

# Independent

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## ECP refutes claims of issuing general elections' schedule

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has categorically denied the issuance of any schedule for the upcoming general elections. A spokesman of ECP, strongly denied a news item published in daily Jang is unfounded and having no basis.

The spokesperson clarified that the schedule circulating on social media is fraudulent. The Election Commission spokesperson noted that false information about the election is con-

sistently appearing in both print and electronic media. He said pay attention only to statements from the official spokesperson of the Election Commission, and disregard any others claiming to be from the Commission. Applications filed in the Commission underwent no consultations, clarified the spokesperson. Additionally, such statements should not be construed as policy declarations of the Election Commission, as per the spokesperson.

## Senate Chairman accepts Shaukat Tarin's resignation

ISLAMABAD (INP): Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani has officially accepted the resignation of former Finance Minister Shaukat Tareen from his Senate membership.



The Senate Secretariat issued a statement confirming that Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, who had traveled to Dubai from Iraq, met with Shaukat Tareen during the visit. In this meeting, Shaukat Tareen tendered his resignation to the Chairman Senate, and after due consideration, Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani approved the resignation.

## Youth is backbone of Kashmir struggle: Mushaal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick has asserted that India had consistently thwarted every chance for a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue.

Advocating for a just and transparent trial for her husband and Kashmiri Hurriyat Leader Muhammad Yasin Malik, Mushaal emphasized that Modi's entire election narrative revolves around the prospect of imposing a death sentence on Yasin Malik.

These remarks were delivered during the Kashmir Conference, which focused on the violations of human rights in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and the role of

the United Nations. The event was organized by the Human Rights Council of Pakistan to commemorate International Human Rights Day.

Mushaal emphasized the need for global attention to the United Nations Human Rights Commission reports of 2018 and 2019 to stop India's human rights violations in IIOJK.

She expressed deep concern over the restricted access of international human rights observers to IIOJK. She lamented the information and communication blockade imposed by India, stating that it has prevented the true extent of human rights abuses in IIOJK from reaching the international community. She said the on-ground situation in IIOJK is far more severe than what is being reported.

## Elections can be postponed in areas under security threat, suggests Qadir Baloch

ISLAMABAD (INP): PPP leader and former federal minister Abdul Qadir Baloch has suggested postponing elections in areas that are under security threat instead of delaying polls entirely.

Last month, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and President Arif Alvi agreed on February 8, 2024 as the date for polls. The development stirred activities in the camps of most political parties. However, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Ghulam Ali recently said it was difficult to carry out political activities in parts

of KP and Balochistan due to the security situation. Similarly, JUI-F chief Fazlur Rehman also raised questions on the feasibility of holding elections amid a "deteriorating" security situation.

Earlier this week, caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, while emphasising the government's readiness to ensure peaceful general elections, acknowledged the terrorist threats faced by political leaders in the run-up to the polls, highlighting a general threat to political figures, with a specific alert for the JUI-F chief.



KOHAT: Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing to workers convention at Captain Zahoorul Islam Shaheed Football Stadium Babri Banda.

## Accuses Sharif family of trying to buy PIA Bilawal says his political rivals are contesting polls to save themselves from jail

Says neither any player nor anyone else can compete with me in politics; PPP contesting election to provide maximum relief to underprivileged

KOHAT (Agencies): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that he does not have any political rivals as "neither any player nor anyone else" can compete with him in politics.

Addressing the party's rally in Kohat district on Sunday, the PPP chief took a veiled jibe at his political opponents, saying that they are contesting elections for their vested interests.

On the other hand, the PPP chief said he is contesting polls against his rivals to resolve the issues of the masses.

"Someone is fighting

elections to get out of jail while someone is fighting to escape from jail," Bilawal said at the rally.

He said the PPP does not represent the elite as it is "representative of the workers and poor of the country".

"We will bury the traditional politics of division and initiate the politics that aims at serving the masses."

The PPP chief also expressed hope that his party would form the government after the upcoming general elections and ensure that the masses would get their rights. The PPP chief said he was warned against holding party conventions in

KP amid security threat alerts. "But [...] our workers say they are neither scared nor they would surrender before terrorism."

INP adds: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has accused the Sharif family of attempting to buy the national airline, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), instead of selling it. Addressing a public meeting in Lower Dir on Sunday, Bilawal said, "I have come to know that they are trying to buy PIA instead of selling it. I want to tell that we will not let Mian Sahib (Shehbaz Sharif) to buy PIA."



