

# Independent

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QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki expressing his views at Grand Jirga regarding peace and reconciliation process in the province

## “Balochistan entangled in long-standing tribal feuds”: Grand tribal Jirga invites “enraged” Balochs to join national mainstream to play effective role in dev. of country

Independent Report

QUETTA: The grand tribal Jirga has called for resolving all long-standing tribal disputes and invited the “enraged” Balochs to join the national mainstream.

The Jirga unanimously decided to expedite the efforts for establishing sustainable peace in the province.

The Jirga was of the strong view that the solution can be found out to resolve the issues being faced, and invited the angry Baloch leaders to come on the dialogue table.

The tribal Jirga was held at the Chief Minister secretariat here on Wednesday.

Prominent among those present in the tribal Jirga were the caretaker Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Domki, tribal elder Nawab Muhammad Khan Shahwani, Sardar Umar Khan Gorgajj, caretaker Provincial Minister for Youth Affairs, Mir Jamal Khan Raisani, Minister for Home, Mir Zubair Jamali, former mili-

tant commander, Gulzar Imam Shambay besides other notables.

Addressing the participants of Jirga, the caretaker Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Domki regretfully pointed out that Balochistan is entangled in the long-standing tribal disputes.

He said that the efforts can be expedited to end the tribal clashes through elders.

The Chief Minister minced no words when he said that we are ready to hold talks with everyone.

However, the relaxation of the state may not be considered as it's weakness.

He said that it would be our humble request to all elders to take personal interest in resolving the burning issues of the tribal disputes.

He invited the angry Balochs present abroad or on mountains through tribal Jirga to join the national mainstream.

## Nation should have no doubt about general elections on February 8: PM Kakar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said that the nation should not have any doubts about the general elections, scheduled to be held on February 8, 2024.

“I have no doubt about it... The concerns are often associated with our political system. We have a history of our own,” he remarked in an interview with Independent Urdu, published on Wednesday.

The prime minister expressed the hope that the elections would be held in free and fair manner.

To a question, he said he did not consider the general elections of the 70s as a benchmark either as many

people had different opinions about those polls.

“Of course, they were very transparent. At that time, it was already decided before the elections which way they would go, so I consider it a problem,” he added.

He said as the arrangements were in place, and he was hopeful that the caretaker government would be able to give results in a relatively better way.

The prime minister said that he endorsed the Election Commission's denial of any delay in the polls.

“They (Election Commission) have to conduct (elections). We are with them.”

He said as per the Elec-

tion Commission, the election schedule will cover 56 days, based on which the schedule should be announced by December 14.

Asked about the notions of elections being associated with the decline in Imran Khan's popularity and his exclusion from the electoral process, the prime minister termed it a political analysis.

However, the elections would judge the popularity of any political leader, he commented.

To a question about the participation of Imran Khan or his party in the general elections, he that there was no restriction on him as yet.

## Pakistan needs dynamic approach to address threats to regional peace: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday said amid the challenging global scenario, Pakistan required a dynamic approach to address the threats to regional peace.

Addressing the inaugural session of Islamabad Conclave 2023 themed ‘Pakistan in a changing world’ organized by Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), he said Pakistan must consciously rediscover its vision in the wake of super power rivalries and interference of neighbouring states.

The president, in this regard, emphasized close liaison among politicians and parliamentarians, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence

for effective deliberations and policy-making.

President Alvi said Pakistan's strategic shift from geo-politics to geo-economic and the regional situation in the wake of India's belligerence needed the policies in line with regional and systemic developments.

President Alvi said the civilized world today had forgotten the principles of morality and was witnessing prevalence of wars waged by powerful against weaker segments.

The situation in Gaza, he said, was an alarming sign of the apathy of the world which could not stop the massacre of innocent people including women and children.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi addressing the inaugural session of the Islamabad Conclave 2023 titled “Pakistan in a changing world”, at the Institute of Strategic Studies.

## PM orders emergency polio eradication plan for high-risk areas

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday directed formulation of an emergency polio eradication plan and launch of integrated programmes in high-risk union councils.

Chairing a meeting on Task Force on Polio Eradication, he emphasized monitoring of polio vaccination campaigns by using modern technology.

Expressing the recent report of police cases, the prime minister regretted that the crippling disease, which was eradicated from the globe, still existed in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

PM Kakar said regarding the use of Inactivated Polio Virus (IPV) vaccine, best international practices and research needed to be taken into consideration.

He directed resumption of the regular polio immunization campaign across the country.

## Military College Sui manifestation of our national unity: Governor

Exhorts cadets of Military College to take wholehearted part in development and construction of country and brighten name of province

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar during an annual ceremony at the Military College Sui on Wednesday.

The Commandant of Military College, Brigadier Waseem Qaiser, members of faculty, cadets and their parents were present at the ceremony.

The Governor said that what we are seeing regarding ability of the students of Military College Sui and its overall performance is the dream that comes true for it was established some 12 years ago.

He said that the marvelous achievement of the cadets is guarantee of the bright future of Military College Sui.

He stressed that the time has come that we may use physical and mental potential of our younger generation in the best interest of the country and nation.

## Solangi unveils 24-hour PTV Multan Center, vows to ensure transparent polls

Says PTV Multan transmission thru satellite to open new avenues of opportunities for poets, artists

MULTAN (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Wednesday that general elections would be held on February 8, 2024 and full preparations were underway to accomplish the task in a fair and transparent manner.

Talking to media persons at the inaugural ceremony of the 24-hour regional transmission of Pakistan Television Multan, he said that the people would ultimately decide the next government of the country and formally give the mandate on elections day through the ballot. He dispelled any doubt by some quarters about the

holding of general elections. He pointed out that Preamble of the Constitution had indicated that elected representatives would ultimately run the affairs of the country.

Answering a question, he said the media was free and the judiciary was independent in the country.

Solangi said that multiple voices and slogans were the hallmark of democracy and no one should worry about the democratic norms. “Democracy does not harbour sheer silence just like a graveyard,” he remarked. He said at the moment, the performance of the next parliament and government could not be assessed in advance.



MULTAN: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi unveiling plaque to inaugurate the PTV National Solangi Multan 24/7 transmission at PTV Centre.

## SC seeks reply in appeal against census in Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court (SC) Wednesday sought reply from additional attorney general and advocate general Balochistan in an appeal against census in the province.

A three-member bench of the top court presided by Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan heard the case.

At the outset of hearing, Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan noted that the petitioner had objected over the participation of acting chief minister in the meeting of council of common interests.

Additional Attorney General Aamer Rehman said that the decisions of the top court were clear re-

lated to the CCI.

He argued that the objection was not raised by any relevant person.

Petitioner's lawyer Kamran Murtaza said that fundamental rights of the citizens were connected with the census.

Addressing the lawyer, Justice Ahsan said that the Chief Minister whom you elected did not object to the census.

“Now the solution may be that you should not vote for this person again in the future,” he said.

