident.

While issuing a notice to the parties, Inspector General (IG) Punjab and Regional Police Officer (RPO) Rawalpindi have been asked for a report within two weeks.

Former Member of National Assembly Sheikh Rashid Shafiq, through Abdul Raziq Advocate, made the IG Punjab and RPO Rawalpindi a party and took a stand in the petition filed that 6 months after the May 9 incident, the petitioner is being involved in various cases through the by-laws. Whereas the petitioner has nothing to do with any incident anywhere, nor is there any evidence of the petitioner's presence, nor is he named in any case other than the City Police

Station case.

The police is maliciously nominating on the basis of supplementary statements after 6 months, although the Supreme Court has also made it clear that delayed supplementary statements have no status nor can they be considered as admissible evidence, so the petitioner is merely anonymous.

Thus far, the petitioner's name has been mentioned in 13 cases and now it has been found that the petitioner is being implicated in more cases at different places.

It has been requested in the petition that the court should seek the details of the cases against the petitioner and also seek an explanation as to which case petitioner is being implicated in and on what basis.

After the preliminary hearing of the petition, the court has asked the IG Punjab and RPO Rawalpindi to respond within two weeks.

## ANF recovers 420 kg drugs in seven operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting seven operations across the country managed to recover over 420 kg of drugs and arrested five accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday.

He informed that in an operation, ANF recovered 800 grams of Ice drug from a parcel booked for Bahrain at a courier office in Rawalpindi.

100 intoxicated tablets (ecstasy) were recovered from an accused netted from Bhara Khau in Islamabad.

In the third operation, 24 kg hashish was recovered from a vehicle intercepted near Sher Shah Toll Plaza, Multan while an accused was arrested.

25.2 kg of hashish was recovered from a vehicle stopped on Super Highway Karachi. An accused was also sent behind the bars.

15.6 kg hashish was recovered from secret cavities of a vehicle near PDA Motorway Peshawar.

## Governor Punjab felicitates Sikh community on Baba Guru Nanak's birth anniversary

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman has extended heartfelt felicitations to the Sikh community on the auspicious occasion of 554th birth anniversary of the Baba Guru Nanak Dev Ji - founder of the Sikh religion. Emphasising significance of Guru Nank's teachings, in a message here on Monday, he said Baba Guru Nanak imparted a universal message of humanity, peace, and harmony.

The Governor underscored the need to promote brotherhood and tolerance. He said that the minorities are enjoying equal rights and freedom in Pakistan in accordance with the constitution and the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

He also hailed Punjab government for making excellent arrangements to facilitate the Sikh pilgrims who have arrived here to attend the birth anniversary celebrations of Baba Guru Nanak Dev Ji.



RAWALPINDI: Caretaker Health Minister Punjab Dr Jamal Nasir addressing during "Meet the Press" at press club in City.

## Meeting to review AIP ongoing projects in NMDs held

**Independent Report**  
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged Districts Affairs, Industries, Commerce, and Technical Education, Dr. Aamer Abdullah, chaired a meeting at his office here on Monday to review the funding status for ongoing projects under the Accelerated Implementation Program (AIP) in Newly Merged Districts.

During the meeting, discussions centered on the allocation of funds for ongoing development projects across various departments, including Communications and Work, Irrigation, Agriculture, Livestock Fisheries, Forestry and Environment, Food, Primary and Secondary and Higher Education, Public Health Engineering, Sports and Youth Affairs, and the Board of Revenue.

The meeting involved a comprehensive review of each project's status and the necessary funds

essential for their timely completion.

Secretary Communication and Works Idris Khan Marwat, Secretary Livestock and Fisheries Dr. Muhammad Asrar, Secretary Food Zarif ul-Maani, Special Secretaries from the Interior and Tribal Affairs Department Muhammad Zubair and Environment Department Khuda Bakhsh, and Director General Sustainable Development Unit (SDU) Adil Saeed Saff, along with other planning and related officers, attended the meeting.

The caretaker minister emphasized prioritizing projects nearing completion to ensure the swift realization of benefits for the local populace.

Addressing specific concerns, the minister instructed the completion of the biometric system required for parents to receive funds related to the government's scholarship program by December 30.



CHITRAL: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali performed ground breaking ceremony of the University of Chitral main campus during his visit to district Chitral.

## Working group formed for artificial rain in Lahore

LAHORE (APP): As part of efforts to control smog, the Punjab government has formed a working group comprising representatives of relevant federal, provincial departments and military organizations to execute the project of artificial rain in Lahore.

The decision to establish the working group was made in a meeting held at the Civil Secretariat under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman here on Monday.

The meeting reviewed progress on the projects of artificial rain and installation of smog reduction towers in Lahore. The administrative secretaries of various departments including environment protection, agriculture, finance and officers concerned attended the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman said that the Punjab government

was taking practical steps to prevent smog, adding that joint efforts were needed to control environmental pollution. He said that the cooperation of federal and military institutions in efforts to prevent smog in Lahore was commendable.

Officials of the Environmental Protection Department gave a briefing on cloud seeding and cloud ionization methods for artificial rain. They said that the first trial for cloud seeding was expected in four to six weeks. They mentioned that the cloud seeding through a chemical process using aircraft was highly dependent on weather conditions and cloud formation.

The officials said that an MoU with a Dubai-based company was in the final stages and in the next six weeks a trial of cloud ionization would be carried out at selected locations in Lahore through use of five systems to be provided by the company.

## Anti-smog operation ordered to speed up

MULTAN (APP): Commissioner Aamir Khattak ordered to speed up anti-smog operations and eliminate air pollution on an emergency basis here Monday.

Addressing a meeting, he said everyone has to fulfil their responsibility to make Multan a pollution-free city.

He said a zero-tolerance policy would be adopted for violation of the order.

Taking notice of complaints of the presence of dengue larvae in parts of the city, the Commissioner directed the staff concerned to improve the anti-dengue campaign.

Talking about the "artificial kind of inflation" he activated price control magistrates with directing to ensure their presence in markets.

On the occasion, Aamir Khattak was informed that about 136 price control magistrates conducted 4691 raids in the past 24 hours.



LAHORE: People are taking interest in paintings during exhibition regarding the "Ghaza" at Khana-e-Farhang (Iran) in Provincial Capital.

## CM takes notice of girl killing incident in Kohistan

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Chief Minister, Justice (Ret'd) Arshad Hussain Shah here Monday took strict notice of killing of a girl allegedly on order of a local jirga in Kohistan and directed the authorities concerned for immediate inquiry of the incident.

He contacted Additional Chief Secretary Home and directed for taking all necessary measures for conducting of an immediate inquiry of the incident and submission of report at earliest, says an official statement here.

The chief minister also directed KPK Inspector General of Police for immediate arrest of all the culprits involved in the gory incident.

Hussain Shah said that supremacy of law and order would be ensured at all cost.