MUZAFFRABAD: Activists of Pasban-e-Hurriyat shouting slogans, to express their solidarity with Palestinians and Kashmir's during a protest rally on the eve of Human Rights Day, at Azadi Chowk.

## Rehmat Shah Afridi laid to rest

PESHAWAR (APP): Funeral prayer of Rehmat Shah Afridi, Editor-in-Chief



of Frontier Post Peshawar was offered here on Sunday. Funeral prayer of the deceased was held at Hayatabad Peshawar and was attended by a large number of people, journalists, civil society members and well wishers. Rehmat Shah Afridi was later laid to rest at his ancestral graveyard.

## Reviews river diversion system Chairman WAPDA visits Diamer Basha Dam

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Water and Development Authority (WAPDA) Engr Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd) on Sunday visited Diamer Basha Dam Project to review the river diversion system, which is operational since last week after partial diversion of River Indus at Diamer Basha Dam Project site.

The diversion system consists of about one Kilometer (Km) - long diversion tunnel, 0.857 Km-long diversion canal and two coffer (starter) dams - one at the upstream and other at the downstream of the main dam site, said a press release.

WAPDA succeeded in diverting River Indus partially last week through the diversion system constructed for the purpose. Now-a-days, mighty River Indus is flowing mainly through diversion tunnel and diversion canal, while partly through its natural course.

Chairman WAPDA also reviewed construction progress on different sites of the project. CEO, GM/Project Director Diamer Basha Dam and representatives of the Consultants and the Contractors were also present during the Chairman's visit.

The Chairman was briefed about the test-run of the diversion system.

## Syed Farooq Shah pays glowing tribute to Rehmat Shah Afridi

Independent Report QUETTA: The Editor-in-Chief of Independent Group of Newspapers Syed Farooq Shah expressed his sorrow over the death of Rehmat Shah Afridi, founder and Editor-in-Chief of 'The Frontier Post' and paid a glowing tribute to him for his services in journalism.

He said that the services rendered by Rehmat Shah Afridi in the field of journalism will be remembered for long. He prayed for peace to the departed soul and courage to the bereaved family to bear the irreparable loss.

It may mentioned here that the founder of English-language daily 'The Frontier Post', Rehmat Shah Afridi, passed away here the other day. He was 74.

## Army Chief off to US on official visit



RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir has left on Sunday for United States of America (USA) on his maiden official visit.

During his visit, General Syed Asim Munir is scheduled to meet the senior military and other government officials of USA, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

Accountability should be done across the board, the minister said. "The history suggests that some of the governments could not complete its democratic terms," he said, adding the case hearing for former prime minister

## Fuel price likely to reduce in from Dec 16

ISLAMABAD (INP): Petrol and diesel prices are likely to decrease by 13 and 15 rupees per liter respectively, effective December 16th.

According to media reports, this potential price drop comes on the back of a 5.49 dollar per barrel decrease in the global petrol market. If the government finalizes the proposed reduction on December 15th, it will bring the price of petrol down from the current 281.34 rupees per liter to 268.34 rupees.

Similarly, diesel prices could drop from 289.79 rupees to 274.79 rupees per liter.

The final decision on the new prices will be announced by the government on December 15th, and the revised prices will be implemented the following day.

## As many as 186 Afghan families returned to Kabul

ISLAMABAD (INP): "Thousands of Afghans are returning to their homeland on a daily basis through Chaman and Torkham borders, thanking Pakistan for its generosity," Radio Pakistan reported.

Apart from other measures for the dignified return of Afghans to their country, transit camps equipped with all facilities have been established in various districts for their temporary accommodation.

Earlier, the Supreme Court (SC) issued notices to the federation, apex committee, and foreign ministry on plea against the deportation of illegal Afghans residing in Pakistan. The plaintiff stated that the caretaker government doesn't have the authority to evict illegal foreign nationals.

## Intense political rhetoric testament to in-time elections: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zulfikar Ali Bhutto has been scheduled after four decades. He, to another query, said the caretaker government was bound to implement the orders of the apex court.

PTI officials, in the past, had emphasized the need for the return of illegal immigrants to their countries, Solangi recalled.

"It seems that the former chief of PTI indirectly wants to gain sympathy from both the Taliban government and the TTP, if so, it would be extremely regrettable," he said while reacting to the former PTI chairman's statement on Afghan-related issues.