The AAG said that the CCI was also mentioned in the case related to the February 8 elections. After this the court adjourned the case for indefinite time.

## Inclusion of Justice Ijaz in SJC as member challenged in SC

ISLAMABAD (Online): The inclusion of Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan as member in Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) in the matter of proceedings against Justice Mazhar Ali Naqvi was challenged in Supreme Court (SC).

Mian Dad advocate has filed a constitutional petition in SC making federal government and secretary SJC respondents.

Complete order sheet of former CCPO Ghulam Muhammad Dogar case is attached with the petition. The application regarding objections on Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan in SJC is also attached with the constitutional petition. Mian Dad has said the reference of corruption and misconduct against Justice Mazhar Naqvi is pending hearing in SJC.

## Security forces kill terrorist in Kulachi operation

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Security Forces on Wednesday gunned down Terrorist Habib Ur Rehman during an intelligence-based operation conducted in general area Kulachi of Dera Ismail Khan District. According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the Army troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location, as a result of which terrorist Habib Ur Rehman was sent to hell.

The killed terrorist had remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against security forces as well as innocent civilians in the area. Weapon, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from the terrorist.

## IHC rejects Imran petition seeking withdrawal of his appeal plea against EC decision

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has rejected PTI chairman Imran Khan petition seeking withdrawal of his appeal plea against Election Commission (EC) decision in Toshakhana reference.

The court announced reserved judgment on PTI chairman petition to withdraw his appeal plea against EC October 21, 2022 decision.

Chairman PTI wants to withdraw the appeal from IHC and run it in Lahore High Court.

## Nawaz Sharif visits Ch. Shujaat after 15 years

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on Wednesday visited the residence of Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain after 15 long years.

PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz, Rana Sanaullah, Ayaz Sadiq and Azam Nazeer Tarar accompanied

the party supreme. The two parties have discussed electoral alliance and seat adjustments on Gujrat seats.

PML-N has decided to support PML-Q candidates on two National Assembly and three provincial assembly seats.

Chaudhry Salik and Tariq Bashir Cheema will contest election on National Assembly seats from Gujrat.

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## Afghan authorities close Torkham Border for crossing

PESHAWAR (INP): The Afghan authorities on Wednesday closed the Torkham Border crossing on their side after raising an objection over installation of a “Welcome to Pakistan” signboard by the Pakistani authorities on its side.

The border officials said the Afghan authorities have closed the border crossing for every kind of movement on their side as a protest.

The Pakistani authorities were installing a signboard inscribed with “Welcome to Pakistan” at Torkham zero point upon which the Afghan authorities raised an objection and in protest closed the border.

The border authorities said the situation has led to closure of all kinds of trading and transit traffic and pedestrian crossing at the border. The officials further said that the Afghan move may adversely affect the regional trader and cause commercial and financial losses to the traders on both sides.

## Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar addressing participants of a ceremony at Military College Sui

Decision taken to fix for hearing presidential reference regarding murder of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto

ISLAMABAD (Online): Decision has been taken to fix presidential reference regarding murder of former Prime Minister (PM) Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto for hearing soon.

Important progress has come to fore on hearing of presidential reference on the matter of murder of former PM Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto.

The reference for declaring the execution of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto a judicial murder is likely to be fixed for hearing in next week.

A larger bench of Supreme Court (SC) under the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJ) Qazi Faez Isa will hear the presidential reference.

It is pertinent to mention here former president Asif Ali Zardari had filed presidential reference in SC in 2011. 6 hearing of the reference have taken place so far.

## Advocate killed, one injured in Mastung firing

QUETTA (APP): The unknown armed men gunned down an advocate and injured his colleague in Mastung town area of Balochistan on Wednesday.

According to police sources, the victim identified as Muhammad Waris Advocate along with his colleague Haji Habibullah was on way to the Session Court from his house when armed assailants opened fire at them and fled from the scene near Major Chowk area. As a result, Muhammad Waris died on the spot after receiving



Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar addressing participants of a ceremony at Military College Sui

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bulled injuries while his friend sustained injuries. Police on information reached the site and shifted the body and the injured to nearby hospital where the injured victim's treatment was started. The body of the deceased was handed over to the heirs after completion of medico legal formalities. The motive behind the killing could not be ascertained so far. Police sources said the motive behind the attack could not be ascertained immediately.

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**ADB's vital support for Pakistan's development**

In a latest important development, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved three projects worth \$658.8 million to help Pakistan achieve its goal of more inclusive and sustainable growth and development. According to a statement the other day, the Manila-based lender said the projects will focus on improving domestic resource mobilisation, rehabilitating schools damaged by the devastating August 2022 floods and enhancing agricultural productivity to improve food security.

"This significant new wave of financing will help Pakistan recover from the impacts of last year's cost-of-living crisis and super-floods and return to the path of long-term development that is sustainable and inclusive," said ADB Director General for Central and West Asia Yevgeniy Zhukov. "This multifaceted approach is part of ADB's strategic engagement in Pakistan and cohesively deploys our programme lending and project investments to enhance support for Pakistan's efforts to improve its economic situation and enhance the quality of life for its people." The Improved Resource Mobilisation and Utilisation Reform Programme will support the government to realise its ambition of achieving economic growth that is sustainable, broad-based, and inclusive.

The \$300 million policy-based loan will support the initiative's first sub-programme, which focuses on laying the foundation for reforms to policies, laws, and institutional capacity that will improve domestic resource mobilisation and utilization. The programme is helping to transform tax administration, public expenditure management, and other institutional structures to strengthen resource mobilisation including non-debt resources such as private investment and savings. The ongoing Sindh Secondary Education Improvement Project will receive additional financing — a \$275 million emergency assistance loan that is part of ADB's \$1.5 billion pledge of support for Pakistan's recovery from the devastating 2022 floods. The additional financing will help reconstruct up to 1,600 flood-damaged schools using disaster- and climate-resilient and gender-responsive designs. This will boost resilience and inclusivity in the education system in Pakistan, helping recovery of learning and earning losses especially for girls in the most disadvantaged and vulnerable districts of Sindh. An \$800,000 technical assistance grant will be provided to help plan and monitor the status of reconstruction in all flood-damaged schools and provide implementation support, including for introducing inclusive design features. A concessional loan of \$80 million for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Security Support Project, which is also part of ADB's \$1.5 billion pledge of support for Pakistan's recovery from the 2022 floods, will help address climate vulnerabilities, enhance food security, and boost the livelihoods of rural farm households in the most flood-damaged districts in the province. The project will provide essential agriculture inputs and training to smallholder farmers, including women, and improve household nutrition and women's empowerment. It will also enhance digital access and availability, especially with regard to market opportunities and climate information. The bank will administer a \$3 million grant for the project from the Japan Fund for Prosperous and Resilient Asia and the Pacific that will finance activities for women farmers related to seed cleaning and the safer handling of agrochemicals.