He directed protection of the companion of the victim girl.

## Car-trailer collision in Khanpur killed 2

KHANPUR (APP): At least two people were killed and two children were injured in a collision between a car and a trailer in Khanpur on Monday.

According to rescue sources, the accident took place on the M5 motorway near the Zahir Peer Interchange, where a high-speed trailer hit a car coming from the opposite direction, resulting in the death of a man and a woman on the spot and injuries to another, a private news channel reported.

Rescue teams reached the spot after being informed and shifted bodies and injured to a nearby hospital.

## Anti-polio drive kicks off in Attock

ATTOCK (Online): Five days long anti-polio campaign has been started in Attock district which will remain continue till December 2. Deputy Commissioner Attock Rao Atif Raza formally inaugurated the drive by administering anti polio drops to a child at district headquarters hospital.

Chief Executive Officer Health Authority Attock Dr. Asad Ismail, Medical Superintendent District headquarters hospital Attock Dr. Jawad Ellahi, District Health Officer Attock Dr. Kashif Hussain and other officials of the health department were also present on this occasion. Briefing newsmen about the drive, Rao Atif Raza has said that during this campaign, 3, 13,959 children from birth to 59 months.

## PML-N and MQM-P complete first round of talks on election, future strategy

KARACHI (INP): The PML-N has completed the initial phase of talks with the MQM-P and other parties in Sindh for a joint strategy to contest the February 8 elections and run the country's affairs afterwards, as the PPP is set to face a strong resistance in its stronghold.

These ongoing developments are of great significance for not just the politics of Karachi and Sindh but of also entire Pakistan after the PPP - once the disputed countrywide force - has been witnessing a shrinking vote base which is now mostly, if not entirely, concentrated in rural Sindh.

It is reported that the subcommittees formed by the PML-N and the MQM-P to discuss and finalise proposals on different subjects completed their assigned

tasks, including the most immediate goal—how to go for seat adjustment in the upcoming polls.

In the next stage, the two parties will hold a meeting in Islamabad for giving final shape to the future line of action before the top leadership could give approval to the same.

The PML-N has given the task of coordinating the elections affairs in Sindh to Khawaja Saad Rafique and in Balochistan to Sardar Ayaz Sadiq - the seasoned and loyal party leaders from Lahore.

Nawaz Sharif - the party supremo and three-time minister who is aiming at the record fourth term in office - has already visited Balochistan, a trip which saw several prominent political personalities joining the PML-N with progress.

## USAID-Funded Municipal Services Prog. in KP completed

By Haroon Siraj  
PESHAWAR: U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Donald A. Blome visited the Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP) office in Hayatabad, Peshawar, to celebrate the successful completion of the USAID-funded Municipal Services Program in Khyber

improved sanitation. The project's accomplishments include: The rehabilitation of 140 clean drinking water facilities serving 448,000 people. Replacement of 25,700 meters of old and rusted water mains, ensuring clean, reliable water supply in 21 Union



Pakhtunkhwa (KP), a 12-year, \$44.6 million effort.

Thanks to the project, today hundreds of thousands of residents of KP have better more reliable access to safe, clean, drinking water, and waste management, and

Councils. Rehabilitated sewerage and drainage lines, which improve sanitation for 1.7 million people. More efficient solid waste collection and disposal.

## Nationwide anti-polio drive begins in Mirpur

MIRPUR [AJK] (APP): In Mirpur district of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, a total of 73,082 children under 05 years of age would be administered polio vaccine and vitamin 'A' drops during the 5-day nationwide anti-polio drive formally launched on Monday.

The district has been divided into six zones with the induction of one supervisor in each zone to implement the drive.

One Ward In charge will supervise the campaign in the

determined area falling in each Union Council in the district, the District Health Officer Dr. Fida Hussain disclosed while unveiling the break of the national drive against polio in the district to be continued till December 1st without any pause, it was officially said.

AJK Health minister had inaugurated the campaign at the DHO office here by administering the polio vaccine besides the vitamin 'A' drops to the children under 05 years of age.



Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan, chaired a strategic meeting to discuss the prospective trajectory of Economic Development within a robust policy framework.

## Fawad stresses for revamping taxation system, privatizing SOEs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Privatization, Fawad Hasan Fawad, on Monday highlighted the flaws in the country's taxation system by informing that around 93 percent of the collected tax revenue is either voluntary or withholding; whereas, only 7 percent is actually collected by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).

Mr. Fawad Hasan Fawad informed the audience that the current state of the public sector is unsustainable and

contributes to the deterioration in the business environment in the country, according to a press release issued here.

Federal Minister for Privatization, Fawad Hasan Fawad, said this while speaking at the 3rd "Pakistan Prosperity Forum" organized by the Policy Research Institute of Market Economy (PRIME).

In 3 years from 2018-2021, the government spent Rs. 2.54 trillion in terms of subsidies, grants,

and loans to keep commercial SOEs operational, he said.

He informed that the size of the government has increased by more than three times in the last couple of decades.

Fawad said that moreover, FBR sends recovery notices to individuals worth billions of rupees while the actual collection is a mere few hundred million.

Since 2016, the tax burden on corporate taxpayers has increased by more than 40 percent on

average, he said. Such a burden has contributed to encouraging people to stay out of the tax system and corporatization.

The public sector reforms should include bureaucratic reforms and taxation system reforms. These two areas are crucial for improving the performance of the state.

He stressed that the reform should not increase in the size of the federal and provincial governments, and the power of state functionaries.

## Pakistan, China hold meeting to promote agri-forestry economy

BEIJING (APP): The third Science and Technology Exchange Conference on China-Pakistan Tropical Arid Non-wood Forest is being held both online and offline from November 26 to 28 in Zhengzhou, China, and Gwadar, Pakistan simultaneously.

The exchange conference aims to showcase achievements and research progress of both nations in the field of economic forestry. It also seeks to facilitate academic exchanges of woody medicinal herbs and active substances between China and Pakistan.

The event, co-hosted

by the Chinese Society of Forestry (CSF) and Central South University of Forestry and Technology (CSUFT), drew over 220 officials, scholars, students and business representatives from both countries, China Economic Net (CEN) reported.

In 2021, to enhance the economic and ecological development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), CSUFT, China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC), and Yulin Holdings collaborated to establish an Engineering Research Center for Tropical Arid

Non-wood Forest. The center aims to showcase a green and sustainable development approach, focusing on the non-wood forest industry and its compatibility with ecological, economic, and social benefits in Gwadar.

During the review and discussion of the progress made over the past years, Zhang Baozhong, chairman of COPHC, introduced the impact of eco-economic forest construction on the business environment in Gwadar. Focusing on the collection and utilization of arid- and salt-tolerant and non-wood barren forests.

## VEON wins award for crisis response

ISLAMABAD (APP): VEON, a global digital operator that provides converged connectivity and online services has won the Crisis Response Award for its group-wide emergency response initiatives.