**It is America's war now**



Zahid Hussain

The UN has warned that "an even more hellish scenario is about to unfold" in Gaza. Israel has now launched its heaviest bombardment yet on the Strip killing hundreds more people after the collapse of a weeklong pause that saw the exchange of some Israeli and Palestinian prisoners. Israeli ground operations now extend to the entire Strip and are being conducted with a ferocity not witnessed before.

Tens of thousands of people have been displaced in the latest Israeli offensive, making it extremely difficult for any kind of humanitarian aid to reach them. All communication services have been cut off as the genocide of a hapless people continues unabated. It is all happening with active US support. It is evident that the Israeli war effort is being backed by the Biden administration.

American-made bombs have reportedly been used in some of the deadliest Israeli strikes on Gaza that have killed thousands of children and destroyed most of the occupied Strip. That makes the Biden administration equally responsible for the ongoing massacre in the occupied territory.

According to a report published in the Wall Street Journal recently, Israeli forces used powerful bombs supplied by the US in the attack on a refugee camp that killed more than 100 people.

It was not the only such incident where American weapons have been used by Israeli forces in Gaza. The Biden

administration has massively intensified the supply of the most modern and lethal kind of weaponry to Israel for the war on the besieged enclave.

Among the casualties, more than 6,000 children have been killed so far. As the UN chief said the occupied territory has turned into "a graveyard for children".

And the carnage is being carried out with the bombs and other weapons supplied to the Zionist regime by the US. Washington has reportedly provided thousands of large bombs and artillery shells for Israel's war on Gaza.

The WSJ report said a surge of US arms to Israel since the start of the war has included 15,000 bombs and 57,000 155mm artillery shells. The US administration has remained silent on the level of weapons support to Israel.

What is most alarming is the fact that the US recently supplied "bunker-buster" bombs, along with an array of other munitions to Israel, which has escalated its bombardment of the besieged territory. The WSJ report said these bombs carry warheads weighing more than 900 kilograms and that have previously been used by the US in its wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria.

But while the US used those bombs mainly in open places, Israel, according to some media reports, is using them in densely populated areas in Gaza, causing massive destruction of property and human life. Some of these bombs have reportedly been used by the Israeli forces in areas close to hospitals, rendering the latter non-functional.

Unicef says that the situation has become so bad that hospital staff in southern Gaza "cannot continue". The world has not seen such barbarism in recent

times.

Despite growing international pressure, the Biden administration is not willing to call for a ceasefire. US officials claim they have repeatedly asked the Israeli leadership to try to limit civilian casualties, even as Zionist forces lay siege to Gaza's main hospitals.

Israel has already extended its military operations to the West Bank. Hundreds of Palestinians have been killed in Israeli military actions in the territory. It's all happening with encouragement from Washington.

American officials claim the war could provide a long-term solution to the Palestinian issue. But the situation is completely the opposite. The genocide and mass destruction causing the displacement of millions of people has made things worse. It has become more difficult to resolve the major cause of the conflict that is rooted in the colonisation of Palestine.

What is more shameful is the report that the Biden administration is seeking the support of Egypt and Jordan for the homeless Gaza population to be settled in their countries.

Such suggestions are quite contradictory to what US Vice President Kamala Harris said in a statement that "under no circumstances will the United States permit the forced relocation of Palestinians from Gaza or the West Bank".

It is now apparent that Washington is fully behind the Israeli war on Gaza. In fact, it is now America's war that has serious implications for global peace. The war has politically divided the US, with the majority of Americans wanting the war to end. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Deadly diplomacy**



Mahir Ali

No one who lived anywhere in the world through the 1970s could ignore Henry Kissinger as he bestrode the world like a colossus, not so much as the peacemaker he pretended to be than as consolidator of the American empire.

We were meant to marvel at Super K, the real-world incarnation of Superman as he shuttled through war zones and beyond, sprinkling his enormous wisdom along the way.

Kissinger, who died a week ago at the overripe age of 100, has been cast as a diplomatic superstar who pursued US interests to the end of the world. That is not an inaccurate assumption, provided one recognises that the interests were exclusively those of the imperium that the US sought to usher in after World War II: they served the aims of the political and economic elites who were determined to make the world safe for capitalism.

"We the people" mentioned at the outset of the Declaration of Independence had nothing to do with it. It logically follows that people anywhere simply did not matter. The encomiums and panegyrics that have flowed in much of the Western media in the past week — alongside some unrelenting critiques — do not suggest that Kissinger ever lost any sleep over the human devastation his policies wrought from Latin America to Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

It was more or less

taken for granted that Kissinger would be enshrined in the US foreign policy establishment, regardless of who won the 1968 election. Richard Nixon probably would not have been his first choice as a boss, but once Nixon emerged as the Republican nominee, Kissinger carried favour by helping to prevent a Vietnam peace agreement that might have benefited the Democratic alternative.

The US war in Indochina dragged on for another five years. As Nixon's national security adviser, Kissinger was largely responsible for the death toll in not just Vietnam but also Cambodia and Laos.

With an office in the White House, Kissinger was conveniently placed to take away the foreign policy initiative from Nixon's first secretary of state, William Rogers — who, inter alia, was willing to collaborate with the USSR in ushering in a Middle East peace agreement that would have disappointed the Palestinians, but might have reduced the bloodshed.

Willingly serving a profoundly antisemitic president, Kissinger himself was not particularly wedded to the interests of Israel beyond seeing it as an invaluable asset that could help the US win over Arab states that leaned towards the Soviet Union, especially Egypt.

Within its limitations, his shuttle diplomacy succeeded on that front, but its appalling consequences continue to be demonstrated half a century later as the US aids and abets an unfolding genocide in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Genocide was never much of a moral dilemma for Kissinger. He was happy to pursue it in Vietnam and extend it to Laos and Cambodia. In the latter instance, he was directly responsible for every airstrike —

"It's an order," Kissinger told a subordinate in 1970. "Anything that flies, on anything that moves."

This ingenious strategy paved the way for the Khmer Rouge regime that killed an estimated two million Cambodians — and enjoyed US backing after it was displaced by a Vietnamese humanitarian intervention.

Kissinger's crimes of commission also include the fate of a democratic socialist interlude in Chile, where Nixoner — as Isaiah Berlin dubbed the duo — decided Salvador Allende was intolerable even before he was inaugurated.

"I don't see why we need to stand by and watch a country go communist due to the irresponsibility of its people," Kissinger commented in 1970. And the US did not stand by. Allende was overthrown and assassinated three years later, and Augusto Pinochet, as well as Argentina's Jorge Videla among other military tyrants, revelled in Kissinger's imprimatur as they went on a killing spree.

Kissinger did nothing to tame Nixon's racist and misogynist aversion to Indians and particularly Indira Gandhi. Yahya Khan, who diligently served as Nixon's emissary to China, was amply rewarded when he inaugurated a civil war in 1971.

Despite the countless skeletons in his cupboard, Kissinger remained a source of advice to successive US administrations — and to many other governments via his firm, Kissinger and Associates, whose client list he wasn't prepared to reveal even when tapped as the head of the 9/11 Commission. Perhaps because he was unwilling to acknowledge the consequences of his decisions. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Commerce News**

**Dr. Alvi for marketplace to promote Pakistani startups through linkages**

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi here Wednesday called for establishing a marketplace to provide Pakistani startups a platform for promoting their indigenously developed products through linkages with the investors as well as the global markets.

The president, addressing the Angels Investors Summit & Startup Showcase, said the startups needed to effectively market their products and enhance their outreach for benefit of the local population as well as the innovators.

The president appreciated the 11 shortlisted startups for the way they were developing the intellectual properties.

He lauded the 'tremendous' innovative ideas of the startups who also gave presentations on their products which are gradually getting recognition in the market.

The president suggested the summit organizers to record detailed video messages of the startups so that they could better explain their products to the people as well as the potential investors.

He told the gathering that in the initially, the developed countries had also been benefiting from the foreign ideas by modifying them in accordance with their local needs. Emphasizing the use of technology and artificial intelligence in the health

sector, President Alvi said the telemedicine was the only solution to Pakistan's health care problems as it would save the poor from paying the transport and other hassles besides reducing burden on the system.

He also called for utilizing the AI and other technologies to address the issue of mental health as around 24% of the population suffered any form of stress. Around 60-80% of college students were also under mental stress which sometimes led to violence or suicides.

He also stressed the need for addressing the taboos associated with the diseases like breast cancer, which he said was being overcome through frequent

messaging and awareness drives.

Chairperson of Aspire Pakistan Hassan Syed apprised the audience of the journey of bringing the startups under the network, the establishment of the National Ideas Bank, Pak Angels and Startup Pakistan platforms.

He said around 8,000 trainings had taken place under the National Ideas Bank and 11 shortlisted startup had to go through screening process which examined their ideas and scope of their products.

Founder of Pak Angels Anwar Khan, in his remarks, said the innovation was a must for a prosperous Pakistan as it could boost the country's exports.



President Dr. Arif Alvi being briefed about innovative technological startups and their products, at the Angels Investors Summit & Startup Showcase held at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.



ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker Federal Minister for Privatization Mr Fawad Hasan Fawad chairing a meeting of Privatization Commission with the Financial Advisor and management of First Women Bank Limited.

**MOITT announces initiatives to empower freelancers**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MOITT) has announced a groundbreaking initiative, offering interest-free loans to freelancers to empower independent professionals by enabling them to establish e-working centers, addressing the critical challenge of inadequate workplaces.

According to official of MOITT under the comprehensive plan, "Each freelancer is set to receive financial assistance of Rs 100,000 to establish their own e-working center. This strategic move is anticipated to revolutionize the freelance landscape in the country, significantly enhancing the economic contributions of freelancers."

**Shipping activity at Port Qasim**

KARACHI (APP): Five ships, MSC Jemima, MSC Greenwich, Maersk Chicago, Meratus Jayawijaya and Ardmore Cherokee Carrying Containers and Palm oil, berthed at Container Terminal and Liquid Terminal respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile two more ships, FMT Efes and Eget Bulker carrying Coko and Chemicals also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during last 24 hours.

**Pakistan's exports to Afghanistan increase by 2.65% in 4 months**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's export of goods and services to Afghanistan witnessed an increase of 2.65 per cent during the first four months of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported.

The overall exports to Afghanistan were recorded

at US \$180.686 million during July-October (2023-24) against exports of US \$176.019 million during July-October (2022-23), SBP data revealed.

On a year-to-year basis, the exports to Afghanistan also surged by 6.57 per cent from \$48.862 million in October 2022, against the exports of \$52.077 million in October 2023.

**PAJCCI expresses concern over closure of Pak-Afghan border for trade at Torkhem**

PESHAWAR (APP): Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI) has expressed concern over closure of Pak-Afghan border at Torkhem for trade for the last almost 24 hours.

In a press statement issued here on Wednesday, Coordinator PAJCCI, Zia ul Haq Sarhadi said the border crossing at Torkhem has been closed for goods

laden trucks at around 4:00 p.m. of Tuesday.

Regarding reason behind closure, Zia shared that the decision of closing border has been taken after erection of a signboard at zero point inscribed with wording of "Goodbye Pakistan". He also informed that pedestrian crossing is open, but trucks are not allowed to cross border from both the sides.

**CG Indonesia visits SCCI**

SUKKUR (APP): Consul General of Indonesia Dr June Kuncoro on Wednesday visited the Sukkur Chamber of Commerce and Industries (SCCI) Sukkur.

While exchanging the views during meeting, the Indonesian CG said that We have to deeply understand the patterns and structure of challenges hindering trade between the two countries.

He congratulated the newly-elected president of SCCI Sukkur and hopes to see his contribution towards enhanced Indonesia-Pakistan cooperation.

He said that as the Indonesian government was always keen to support business people, hence, the Indonesian Consulate and its embassy in Islamabad remain extensively engaged beyond the call of duty in identifying opportunities and fully facilitating businessmen of both countries. To enhance Indonesia-Pakistan trade ties, he advised the business community of Karachi to participate in trade fairs, meet Indonesian business people.

**Efforts to promote technological innovation for crops growth**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for National Food Security & Research Dr Kausar Abdullah Malik on Wednesday said that maize is a strategic crop concerning national food security needs and the ministry will make all efforts to promote the latest technological innovation and provide an enabling policy for the crop's continued growth.

He expressed these views during the meeting with the CropLife Pakistan delegation, which apprised the minister of their contribution to the seed sector, in particular, maize, where over the past two decades yields have grown four-fold and overall production has increased from a little over 1 million metric tons to an impressive 10.5 million metric tons in 2022-23.

**Top Chinese cotton producer welcomes collaboration with Pak**

BEIJING (APP): "Our cotton consumption still falls short of achieving complete self-sufficiency, leading our company to consider importing cotton. In the future, we plan to collaborate with leading cotton-producing nations globally, tailoring our partnerships based on specific variety requirements," said Ms. Zhang Yan, the interim

CEO of WinnerMedical. "While we do not directly procure from cotton farmers, our approach primarily involves utilizing platforms like China Cotton to select the most suitable global supply chains. Collaboration with major cotton-producing nations like Pakistan is entirely feasible."

## Cope with requirements of modern era Vital to adopt new technology, especially artificial intelligence, says Punjab Governor

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman today inaugurated the first International Electrical Vehicle Expo 2023 at the University of Lahore and attended the event as a special guest.

Punjab Governor while addressing the ceremony stated that it is very important to adopt new technology, especially artificial intelligence, to cope with the requirements of the modern era.

He said this exhibition has provided a platform to many national and international companies to showcase their products and collaborate with one another. Governor Punjab said that today, the world is going through the fourth industrial revolution in which technology and collaboration play a very important role.