The World Communications Awards, presented in Amsterdam and hosted after the conclusion of the Total Telecoms Congress, is adjudicated by over 90 independent industry experts, academics, and CTOs; and is widely recognized as one of the most prestigious awards in the telecommunications industry, said a news release issued here on Monday.

VEON was recognized for its "comprehensive approach to some of the most difficult operating environments on Earth, both due to natural disasters and man-made conflicts" including a focus on network resilience, early disaster-warning apps, and humanitarian aid.

During the past two years, VEON's digital operators have prioritized putting technology to the use of the most vulnerable people and communities who fell victim to the war in Ukraine, devastating floods in Pakistan, and cyclone Mocha in Bangladesh.

While no humanitarian situation is comparable in terms of devastation, these disasters have all affected and continue to affect millions of people, exposing them to disease, hunger, and displacement, with women and children being the most vulnerable.

"This strategy will ensure evidence-based decision-making across different levels of governance."

This initiative will help PBS in crafting a crucial National Data Dissemination Policy to ensure that the statistics produced by it reach and benefit a wide range of users.

The 2nd workshop was attended by data users, researchers, demographers and other stakeholders, besides Dr. Naem uz Zafar, Chief statistician, Member (SS/RM).

The bureau said the workshops would ensure a more comprehensive



QUETTA: A delegation of Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry led by its President Haji Abdullah Achakzai meeting with Balochistan Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar.

## Rupee shed 27 paise against Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Monday witnessed 27 paise devaluation against US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 285.64 against the previous day's closing at Rs285.37.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs 285.2 and Rs 288.8 respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by Rs 1.41 to close at Rs312.72 against the last day's closing of Rs311.31, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen gained one paise to close at Rs1.91; whereas an increase of Rs2.06 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs360.25 as compared to the last closing of Rs358.19.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 07 and 08 paise to close at Rs77.77 and Rs76.16 respectively.

## PSX gains 725 points to close at 59,811

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Monday, gaining 724.99 points, a positive change of 1.23 percent, closing at 59,811.34 points against 59,086.35 points the previous trading day.

A total of 657,580,760 shares valuing Rs 20,272 billion were traded during the day as compared to 658,424,782 shares valuing Rs 22,015 billion the last day.

Some 391 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 245 of them recorded gains and 121 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 25 remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Kohinoor Spinning with 109,392,000 shares at Rs4.00 per share, WorldCall Telecom with 43,313,979 shares at Rs 1.52 per share and Yousuf Weaving with 22,758,500 shares at Rs 4.24 per share.

Hoechst Pak Ltd witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 88.11 per share price, closing at Rs 1,263.00, whereas the runner-up was Ismail Ind with a Rs 75.12 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,076.72.

Nestle Pakistan witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 117.50 per share closing at Rs 8,450.00, followed by Rafhan Maize with a Rs 91.97 decline to close at Rs 10,390.38.

## Custom Agents trapped as victims of draconian laws despite their law-abiding role

**Independent Report**  
KARACHI: Sheikh Muhammad Tariq, Vice Chairman of Custom Agents, has said that in the intricate dynamics of customs procedures, a significant concern surfaces regarding the application of draconian laws against Custom Agents.

The issue revolves around the exercise of power by higher authorities who, in conducting direct inspections and facilitating the release of goods, may inadvertently be engaging in the practice of shifting the onus of responsibility for violations or negligence onto the Custom Agents.

This issue underscores the indispensable need for a cautious and assertive approach in addressing and rectifying any potential abuses of power.

Moreover, there is a pressing matter related to the imposition of taxes on goods, where an apparent

overreach of authority and a potential disregard for established laws is observed. This prompts a thorough examination of the legitimacy and fairness of the tax imposition practices. It becomes imperative to scrutinize whether these actions align with established legal frameworks, as any deviation raises significant questions about the transparency and adherence to the rule of law within the customs regulatory domain.

Addressing these multifaceted concerns is not only crucial for the equitable treatment of Custom Agents but also for the broader principles of accountability and legal compliance within the customs landscape.

It is imperative to acknowledge that Custom Agents should not be automatically implicated or assumed to have any involvement or awareness of malpractices.

## Jubilee Life Insurance marks 5-year milestone in empowering youth

**Independent Report**  
KARACHI: Jubilee Life Insurance, Pakistan's largest private sector insurance company, proudly celebrated its 5th consecutive year of collaboration with SEED Ventures on the Enterprise Challenge Pakistan (ECP), the country's premier business challenge for school children with an

Ayesha, ECP Programme Manager Ms Maha Salman.

ECP is an initiative of Prince's Trust International executed by SEED Ventures since 2016 across Pakistan. It is a national competition for 14-18-year-old students that aims to inspire the entrepreneurial spirit within young people and



event held at the British Deputy High Commission (BDHC) Karachi, Pakistan. The keynote address at the event was delivered by British Deputy High Commissioner Her Excellency Ms Sarah Mooney. Other speakers at the event included MD & CEO Jubilee Life Insurance Mr Javed Ahmed, and Head of Marketing and Brand Management Jubilee Life Insurance Mr Usman Qaiser, along with CEO SEED Ventures Ms Shaista

transform them into the job creators of tomorrow. Jubilee Life's partnership with ECP aligns with its broader vision to alleviate socio-economic challenges by empowering youth and women, focusing on socially including and embracing those historically excluded. At the heart of this collaboration is a shared commitment to empowering the next generation of leaders in Pakistan. Jubilee Life Insurance recognizes the significance of investing in young minds.



KARACHI: Chief Statistician Pakistan Bureau of Statistics Dr. Naem-uz-Zafar gives shield to Head of Office Sindh (UNFA), Ms. Bayramgul Garabayeva at a workshop on data users and data producer's dialogue organized by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics in collaboration with United Nations Population Funds (UNFPA).

## PRMI for modernization of local business to enhance FDI

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Regulatory Modernization Initiatives (PRMI) was a major plan of the Board of Investment (BOI) for the modernization and automation of the regulatory framework at all three government levels including federal, provincial and district level.

He said the vital success indicator of the initiative would be increase in the overall private sector and foreign direct investment level without compromising the effectiveness of the various regulatory regimes.

Sohail Rajput said enabling a business environment played a pivotal role in attracting domestic and foreign investment.

said the main objective of PRMI reforms strategy was to improve the entry and operation environment for business, focusing on the simplification and automation of the regulatory framework at all three government levels including federal, provincial and district level. He said the vital success indicator of the initiative would be increase in the overall private sector and foreign direct investment level without compromising the effectiveness of the various regulatory regimes.

Sohail Rajput said enabling a business environment played a pivotal role in attracting domestic and foreign investment.



KARACHI: People are buying woolen clothes from vendors after increasing coldness.