He said that better results can be achieved by working together. He said that governments also work together with public-

private partnership and institutions on various projects, which yield good results.

Governor Punjab said that in this exhibition, electric vehicles including motorcycles and cars have been displayed, which will promote environment-friendly transport. He said that the interaction of academia and industry in this exhibition is a welcome thing. He further said that the promotion of electric vehicles will help in tackling issues like smog.

He said that he is happy to see that international companies in electrical vehicles and artificial intelligence are bringing their expertise and technology to Pakistan, which will help us accelerate the adoption of these technologies in our country and create new opportunities for our citizens. Governor Punjab said that the expo is a testament to the power of innovation and collaboration and shows that when government.



**KARACHI:** A man drive thru Dust in area of Karachi, according to reports the Karachi Ranked Most Polluted city in the world in term of air quality, The various forms of pollution have increased at Karachi which has caused widespread environmental and health problems.



**LAHORE:** Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman inspecting the stall after inauguration of first International Electrical Vehicle Expo 2023 at the University of Lahore.

### Minister hails medical team over recovery of domestic violence survivor

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Punjab Health Minister Professor Dr. Javed Akram expressed gratitude to the dedicated team of doctors and nurses who played a crucial role in the recovery of Rizwana, a victim of domestic violence.

In a press conference at Lahore General Hospital on Wednesday, the minister highlighted that Rizwana underwent 13 surgeries during her four-month treatment at the hospital and was now on

the path to recovery. Addressing Rizwana as the "daughter of the nation," Dr. Javed Akram announced her referral to Child Protection and Welfare Bureau and Social Welfare and Baitul Mal for education and training. A committee, comprising the Chairperson of Child Protection and Welfare Bureau and officers from the Department of Social Welfare and Bait ul Mal, has been formed to ensure continued care for Rizwana.

### IDPD day observed in Peshawar

PESHAWAR (Online): International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) 2023 was observed at the Special Education Complex (SEC) in Hayatabad, Peshawar.

Dr. Aneela Mehfooz Durrani, Secretary Zakat, Ushr, Social Welfare, Special Education, and Women Empowerment Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, was the chief guest at the occasion. Dr. Awlad Hussain Shah, Ms. Humaira Naz and Mukhtiar Gul of Sarhad Rural Support Program (SRSP).

### KP Governor directs resolution of problems of IRNUM hospital's entrance

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali here Wednesday directed the authorities concerned to resolve problems related to the main entrance of the IRNUM cancer hospital.

He passed these directives while presiding over a high-level meeting about problems at the central entrance of IRNUM hospital, Peshawar.

The meeting exchanged views on

parking problems and bringing ease in communication between patients, relatives, and other people at the main entrance of the hospital.

He directed the Director General Peshawar Development Authority, high-ups of the police, and Peshawar University to address these problems at the earliest. The Governor praised the long services of the hospital regarding the treatment of cancer patients.

### Minister directs to expedite work on Journalists WEF

PESHAWAR (APP): Minister of Information, Firoz Jamal Shah, has directed the swift resolution of journalists' issues and expedited efforts on the Journalists Welfare Endowment Fund to address their financial concerns.

During a meeting of the Journalists Welfare Endowment Fund, he emphasized urgent action on journalists' requests, urging a comprehensive presentation of these requests to the committee for timely assistance. He acknowledged the challenging roles journalists play in ensuring transparency in government affairs and facilitating the dissemination of government actions to the public.

### Women should take legal ways to claim their rights: Ombudsperson

FAISALABAD (APP): Woman Ombudsperson Punjab Nabila Hakim Ali Khan said on Wednesday that women should not remain silent for their rights, instead they should adopt legal ways to claim their rights where they were denied.

She was addressing a seminar for the protection of women's rights here at Govt College Women University, Madina Town. RPO Dr Abid Khan, SSP Operation Dr Rizwan, Incharge Protection Center

Gul Naz, faculty members and students were also present on the occasion. The Ombudsperson said the government was taking all possible steps to ensure women rights in the province, so do not allow anyone to take away your rights or abuse you by keeping silent.

"If you (women) do not get a share in the inherited property, file a complaint for your share with the local administration and if you are not listened then report

to the office of the Woman Ombudsman Secretariat," she said.

The Woman Ombudsperson said that today was the day of women, their development and rights.

She urged the students and women to bring out their hidden abilities and improve their confidence. She further said that several initiatives were being taken by the government at national and provincial level for women rights and their protection.

### Two people killed as trailer hit motorbike

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): Two people were killed in a collision between a trailer and motorbike at Alipur Jhang road on Wednesday.

According to the rescue source, the incident occurred due to the negligence of the trailer driver in which two persons died on the spot. The heirs of LHC has issued written order for hearing on petition of Parvaiz Elahi's wife Qaisara Elahi.

It has been said in

### LHC issues written order on contempt of court petition against Parvaiz Elahi's arrest

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has issued written order on contempt of court petition filed against arrest of Former Punjab Chief Minister (CM) Chaudhary Parvaiz Elahi despite Court order. Justice Sultan Tanvir Ahmad of LHC has issued written order for hearing on petition of Parvaiz Elahi's wife Qaisara Elahi.

written order the court kept restored warrants of IG Islamabad. Copy of written order should be sent to Secretary Establishment Islamabad and he should appoint an officer for judicial assistance in this matter. Court has written in the order that it is suspected that IG Islamabad and SSP were wrongly advised of the jurisdiction.

## International News

### Putin, escorted by fighter jets, lands in Saudi Arabia for MbS talks

**Monitoring Desk**  
RIYADH: Russian President Vladimir Putin landed in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday for hastily arranged talks with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on oil, Gaza and Ukraine.

It was not immediately clear what Putin, who has rarely left Russia since the start of the Ukraine war, intends to raise specifically about oil or geopolitics in a face-to-face meeting with the crown prince of the world's largest crude exporter.

Advertisement - Scroll to continue Putin's meeting with MbS, as the prince is widely known, comes after oil prices fell despite a pledge by OPEC+, which groups the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and al-

lies led by Russia, to further cut output.

The Russian defence ministry showed the Kremlin chief's Ilushin-96 aircraft flanked by Sukhoi-35 fighter jets on its flight from Russia to the United Arab Emirates, his first stop.

In Abu Dhabi, President Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan welcomed his "dear friend" Putin, while UAE jets greeted him with a fly-past trailing the colours of Russia's flag. "Our relations, largely due to your position, have reached an unprecedentedly high level," Putin told him. "The UAE is Russia's main trading partner in the Arab world."

Putin said Russia and the UAE cooperated as

part of OPEC+, whose members pump more than 40% of the world's oil, adding that they would discuss the Israeli-Hamas conflict and Ukraine.

After the UAE, Putin flew to Saudi Arabia for his first face-to-face meeting with MbS since October 2019. His last visit to the region was in July 2022, when he met Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in Iran.

The trip to meet MbS, only days after a key OPEC+ meeting was delayed, appeared hastily arranged. One source had told Reuters beforehand that MbS had plans to visit Moscow. The Russian delegation includes top oil, economy, foreign affairs, space and nuclear energy officials.



**President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Russian President Vladimir Putin attend a meeting at Qasr Al Watan in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.**

### COP28 deal may demand phase-out of fossil fuels

**Monitoring Desk**  
DUBAI: Countries at the COP28 climate conference are considering calling for a formal phase-out of fossil fuels as part of the UN summit's final deal to tackle global warming.

The proposal is set to spark heated debate among the nearly 200 countries, with some Western and climate-vulnerable states pushing for the language to be used and many oil and gas producers keen to leave it out.

The draft of what could be the final agreement from COP28, released by the UN climate body on Tuesday, proposed "an or-

derly and just phase-out of fossil fuels" which if adopted would mark the first global deal to end the oil age.

But even as NGOs slammed the record number of fossil fuel lobbyists at the UN climate talks this year, the industry showed it wouldn't be browbeaten, with the OPEC cartel hosting a chat on "climate initiatives" and one of the heads of the "Big Oil" majors sparring with activists.

On the COP28 main stage, the CEOs of several major energy firms argued in favour of oil and gas, highlighting their progress in areas such as cutting the

greenhouse gas methane. "We are big guys and we can do big things. We can deliver results and we will have to report them very soon," said Jean Paul Prates, CEO of Brazil's state-run oil company Petrobras. "The energy transition will only be valid if it's a fair transition," he added.

At least 2,400 fossil fuel lobbyists registered for this year's summit, an analysis of UN registration data published by Kick Big Polluters Out showed, outnumbering the delegates from the 10 most climate vulnerable countries combined.



**Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy addresses to service members during award ceremony on Day of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kyiv, Ukraine.**

### Sudanese warring parties dig in as Jeddah talks falter again

**Monitoring Desk**  
DUBAI: Saudi and US-brokered talks aimed at halting fighting between Sudan's warring parties have faltered again, and the country's army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces have pressed on with military campaigns that have caused a major humanitarian crisis.

The lack of progress at the talks in Jeddah dashed hopes for resolution of a conflict that has displaced more than 6.5 million inside

and outside Sudan, decimated the economy, and triggered ethnically driven massacres in Darfur. Sudan's army has escalated its rhetoric and residents say it has intensified air strikes in the capital Khartoum, while its rival, the paramilitary RSF, has secured advances in the Darfur and Kordofan regions. "They are firing artillery aggressively, and it often lands in civilian homes," said Ahmed Abdallah, a 51-year-old in Omdurman.

### China says its fighters shadowed US Navy patrol plane over Taiwan Strait

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: China's military said on Wednesday it sent fighter jets to monitor and warn a US Navy patrol aircraft that flew over the sensitive Taiwan Strait, a mission that took place weeks before Taiwan holds elections.

China claims sovereignty over democratically governed Taiwan, and says it has jurisdiction over the strait. Taiwan and the United States dispute that, saying the Taiwan Strait is an international waterway.

The US Navy's 7th Fleet said the P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol and reconnaissance plane, which is also used for anti-submarine missions, flew over the strait in international airspace. "The aircraft's transit of the Taiwan Strait demonstrates the United States' commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific.

### Indonesia rescuers evacuate all climbers from Marapi volcano after eruption killed 23

**Monitoring Desk**  
TANAH DATAR: Rescuers have evacuated all of the climbers who were trapped in Indonesia's Marapi volcano, a spokesperson for the search and rescue agency said on Wednesday, after it erupted this week, killing 23 people.

There were 75 climbers at the time on 2,891-metre (9484.91 ft) high Marapi, one of Sumatra's most active volcanoes, when it began spewing gray

clouds of ash as high as 3 kilometres (2 miles) into the sky on Sunday.

Jody Haryawan, a spokesperson for the rescue team, said one missing climber was found on Wednesday afternoon. On Tuesday, the rescuers evacuated 22 bodies from the volcano. All the climbers were accounted for, following the rescue earlier of dozens, many of whom were wounded or burned by the eruption.

### Iran sends up rocket with test living capsule

**Monitoring Desk**  
DUBAI: Iran sent up a rocket with a test living space capsule on Wednesday, the semi-official Tasnim news agency reported, as the country pressed on with plans to send astronauts into space.

The announcement came 10 years after Iran announced it had sent two live monkeys into space and brought them back safely.

### Qatar emir slams 'shameful' inaction on Gaza crisis

**Monitoring Desk**  
DOHA: Qatar's ruler hit out at "shameful" international inaction over the Israeli aggression against Gazans as he opened a Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) meeting in Doha on Tuesday.

"It is shameful for the international community to allow this heinous crime to continue for nearly two months, during which the systematic and deliberate killing of innocent civilians continues, including women and children," Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani said.

Qatar was a key mediator in negotiations that resulted in a seven-day

truce, which saw scores of Israeli prisoners exchanged for Palestinians prisoners and humanitarian aid, until it ended on Friday.

Its foreign ministry said that GCC summit was aimed at forming a united approach to end the aggression in Gaza.

"Now the ceiling should be raised to talk about a sustainable truce" that could lead to ending this unrest, Majed Al-Ansari, spokesperson for Qatar's foreign ministry, told Al Jazeera.

Qatar's ruler said his country was "constantly working to renew" the truce, but added this was "not an alternative to a permanent ceasefire".



**German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, President of Brazil, hold a press conference at the Federal Chancellery on the occasion of the 2nd German-Brazilian intergovernmental consultations, in Berlin.**

### Germany and Brazil hope for swift finalization of a trade agreement between EU and Mercosur

**Monitoring Desk**  
BERLIN: The chancellor of Germany and president of Brazil expressed hope Monday that decades-long negotiations might soon yield a finalized free trade agreement between the 27-member European Union and a bloc of four South American nations.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva told reporters in Berlin that they support the trade deal for the EU and Mercosur, comprised of Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. The two blocs are holding a summit Thursday in Rio de Janeiro, but final approval of a preliminary trade agreement has remained elusive.

"We are strongly committed to ensuring that the agreement is now finalized swiftly," Scholz said after a meeting of senior officials from both countries in the German capital.

Lula also vowed to fight for the deal, and said he hoped for a breakthrough at the Rio de Janeiro meeting.

## ADB approves \$658.8m financial support for Pak sustainable development

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved this week three projects amounting to \$658.8 million to help Pakistan achieve its goal of more inclusive and sustainable growth and development.

The projects would focus on improving domestic resource mobilization; rehabilitating schools damaged by the devastating August 2022 floods; and enhancing agricultural productivity to improve food security, a news release said on Wednesday.

"This significant new wave of financing will help Pakistan recover from the impacts of last year's cost-of-living crisis and super-floods and return to the path of long-term development that is sustainable and inclusive," ADB Director General for Central and West Asia Yevgeniy Zhukov said.