## Malnutrition causes \$7.5b loss to national GDP per annum: Experts

FAISALABAD (APP): Proper awareness is imperative to overcome malnutrition as it is causing colossal loss of 7.5 billion dollars to national GDP per annum.

This was stated by the experts while addressing the 5th All Pakistan Nutritionists Convention organized by the Nutritionist and Dietetic Society and Faculty of Food and Nutrition and Home Sciences, University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) at its Iqbal Auditorium here on Monday.

Presiding over the

convention, Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Muhammad Sarwar Khan said that raising awareness among the people about nutritious food is need of the hour in order to overcome this crisis.

He said that after food security, the most important issue is nutrition security. The increasing trend of junk food among the young generation and children was deepening the nutritional crisis.

He said that malnutrition had damaged the people especially children and women.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where two ships, Bum Shin and Theresa Schulte carrying Palm oil and Chemicals, berthed at Liquid Terminal and Engro Terminal respectively during last 24 hours.

Meanwhile five more ships, carrying Containers, Coal and LPG also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during the same period. A total of Seven ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them, two ships, Doro and Maersk Chesapeake left the port on Monday morning and another ship Theresa Chesapeake is expected to sail on today after noon.

Cargo throughput of 62,535 tonnes, comprising 25,809 tonnes imports cargo and 36,726 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 2,062 Containers.



QUETTA: Managing Director OGDCLA Hayat Malik meeting with Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan.

## RTA sets fixed fare for local public transporters

ABBOTTABAD (APP): After a comprehensive meeting with key stakeholders, the Regional Transport Authority (RTA) Monday has fixed fares for Suzuki vehicles operating on local routes.

The decision was reached in consultation with Secretary RTA Hazara division Athar Khan, SSP Traffic Arif Javed, Additional Assistant Commissioner Ali Sher Khan Khalil, representatives from the Suzuki Union, municipal officials,

## All Pakistan Kisan Ittehad delegation meets S.M Tanveer

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: A delegation of All Pakistan Kisan Ittehad here on Monday met Caretaker Punjab Minister for Agriculture S.M Tanveer and apprised him about the problems of farmers.

Speaking on the occasion the minister said, "Agriculture sector has a key position in the national economy and its development can help in overcoming the country's economic crisis."

New investment of billions of dollars was underway in the

agricultural sector and in order to address black marketing of fertilizers the crackdown in this regard had been intensified, he added. He further said that canal water theft was also being addressed with the support of irrigation and other allied departments.

The government of Punjab had raised its voice before the federal government regarding the purchase of cotton at a fixed price, he added.

SM Tanveer said that effective measures were being taken to increase per acre production of wheat.

## ICCI calls for supportive industrial policy for SMEs

ISLAMABAD (INP): Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry welcomed the constitution of an Industry Advisory Council led by Dr. Gohar Ejaz, Federal Minister for Commerce to formulate the country's industrial policy and stressed that the new industrial policy should be supportive of the SMEs.

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that SMEs are the backbone of our economy as besides promoting the economic activities and exports, they play a vital role in job creation,

poverty reduction, and innovation. Therefore, it is very important that the new industrial policy should focus on supporting the SMEs so that these businesses could play a more effective role in reviving the economy.

He said that the new industrial policy should ensure easier access to finance for SMEs for expansion and growth and help in their capacity building. He said that the new industrial policy should offer good incentives for SMEs to adopt modern technologies and digital solutions.



LAHORE: A delegation of Pakistan Kisan Ittehad meeting with Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce S.M Tanveer.

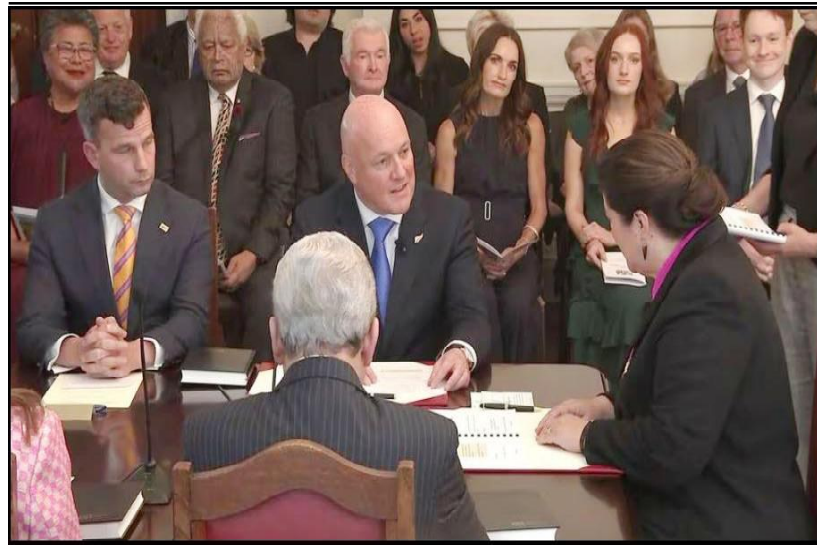
## Negotiators close to agreeing extension of Gaza truce, say Egyptian security sources

**News Desk**  
GAZA/JERUSALEM: Egyptian, Qatari and US negotiators closed in on an extension of a four-day truce in Gaza that expires on Monday, Egyptian security sources said, amid rising international pressure to roll over a deal which has paused seven weeks of fighting.  
Palestinian group Hamas is seeking a four-day extension while Israel wants day-by-day extensions, with negotiations continuing over which Palestinian prisoners would be freed, the sources said.  
An Israeli official earlier reiterated Israel's position that it would agree to an extra day of truce for each additional 10 hostages freed and to release three times the number of Palestinians each time. The number of additional days is capped at five, the official added.  
A Palestinian official, familiar with the truce talks, said both Hamas and Israel had shown a positive attitude to requests to extend the pause in fighting, but added that "a final decision hasn't yet been reached."  
On Sunday, Hamas freed 17 people, including a 4-year-old Israeli-American girl, bringing the total number the militant group has released since Friday to 58, including foreigners. Israel freed 39 teenage Palestinian prisoners on Sunday, taking the total number of Palestinians freed under the truce to 117.  
Under the terms of the current deal, Hamas is due to

release in total 50 Israeli women and children held hostage in Gaza, which means that 11 remained to be freed on Monday. There is no limit in the deal on the number of foreigners it can release.  
An Israeli government spokesperson said on Monday that the total number of hostages still held in Gaza was now 184, including 14 foreigners and 80 Israelis with dual nationality.  
Both Israel and Hamas raised concerns over Monday's lists and Qatari mediators were working with them to resolve the issues and avoid delays, an official briefed on the matter told Reuters.  
Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said it was reviewing the list of Palestinian prisoners it had received from Hamas for release on Monday and would provide further information when possible.  
Hamas spokesperson Osama Hamdan, speaking to Lebanon's LBC broadcaster, said the group would try to find more hostages to release and thus prolong the truce. Hamas has previously said it is not holding all the hostages who were brought to Gaza.  
Once the truce ends, Netanyahu said at the weekend, "we will return with full force to achieve our goals: the elimination of Hamas; ensuring that Gaza does not return to what it was; and of course the release of all our hostages."



Palestinians eat outside amid the destruction caused by Israeli strikes in the village of Khuzaa, east of Khan Yunis near the border fence between Israel and the southern Gaza Strip



WELLINGTON: Former airline boss Christopher Luxon formally took office as New Zealand's prime minister vowing to tame inflation and bring down interest rates

## Satirical Putin play stirs emotions in Bulgaria

SOPIA (AFP/APP): A highly acclaimed satirical play about President Vladimir Putin and his allies facing a war crimes tribunal is making waves in Bulgaria, a country historically close to Russia.  
Titled "The Hague", the play by Ukrainian author Sasha Denisova recounts the story of an orphaned teenager from Mariupol who imagines how Russia's top brass is brought to justice over its devastating war in Ukraine.  
After premiering in Poland and the United States earlier this year, celebrated guest director Galin Stoev adapted the play for a Bulgarian audience, seeking to challenge the Balkan country's pro-Kremlin sentiment.  
In the drama currently staged at Sofia's National Theatre, Putin is portrayed by a woman—Bulgarian actor Radena Valkanova—donning a sleek black suit and red shoes.  
"If we can't watch the Hague trial in real life, let's watch it in the theatre," Denisova said of the scene she penned before the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for Putin over the alleged unlawful deportation of Ukrainian children.  
In the same way, as Charlie Chaplin mocked Nazi leader Adolf Hitler on screen, "Putin must be laughed at without mercy," she told AFP, stressing the power of satire.  
Historically close to Russia, EU and NATO member Bulgaria still has many citizens nostalgic for what they see as the glory days of the Russian empire and the Soviet Union.  
The nostalgia also refers to Russia as a protector for the Slavic people of Bulgaria from Ottoman rule.  
Studies suggesting that 30 percent of Bulgarians are pro-Putin—despite Moscow's relentless war on Ukraine—encouraged Stoev in his determination to stage an "eye-opening" adaptation of the play in Sofia.  
And he seems to have hit a mark.  
"The audience is deeply moved and asks questions," Stoev told AFP, after the actors received another round of standing ovations from the crowd.

## Lightning strikes in India's Gujarat kill 24

GUJARAT (INDIA) (INP): Twenty-four people have died by lightning strikes and about 23 have been left injured in rain-related incidents in the western Indian state of Gujarat over the past two days, government officials said, with rains continuing on Monday morning.  
The state was hit by heavy rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms and hailstorms on Sunday and Monday, with some places receiving up to 144 millimetres (5.7 inches) of rain in the 24 hours ending on Monday morning, according to state government data.  
The rains caused damage to houses and loss of cattle across the state. "We will begin a survey soon to assess the loss suffered," Gujarat Agriculture Minister Raghavji Patel said on Monday, adding that compensation will be paid to victims on the basis of the survey's results.

## Russia includes Facebook spokesperson Andy Stone to most wanted list

MOSCOW (Online): Russia has included the spokesperson of Facebook to the list of wanted persons.  
According to a foreign news agency, Russia has added Andy Stone, the spokesman for Meta Platforms, to the wanted list.  
According to media reports, the Russian Interior Ministry also opened a criminal investigation against Andy Stone, but did not disclose details of the investigation or the charges against him. The ban was imposed shortly after Moscow invaded Ukraine in February of this year.  
According to media reports, a Russian investigative committee said in March 2022 that it had opened a criminal investigation into the illegal actions of META employees and mentioned Andy Stone. The committee accused him of torture on Russian military platforms and of inciting extremist activities after the ban on calls was lifted.

## Luxon sworn in as New Zealand prime minister

WELLINGTON (AFP/APP): Former airline boss Christopher Luxon formally took office as New Zealand's prime minister on Monday, vowing to tame inflation and bring down interest rates.  
Luxon took over six weeks after his conservative National Party won national elections, ending a six-year Labour Party reign ushered in by Jacinda Ardern.  
Luxon, 53, once chief executive of Air New Zealand, was sworn in as head of a new coalition government by New Zealand's governor-general in a ceremony in the capital Wellington.  
"It is an honour and an awesome responsibility," Luxon told reporters.  
"The number one job is to fix the economy. We have to reduce the cost of living and get inflation under control so we can lower interest rates and make food more affordable."  
Luxon said his new government would also focus in its first few months on restoring law and order and improving public services.  
"We need to go to work," he said.  
The former Labour government struggled to control the rising cost of living, a global issue blamed in part on pandemic-related supply issues and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.  
The previous prime minister, Labour Party leader Chris Hipkins, took over from Ardern in January.  
She had unexpectedly resigned, calling an end to her five-year period in office because she no longer had "enough in the tank".  
Luxon said his cabinet would meet over the next two days to determine their plans for the first 100 days in office. National has also said it wants to crack down on crime, ban cellphones in schools and scrap planned fuel tax hikes.

## China's top diplomat to visit UN for Israel-Hamas talks

Beijing (AFP/APP): China's top diplomat Wang Yi will visit New York this week to hold a United Nations Security Council meeting on the Israel-Hamas conflict, Beijing's foreign ministry said on Monday.  
"As it holds the rotating presidency of the United Nations Security Council this month, China will hold a high-level meeting on the Palestinian-Israeli issue on November 29," spokesman Wang Wenbin said.  
Wang Yi will preside over the meeting, he added. Hamas poured across the border on October 7, killing 1,200 people, according to Israeli officials.  
In response, Israel launched a military campaign to destroy Hamas, killing nearly 15,000 people, mostly civilians and including thousands of children, according to Gaza's Hamas government.  
China said last week it welcomed a truce between Israel-Hamas, which began Friday and led to dozens of hostages being freed and the release of more than 100 Palestinian prisoners.  
The deal entered its final 24 hours on Monday.  
Beijing hoped this week's UN talks would achieve "a ceasefire and an end to the fighting" and make "contributions to alleviating the humanitarian crisis in Gaza", Wang Wenbin said.  
China has historically been sympathetic to the Palestinian cause and supportive of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.  
Chinese President Xi Jinping has called for an "international peace conference" to resolve the fighting.

## US President Biden to miss COP28 climate summit

WASHINGTON (INP): President Joe Biden will miss the latest UN climate summit in Dubai, after two years of attending the talks in hopes of highlighting US leadership, a US official said.  
Some 70,000 people including national leaders and Pope Francis are expected at COP28 as it opens on Thursday, in what could be the largest United Nations climate summit ever. Schedules released by the White House for Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris showed neither heading to Dubai this week.  
Biden's engagements include a trip to Colorado to highlight US investment in wind energy, a meeting with the president of Angola and the lighting of the national Christmas tree. A US official confirmed that Biden was not planning to attend COP28 this week or during a second window close to the end of the talks on December 12.  
The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Biden administration was still discussing whether to send a top-level official to Dubai. John Kerry, the US climate envoy and former secretary of state and senator, will be leading day-to-day negotiations for the United States.  
The official did not give a reason for Biden's decision. But Biden has been focused for more than a month on the war between Israel and Hamas and is also looking to highlight his domestic agenda with less than a year to the US presidential election.