"This multifaceted approach is part of ADB's strategic engagement in Pa-

kistan and cohesively deploys our program lending and project investments to enhance support for Pakistan's efforts to improve its economic situation and enhance the quality of life for its people," he added. The Improved Resource Mobilization and Utilization Reform Programme would support the government to realize its ambition of achieving economic growth that is sustainable, broad-based, and inclusive. The \$300 million policy-based loan would support the initiative's first subprogram, which focuses on laying the foundation for reforms to policies, laws, and institutional capacity that would improve domestic resource mobilization and utilization. The programme is helping to transform tax administration, public expenditure management, and other institutional structures to strengthen resource mobilization including non-debt resources.



QUETTA: Former Provincial Minister Umar Khan Jamali meeting with caretaker Home Minister Captain (Retd) Muhammad Zubair Jamali.

## Education & Skills Expo begins: Interim Govt resolves to work on project of sending youth abroad for making them skilled

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, Mir Jamal Khan Raisani stated that the interim provincial government is resolved to send youth of the province abroad to make them skilled so that they may play effective role in development of the country by learning skills in different sectors.

occasion were Director Schools, Abdul Wahid Shakir, Director Monitoring and Evaluation, Munir Ahmed, Director PITE, Sher Ahmed Samalani, representatives of UNICEF and other high ups of different non-governmental organizations and Education department.

These views were expressed by the caretaker Minister Mir Jamal Khan Raisani while addressing the ceremony held marking inauguration of the Education and Skills Expo 2023 at Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIEMS) on Wednesday.

Addressing the ceremony, the caretaker Provincial Minister exhorted the children to learn skills along with education.

He appreciated the Education department, UNICEF and other organizations for organizing the Education and Skills Expo in Quetta.

He said that the Expo would provide the opportunities of business in future.



QUETTA: Ending violence Against Women & Girls members hold awareness walk regarding "16 days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence" outside QPC.

## Scrutiny of various dev. projects continues by CMIT in Usta Muhammad

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The scrutiny of different development projects is continued by the Chief Minister Inspection Team (CMIT) in the province.

He concerned district high ups were in attendance at the meeting held at the Deputy Commissioner Usta Muhammad.

In this regard, the Member CMIT, Umeed Ali Khokhar visited Usta Muhammad on Wednesday where he presided over a meeting to review the meeting the same day.

The concerned high ups briefed the meeting about the progress of different development projects being executed by their respective departments.

The Member CMIT expressed anguish over absence of few officers.

Addressing the meeting, Umeed Ali Khokhar stressed the need to resolve the issues being faced in early execution of the projects.

## Ismail Haniyeh for Pak support against Israeli occupation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior Political Leader of Hamas, Ismail Haniyeh on Wednesday virtually addressed the National Dialogue on "The Sanctity of Al-Aqsa Mosque and Responsibility of the Muslim Ummah" held at the Jinnah Convention Centre and sought Pakistan's support against Israeli occupation.

Haniyeh stated that Israel's actions, including the arrest of approximately 16,000 Palestinians and desecration of holy sites, were a violation of international norms.

Organized by Majlis Ittehad-e-Ummah Pakistan, he emphasized Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories, addressing the challenges faced by the Pal-

estinian people.

Haniyeh warned against the establishment of diplomatic relations between Islamic countries.



ISLAMABAD: President of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazal-ur-Rehman, Chief of Jamat-e-Islami Siraj-ul-Haq, Moulana Taqi Usmani and others rising hand together to show solidarity with the oppressed Muslims of Palestine during "Hurmat-e-Al-Aqsa Conference" at Convention Center.

## Religious scholars, leaders unite against Israeli aggression, call for global solidarity

**JUI-F chief urge Muslim World not to recognize Israel**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prominent religious scholars and leaders representing diverse schools of thought on Wednesday gathered at the Jinnah Convention Centre for the National Conference titled "The Sanctity of Al-Aqsa Mosque and Responsibility of the Muslim Ummah."

Organized by Majlis Ittehad-e-Ummah Pakistan, the conference saw a joint declaration expressing full solidarity with the freedom of Al-Aqsa Mosque and condemning the oppression faced by Palestinian brothers.

Addressing the gathering, the religious scholars and leaders highlighted Israel's relentless aggression, branding it as a violator of international law since its illegal establishment. They emphasized the recent brutal bombings in Gaza, resulting in the mar-

tyrdom of over 15,000 Palestinians, including 6,000 children and numerous women. They declared these actions as war crimes against humanity, targeting mosques, churches, hospitals, and even newborns. The Ulema and Mashaykh criticized Western powers for their complicity in supporting Israel's crimes through financial, practical, and military assistance. They called for an immediate end to the brutal bombings, war crimes, and all forms of support for Israel. They asserted that the entire land of Palestine belonged to its original inhabitants, condemning the unjust settlements established by Zionists. They urged the people of Palestine to resist this aggression, emphasizing the religious duty of Muslims to support the cause.

Jihad rooted in pure Islam, the scholars and leaders stressed liberating the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the land of the Last Prophet Peace Be Upon Him from Zionist dominance.

They demanded basic rights for the people of Palestine according to United Nations resolutions, calling for an end to military intervention, the siege on Al-Quds, Gaza Strip, and the West Bank, and the permanent opening of the Rafah border. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has urged the Muslim World not to recognize Israel. Speaking at the National Conference on "The Sanctity of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Responsibility of the Muslim Ummah" organized by Majlis Ittehad-e-Ummah Pakistan here on Wednesday, he asked international organizations to respect public opinion.



QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Sports and Culture Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani visiting staff during inaugural ceremony of Education Expo 2023-12-06.

## Govt. ends free electricity facility for DISCOs, GENCOs, GENCOs officers

ISLAMABAD (INP): Government has ended free electricity units for the DISCOs and GENCOs, WAPDA and NTDC officers, effective from December 1, reported on Wednesday. In a notification issued by the power division, it was stated the federal cabinet had approved monetisation of free electricity units admissible to the employees of Wapda, ex-Wapda companies, including distribution companies (Discos), generation companies (GenCos), National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC) and Power Information Technology Company (PITC).

## CPEC paving foundation of sustainable development of Pakistan: Chinese CG

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan and China achieved concrete progress under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor which is paving the foundation of sustainable development and economic growth of Pakistan.

Regarding progress on CPEC projects, Yang Yundong said the Gwadar Port had become operational for a few years, free zones were also in operation while the New Islamabad Airport, Sukkur - Multan Motorway and other major projects have been completed under the Economic Corridor.

The people of Pakistan started reaping the benefits of the CPEC journey as several major projects have been completed while many more were in the completion process.

The Consul General said the Havalian-Thakot section of Karakoram Highway, Jakla-DI Khan Motorway, Optical Cable, Eastern Expressway and Orange Line Metro Train Lahore projects were also completed which had started giving fruits to the common men.