## Police arrest 109 climate protesters at Australian coal port

Sydney (AFP/APP): More than 100 climate activists have been arrested after staging a floating blockade of Australia's largest coal port, police said Monday, including five children and a 97-year-old reverend.  
A fleet of kayaks blocked shipping traffic over the weekend at the Port of Newcastle on Australia's east coast, impeding the government to end the country's long reliance on fossil fuel exports.  
Authorities agreed to let the protest run for 30 hours, but police boats started closing in when the deadline passed and crowds of activists refused to leave the water.  
Among the 109 people arrested was Uniting Church reverend Alan Stuart, who said he wanted to stave off climate disasters for his "grandchildren and future generations".  
"I am so sorry that they will have to suffer the consequences of our inaction," he said in a statement ahead of his arrest.  
"So, I think I must do what I can and stand up for what I know is right."  
Protest group Rising Tide, which organised the blockade, said Stuart, 97, was the "oldest" Australian ever arrested in connection with a climate change demonstration.  
"We chose to risk arrest because scientists are warning that to avoid catastrophic climate collapse we must urgently phase out fossil fuels," the group said in a statement.  
New South Wales Police said five juveniles had also been arrested but did not give their ages.



Released Palestinian prisoner Israa Jaabis receives an emotional welcome from her family in Jerusalem, after she was freed as part of a prisoner-swap deal between Hamas and Israel

## Irish author Paul Lynch wins 2023 Booker Prize

LONDON (AFP/APP): Irish author Paul Lynch won the 2023 Booker Prize for fiction on Sunday for his novel "Prophet Song," a dystopian work about an Ireland that descends into tyranny.  
The 46-year-old pipped five other shortlisted novelists to the prestigious award at a ceremony in London.  
He becomes the fifth Irish writer to win the high-profile literary prize, which has propelled to fame countless household names, including past winners Salman Rushdie, Margaret Atwood and Hilary Mantel.  
"This was not an easy book to write," Lynch said after collecting his award, which comes with £50,000 (around \$63,000) and a huge boost to his profile.  
"The rational part of me believed I was doing

## Bangladesh arrest thousands in 'violent' crackdown: HRW

DHAKA (INP): Bangladesh has launched a sweeping and violent crackdown on opposition parties to "eliminate competition" ahead of general elections, including arresting almost 10,000 activists, Human Rights Watch said Monday.  
As well as the thousands arrested—many from the key Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)—a staggering number also face charges.  
According to the BNP, about half of its five million members "face politically motivated prosecution", HRW said.  
"The arrests, they are not leaving anyone behind, from senior level to the ground level," one activist told HRW. Prisons are now at more than double their capacity, the rights group said.  
The South Asian nation of around 170 million people holds a general election on January 7, with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina eyeing her fourth consecutive term in power.  
"Bangladesh authorities are carrying out mass arrests of political opposition in a clear attempt to quash the opposition and eliminate competition ahead of the general elections", HRW said.  
New York-based HRW, who called it a "violent autocratic crackdown", said at least 16 people have been killed since protests escalated in October, including

## Six pupils go on trial over 2020 murder of French schoolteacher

PARIS (INP): Six teenagers go on trial in Paris on Monday for their role in the 2020 beheading of teacher Samuel Paty, the first of two trials in a case that horrified France.  
The 47-year-old history and geography teacher was stabbed and then beheaded near his secondary school in the Paris suburb of Conflans-Sainte-Honorine.  
His attacker, 18-year-old ethnic Chechen refugee Abdoullakh Anzorov, was shot dead at the scene by police.  
The young Chechen murdered Paty after messages spread on social media that the teacher had shown his class blasphemous cartoons from the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo.  
Paty had used the magazine as part of an ethics class to discuss free speech laws in France, where blasphemy is legal and cartoons mocking religious figures have a long history.  
His killing took place just weeks after Charlie Hebdo republished the cartoons. When the magazine first used the images in 2015, gunmen stormed its office, killing 12 people.  
Last month another teacher, Dominique Bernard, was killed in Arras in northern France by a young radicalised Islamist.

## More than half a million people left without power in Crimea, Russia and Ukraine after huge storm

**News Desk**  
NEW YORK: More than half a million people were left without power in Crimea, Russia and Ukraine after a storm in the Black Sea area flooded roads, ripped up trees and took down power lines, Russian state news agency Tass and Ukraine's energy ministry said. Meanwhile, the Moscow region experienced its heaviest snowfall in 40 years, the governor said.  
The storms and snowfall were part of a weather front that left one person dead and many places without electricity amid heavy snow and blizzards in Romania and Moldova on Sunday.  
The head of Russia's national meteorological service said the storm that hit Crimea was the most powerful since record-keeping began, state news agency RIA Novosti reported.  
Crimea was annexed by Russia in 2014 and is a key military and logistics hub for Russia as it pursues its war in Ukraine. It is unclear whether the storm damaged any Russian military equipment or defenses.  
The storm also hit southern Russia and sent waves flooding into the beach resort of Sochi, blew the roof off a five-story building in Anapa and damaged homes and schools in Kuban, the state news agency said. It also caused a cargo ship to run aground near Anapa.  
Local Russia-installed officials said one person died in Crimea after going out to look at the waves in a village near the town of Sudak in the southern part of the peninsula, while other people were hospitalized or evacuated from their homes.  
The government in Crimea told people to stay at home on Monday and closed government facilities, including schools and hospitals, as strong winds were expected to continue.  
The storm prompted several Crimean regions to declare a state of emergency.  
Tatyana Lyubetskaya, a Russia-installed official at the Crimean environmental monitoring department, told Tass.  
Roman Vilfand, the head of Russia's national meteorological service, told RIA Novosti that a similar storm hit the region in November 1854 during the Crimean War. It caused at least 30 ships to sink off Crimea's coast, RIA Novosti said.



Emergency workers release a car which is stuck in snow during a heavy snow storm in Odesa region, Ukraine.

## Govt to launch national program on hepatitis, diabetes

ISLAMABAD (APP): The inter-ministerial meeting chaired by caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan on Monday decided to launch National Diabetes, Hepatitis and National Health Support Programs.

The meeting was attended by all provincial ministers and their representatives. It took major decisions with consequences taking up ten point major reform agenda for the transformation of the health sector in the country.

It was decided to launch National Diabetes Program costing Rs. 6.8 billion in view of the high prevalence of this non-communicable diseases in the country.

The program will have a major impact on arresting the high incidence of the disease in Pakistan.

Free screening and diagnosis facilities will be provided to the patients under this landmark initiative.

It was also agreed to launch National Hepatitis Program at the cost of Rs. 34.5 billion under which free screening, diagnoses and treatment facilities will be

provided across the country. To strengthen primary health care it was decided to launch National Health Support Program at the cost of Rs. 430 million.

Around 500 BHU will be refurbished and will be made functional across the country. The provincial governments will bear the recurrent cost including the appointment of human resource. To decrease neonatal morbidity and mortality newborn strategy was endorsed, which will be implemented throughout the country.

It will ensure the supplies and availability of medicines at the primary health care level.

National Behaviour Change Strategy will be introduced to equip the population with the necessary knowledge to practice health behaviours.

Consonant with this responsibility Federal Ministry of Health has been striving to provide suitable platforms to ensure harmonization of various areas in health and population, particularly those which require a coordinated national approach and face common critical challenges.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Dr. Nadeem Jan chaired an Inter Ministerial meeting on health and population participated by all provinces Ministers and their representatives.

## Senate told Pakistan has sufficient stock of wheat to cater country needs

Administrative measures stabilized rupee's value

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Information, Murtaza Solangi on Monday said Pakistan currently had ample wheat stocks and concrete measures would be initiated to address any flour shortage due to supply chain problems.

Responding to a motion under Rule 218 by Senator Sania Nishtar, fo-

cus on addressing gaps in the wheat supply chain that may lead to flour shortage, the minister stated that currently there was no wheat shortage in the country. Senator Nishtar had pointed out the specific lack in wheat policy, citing the conversion of green bags to white bags at the retail level. She also hinted at the smuggling as a factor, contributing to wheat shortages in addition to creation of systematic artificial shortages and hoarding.

The minister emphasized that there was an adequate stock of wheat in the country as public wheat stock included 39,24,367 metric tons in Punjab, 8,17,394 metric tons in Sindh, 2,15,082 metric tons in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 89,354 metric tons in Balochistan. Pakistan Agricultural Storage & Services

Corporation Ltd (PASSCO) accounted for 17,18,177 metric tons, he added. Private wheat stock comprises 3,37,270 metric tons in Punjab, 93,165 metric tons in Sindh, 14,918 metric tons in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 4,157 metric tons in Balochistan.

The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs said that Pakistan had over seven million (7,213,884) metric tons of wheat, with an additional imported stock of 10,33,845 metric tons, ensuring there was no shortage. He said the support price for provinces differed, being Rs 4600 in Punjab and Rs 4700 in Sindh.

During discussions on the motion, Senator Dilawar Khan said that Pakistan should export wheat rather than its import and called for concessions to the

agriculture sector.

Meanwhile Caretaker Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Monday informed the Senate that the value of rupees has stabilized owing to the administrative measures of the incumbent government.

Winding up the discussion on the motion raised by Kamran Murtaza regarding the devaluation of the Pakistan Rupee and shortage of US dollars in the market resulting in high inflation, the minister said that the government controlled the informal channels/hundi business in the country. He expressed the hope that the value of the country's currency would further improve after receiving a second tranche from the IMF after its review.



QUETTA: Central leader of Pakistan Peoples Party Nawab Sanaulah Zehri being briefed about security arrangements of PPP's 30th November public gathering during his visit to CPO

## 8 under-construction WAPDA projects completed

MANGLA: (APP): As a result of the completion of eight under-construction water and hydropower projects of WAPDA, the carry-over water capacity in the country will increase from 30 days to 45 days with an addition of 9.7 MAF water storage, while hydel power generation of WAPDA will also be doubled to more than 18,000 MW with an increase of 9,043 MW, it was officially said.

This was briefed to a delegation of PAF Air War College Karachi during their visit to WAPDA House on Monday, media wing of

WAPDA said in a statement released on Monday. Headed by Air Commodore Raja Imran Asghar, Deputy President of the College, the delegation was comprised of Pakistani and allied officers from Bahrain, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Zimbabwe, the press statement said. Secretary WAPDA Fakharuzzaman Ali Cheema welcomed the guests while Advisor (Hydrology and Water Management) Shahid Hamid briefed the delegation about role, functions and development plans.



QUETTA: Residents of Satellite Town are blocked road and burn tires as they are holding protest demonstration against low pressure of sui gas in their area.

## Ex-bureaucrat Ahad acquitted in assets beyond means reference

ISLAMABAD (Online): National Accountability Bureau (NAB) acquitted Ahad Cheema, former adviser to the caretaker prime minister, of the charges in the reference of assets beyond means.

In the report submitted by NAB on Ahad Cheema's acquittal plea, it has been said that there is no reference to assets in excess of income against the former bureaucrat, all his assets are in line with his

income. In the NAB report, it has been said that the alleged benami (Without name) institutes of Ahad Cheema have built properties from their personal income, the properties of their alleged benami institutes cannot be linked to Ahad Cheema, their relatives Sadia Mansoor, Mansoor Ahmed and Nazia Ashraf's accounts are not Ahad Cheema's benami accounts.

## Tandoors of those selling less weight naan on high rate to be sealed: ADC

Independent Report QUETTA: The Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Quetta, Muhammad Anwar Kakar has warned that the Tandoor shops of those selling less weight naan (bread) on high rate would be sealed and the owners would be sentenced to imprisonment in jail.

The Additional DC General was addressing the meeting with office bearers of Tandoor Association here on Monday.

It was unanimously decided that the Tandoors of those owners found selling less weight roti on the rate over the prescribed rate

would be sealed forever canceling their licenses.

The Additional DC warned the Tandoor Association of stern action against those violating the agreement reached with it about selling of the naan.

It was mentioned that the administration issued revised rate list of the naan in view of the problems of Tandoor Association.

But, still the violation of agreement is continued by the Tandoor Association, the ADC regretfully pointed out.

He asked the Tandoor Association to abide by the agreement.

## WB to launch 'Policy Notes' for Pakistan's key-area reforms

ISLAMABAD (APP): The World Bank (WB) will present a series of 'Policy Notes' on Tuesday outlining the most critical policy shifts for Pakistan's key areas including achieving fiscal sustainability.

The policy notes have been compiled after months of dialogue, under the initiative "Reforms for a Brighter Future: Time to Decide," which focuses on fiscal sustainability, private sector growth, energy, stunting, learning poverty, agriculture, and climate change.

The launch event would present the findings from outreach and engagements conducted across the country, and inform the public policy dialogue on moving towards a productive, sustainable, resilient, and healthy Pakistan.

## Fawad Ch. gets B-class facilities in jail

ISLAMABAD (INP): The former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry has been granted B-class facilities in jail on Monday.

In compliance with a court directive, Chief Commissioner Anwarul Haq appeared before the High Court in a case involving the prison facilities of Fawad Chaudhry.