## Chief Secretary directs DCs to ensure implementation of ECP's decision

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Chief Secretary (CS) Shakeel Qadir Khan on Wednesday directed all Deputy Commissioners (DCs) to ensure the implementation of instructions given by the Election Commission (ECP) and to complete repair work of polling stations in their respective districts as soon as possible.

He said that provision of health facilities and quality education are essential for the betterment of society and in this regard, the provincial government was taking steps for improvement in both sectors.

He shared these views while chairing a meeting of divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners regarding the prevention of smuggling, provision of quality education and best facilities in the health sectors, price control committee, and Quetta water treatment plant, in which various related issues were reviewed.

He said that all deputy commissioners should visit hospitals, primary health centres, and educational institutions in the respective districts and ensure attendance of absent staff and the supply of medicines in hospitals should be ensured. On this occasion, the meeting gave a detailed briefing by all the divisional commissioners regarding their respective divisions and told that all the commissioners and deputy commissioners have made more than 1200 visits to all the districts.

The meeting was attended by Senior Member Board of Revenue Hafiz Muhammad Tahir, Additional Chief Secretary Interior Zahid Saleem, Secretary Imran Zarkoon, Secretary Health Abdullah Khan, Secretary, Education Saleh Mohammad Nasir, Commissioner Quetta Hamza Shafqaat, Deputy Commissioner Quetta while other Divisional Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners participated it through video link.

Addressing the meeting, the Chief Secretary said that all the Deputy Commissioners (DCs) should ensure the implementation of the instructions given by the Election Commission and all DCs should complete the repair work of polling stations in their respective districts as soon as possible.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan addressing Divisional Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners Conference.

## Pakistan urges India to ensure safety of minorities particularly Muslims

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan has urged the Indian government to ensure the safety, security, and protection of minorities, particularly Muslims and their places of worship.

The Foreign Office in a statement issued on Wednesday, on the completion of 31 years since the demolition of the historic Babri Mosque said that the day was a sad reminder where a mob of Hindu zealots demolished the centuries-old mosque in Ayodhya city of Uttar Pradesh state in full view of Indian law enforcement authorities.

The statement said, it is lamentable that India's superior judiciary not only acquitted the criminals responsible for this hateful act but also allowed the construction of a temple on the site of the demolished mosque.

The Foreign Office said the temple was expected to be inaugurated in January 2024 - months before the next general election in India. It said the anti-Muslim frenzy that caused the Babri Mosque's destruction remains unabated. A few weeks ago, the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh publicly cited the demolition of the mosque as a template to demolish parts of Pakistan. The statement said the elements belonging to the ruling dispensation in India continue to incite hysteria and hatred against Muslims. "Today, Hindu supremacist groups are demanding conversion of many other mosques into temples, including the Gyanvapi Mosque in Varanasi and Shahi Eidgah Mosque in Mathura," it said. The Foreign Office said that several mosques and shrines had already been demolished under the garb of different administrative measures or ju-

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## Husband bound to pay 'mehr' whenever his wife demands: SC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court on Wednesday declared that the 'haq mehr' (dower) has to be paid to a woman whenever she demanded it from her husband.

BEIJING: Mr. Cui Jun, President China Economic Net called on Ambassador Khalil Hashmi at Pakistan Embassy Beijing; discussed different areas of bilateral cooperation including media exchanges between China and Pakistan.

The court imposed a fine worth Rs1,00,000 on petitioner for six-year delay in payment of the 'mehr' amount to his wife and also directed him to pay the expenditures of litigation to the woman. A three-member bench, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa issued the three-page written order in an appeal filed by a citizen Khalid Pervaz.

The order said that 'mehr' is an Islamic concept and it is specifically recognised by the law of Pakistan. It has to be paid whenever demanded by the wife, it added. The order said that the mehr (dower) can be demanded during the subsistence of the marriage, and that the husband is under an obligation to pay it.

Undersecretary of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mohammed Hussein Mohammed Bahr-aluloom along with senior officials of the Iraqi Parliament warmly received the distinguished delegation.

It said that the woman had to file a suit for recovery of the 'mehr' and maintenance, and the petitioner unnecessarily involved her in litigation, which reached this Court after six and half years. The court said that this kind of frivolous litigation is paralysing the judicial system of the country. The petitioner took up an untenable defence, and perpetuated it probably because costs were not imposed upon him and the courts did not insist that the decision of the Family Court should first be complied with before entertaining a challenge to it.

During his stay in Iraq, Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani was scheduled to engage in meetings with senior Iraqi leadership and parliamentary heads including acting Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament.

These discussions were expected to focus on strengthening diplomatic ties, fostering collaboration on key regional issues, and exploring avenues for mutual cooperation.

PHC eases rules for Afghan refugees marrying Pakistanis

PESHAWAR (INP): The Peshawar High Court on Wednesday relaxed the rules for Afghan refugees who have married Pakistani men or women.

The detailed judgment, penned by Justice Waqar Ahmed, spans 33 pages and marks a significant step towards facilitating the lives of Afghan refugees who have chosen to build their lives in Pakistan.

The court's directive allows Afghan nationals married to Pakistanis to apply for Pakistan Origin Cards (POCs), a document that grants them certain rights and privileges associated with Pakistani citizenship. This move aims to streamline the process for Afghan refugees seeking to regularize their status in Pakistan and integrate into society seamlessly. The decision emphasizes the importance of simplifying the marriage registration process for Afghan-Pakistani couples, eliminating the mandatory requirement of a passport and ID card for POC applications in cases of marriage. Additionally, the court mandates that POC cards be issued promptly following security clearance, ensuring that eligible individuals are not subjected to unnecessary delays.

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## Lasbela Women Empowerment Summit sparks inspiration and development

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: In a momentous collaboration, the Ministry of Information Government of Balochistan, and Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Funds (PPF) join hands to host the Lasbela Women Empowerment Summit, a beacon of change aimed at uplifting women across diverse fields.

QUETTA: Caretaker Human Rights Minister, Khalil George along with "Pastor Imran Afzal and others are cutting cake during a ceremony on the eve of Christmas Day "coming ahead.

The summit, organized by Information Ministry and PPF, has garnered significant attention for its commitment to fostering inspiration and progress among women in the region.

QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan addressing Divisional Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners Conference.

Held in Uthal, Lasbela, the summit witnessed the presence of distinguished guests, with Mr. Naeem Umrani, ADC (R) District Lasbela, gracing the occasion as the Chief Guest. Mr. Umrani, in his address, applauded the impactful strides taken towards women empowerment, emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts to bring about positive change. He also distributed prizes, certificates and shields.

The Government's commitment to supporting initiatives that empower women was evident throughout the summit. The Information Ministry and PPF played pivotal roles in ensuring the success of this collaborative effort, reflecting a shared vision for a more inclusive and progressive society.

The important highlights of the summit included discussions on entrepreneurship, education, healthcare, and technology, showcasing the multifaceted nature of women's contributions to society. Attendees were inspired by success stories.

The summit, held un-