During the court hearing, the Chief Commissioner presented an implementation report on Fawad Chaudhry's requests. The report revealed that former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry has been granted B-class facilities in jail, and as per the court's directives, he has been permitted to meet with family and legal representatives.

Additionally, the court granted permission for a separate meeting between Fawad Chaudhry's wife and him within the prison premises.

During the conversation with the Deputy Superintendent of Jail, Justice Mian Gul Hasan Aurangzeb emphasized the need to provide medical facilities to Fawad Chaudhry in accordance with the jail manual.

The court directed the jail authorities to show respect and dignity to the petitioner.



QUETTA: Accountant General Balochistan Hassan Saqlain meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

## Senate passes resolution Asking for addressing concerns in Dasu, Diamer Bhasha Dams regions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate on Monday passed a resolution expressing deep concern over the present situation emerging in the areas of the Dasu and Diamer Bhasha dams and asked for recruitment in the said projects as per the quota fixed for them. The resolution was tabled by Muhammad Talha Mahmood. The resolution further said that the salary of persons working on the said projects should not be less than the minimum wage, i.e., Rupees thirty-two thousand per month, as fixed by the Government in the budget for the current fiscal year.

It also emphasized that the laborers working on those projects should be paid at least Rs. 1500 per day, following the Government policy.

Additionally, the resolution urged the government to provide compensation to all the affected of those projects under the "chola package."

It further said that the Government should take all necessary steps to utilize the amount allocated for the construction of roads, schools, and other facilities in the affected areas in consultation with local elders of Kohistan on a merit basis.



QUETTA: Funeral prayers of BAP leader Mir Ismail Lehri being offered

## Dashti for timely completion of development schemes in Makran

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Secretary Communication and Works (C&W) Department, Qambar Dashti has directed all the concerned officers to mobilize all available resources to complete the ongoing development projects in the Makran division.

He also directed them not to make any compromise on quality of work on the projects besides asking them to issue notices to the contractors who stopped work on the projects.

If they didn't resume work on the projects even

then, the process of blacklisting should be initiated against them, directed the Secretary C&W while presiding over the meeting held to review progress of work on the ongoing development schemes in Makran circles, at Kech on Monday.

Those who were present in the meeting were included Chief Engineers Faiz Mohsin and Iqbal Kasi besides other concerned officers.

The Secretary C&W was briefed by the concerned engineers about progress of the schemes being executed in their re-

## Governor grieved over death of Ismail Lehri

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of former Nazim Chiltan Town, Mir Muhammad Ismail Lehri.

In a condolence statement issued here on Monday, the Governor said that the late Ismail Lehri was a thorough gentleman and a kind person.

He said that the services of Mir Ismail Lehri for the poor people would be remembered for a long time.

The Governor prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed soul into Its eternal peace and give enough patience and strength to the bear the tragic loss.

## DG NAB to hold open court in Quetta

Independent Report

QUETTA: Director General, National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Balochistan Zafar Iqbal will hold an open court here at the regional office on November 30.

Following the directives of the chairman NAB, the anti-corruption watchdog has decided to hear public complaints with regard to corruption and corrupt practices, NAB officer said on Monday.

He noted that NAB will take action against complaints falling within the jurisdiction of the NAB Ordinance 1999.

## Caretaker FM says Welfare of overseas Pakistanis, resolution of issues among govt's top priorities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani on Monday said that welfare of the overseas Pakistanis and the resolution of their issues on a priority basis, were among the top priorities of the interim government.

Jilani further said that the European Union (EU) was an important partner of Pakistan and welcomed the continuation of GSP Plus status for Pakistan, adding these steps would further promote bilateral economic links with the EU.

The minister expressed these views during

his visit to the Pakistan Embassy in Belgium where he was warmly received by Pakistan Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union Anna Baloch and other members of the diplomatic staff, a press release said.

The caretaker foreign minister visited different sections of the embassy including the consular section and expressed his satisfaction over the facilities being provided to the Pakistani community.

On the occasion, he also penned down his expressions in the visitors' book placed in the embassy.



RAWALPINDI: Lieutenant General Fahad Bin Abdullah Muhammad Al Mutair, Commander of the Royal Saudi Land Forces called on General Sahir Shamsah Mirza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, at Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi.

## Strengthening & empowering women: Balochistan women summit to be held in Quetta today

Independent Report

QUETTA: The first Balochistan Women Summit 2023 is scheduled to be held under the auspices of Provincial Information Department in Quetta today (Tuesday).

According to an official handout issued here on Sunday, the Women Summit would be held in collaboration with Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund for strengthening and empowering women of the province.

The Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar would be the chief guest at the event while the provin-

cial ministers and advisers would also be participating in it. The prominent YouTubers, singers and personalities belonging to different sections of life would also be participating in the summit. The awards would also be conferred upon different personalities in recognition of their invaluable services.

The summit is also aimed at recognizing the invaluable services and important role of women in different sectors.

This platform would also promote the culture of praise and recognition of services of others.



NANKANA SAHIB: Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed addressing on the occasion of 554th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev.

## Interim Govt determined to resolve basic problems of masses; Danish Langove

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Advisor to caretaker Chief Minister for Irrigation, Mir Danish Langove has stated that the interim government knows well about the issues of masses.

The government is determined to resolve the basic issues of health, education, employment and others being faced by the general public.

He said that it is our

topmost priority to assist the Election Commission in conducting the free and fair general elections in the province.

The Advisor said that no stone would be left unturned in public service and all available resources are being mobilized for the purpose, he maintained.

Mir Danish Langove also said that it is his utmost endeavour to materialize the dreams of masses.

## LHC reserves decision on petition to remove Caretaker PM from office

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has reserved its decision on the petition filed to remove Caretaker Prime Minister (PM) Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar from his office.

Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan of LHC heard the petition of Advocate Muhammad Muqasit.

During the hearing, the government lawyer argued that there is nothing in the constitution that the caretaker government is only for 90 days, if there is no executive of the country, how will the country run?

The petitioner's lawyer said that my request is in accordance with the law, the main job of the caretaker prime minister is to conduct elections, which he is not conducting, the prime minister has lost his sanctity, the BBC contacted me regarding this matter.

Court remarked that the BBC is not a party to

what does it have to do with us? You should go and find out why Pakistan was created, who created it, you are lying in these circles, I did not like your reference to BBC.

Later, the Lahore High Court reserved its decision on the petition to remove the Caretaker Prime Minister from office.

Earlier, in the petition filed in the LHC, the position was taken that the appointment of the caretaker prime minister has become ineffective after the completion of the 90-day period, the caretaker prime minister's term has been completed on November 15. Anwar Ul Haq Kakar is no more prime minister.

Petitioner further said that the election commission or any constitutional court did not extend the caretaker prime minister's term, requesting the court to issue an order to remove the caretaker prime minister from office.