"Public broadcasters operate on public support," he said while underlining the need for carrying reforms in these institutions of public importance.

"With the will of the Almighty, the elections will take place on Thursday, February 8, 2024," said the minister while talking to a private media channel on a TV talk show.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) would issue the general election schedule, he said, adding all political parties would be given 54 days under the constitution and law for electioneering.

To a query, he said the courts were dispensing justice to everyone despite questions raised by a handful of people.



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PESHAWAR: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Chief, Siraj-ul-Haq addresses to his supporters during public gathering meeting held in Peshawar.

## JI chief vows ethical social media engagement for a brighter Pakistan

PESHAWAR (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami chief Sirajul Haq, while emphasising the significance of social media during the party's social media convention on Sunday, asserted that his workers would utilise social media for campaigning, but would not engage in false propaganda against anyone.

Siraj stated that the purpose of JI's social media efforts was to identify the leadership of the new generation. "Our goal is to light the candle of hope for the people of Pakistan."

The JI chief mentioned that the Islamabad High Court had examined the social media departments of all parties and found that the JI's social media wing was free of lies and propaganda. Siraj said that his party would use social media for the sake of Allah's religion. "We will also employ the power of social media against corruption."

## CTD SHO martyred, two injured in Khuzdar blast

QUETTA: An official of Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) was martyred while two others sustained injuries after their vehicle was hit by a magnetic improvised explosive device (IED) in Khuzdar on Sunday noon.



The police sources informed that, CTD Station House Officer Mohammad Murad embraced martyrdom in the blast after his car was targeted on the Sultan Ibrahim road in Khuzdar city. Two others also sustained injuries. Meanwhile, the wounded were shifted to the Khuzdar Teaching Hospital.

## Govt likely to extend Hajj application deadline

ISLAMABAD (INP): Government is considering extending the deadline for submitting Hajj applications under the government scheme as so far, only 28,782 applications have been received. The low turnout of applicants prompted authorities to explore alternative options to encourage more participation. As per data, only 24,446 applications were collected under the official regular scheme on Saturday. The sponsorship scheme, aimed at facilitating pilgrims, received a modest 174 applications on the last day. Ministry of Religious Affairs is considering extending the submission period by 7 to 10 days to boost the number of applications and ensure wider participation in the Hajj pilgrimage. Despite slashing Hajj expenses and introducing short-term Hajj facilities, the number of applications has dropped this year too.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony had to return the quota of almost 20,000 to Saudi Arabia after dropping in Hajj pilgrims last year.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulber Khan taking oath from the newly elected cabinet members of Professor and Lecturer association at CM Secretariat

## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Liberties lost

As Pakistan marks Human Rights Day today, it confronts a troubling panorama of human rights violations. Rights bodies, local and international, have consistently drawn attention to the country's abysmal record but to no avail. Despite constitutional guarantees, the reality for many Pakistanis is a pervasive sense of insecurity. The use of enforced disappearances as a tool against dissent is particularly alarming. With at least 2,210 unresolved cases, the state's role in these disappearances paints a picture of repression.

The failure to enact legislation criminalising enforced disappearances, despite repeated attempts, suggests a lack of political will at the highest levels. The cases of journalists Nafees Naeem, Arsalan Khan, Imran Riaz and Baloch student Bebagr Imdad, who were all abducted — some for months — and later released, highlight a disturbing trend of targeting critical voices.

Some progress was made, with safety laws for journalists passed first by the Sindh Assembly followed by the National Assembly in late 2021, but their implementation remains a distant dream. The curtailing of freedom of assembly and expression is another area of grave concern. The authorities' use of force to disperse peaceful protests, and the intimidation and arbitrary detention of protesters, all indicate shrinking space for civil liberties.

Religious intolerance continues to ignite violence, with blasphemy allegations leading to the lynching of both minorities and Muslims. The Supreme Court's warnings against the misuse of blasphemy laws are welcome, yet much more is needed to protect the vulnerable from societal prejudices.

Violence against women remains a pervasive issue. While the conviction of Zahir Jaffer for the murder of Noor Mukadam is a significant step, systemic changes are crucial for addressing the broader issue of gender-based violence. The lack of enactment of the Domestic Violence Bill speaks volumes about the state's failure to uphold women's rights. The rights of transgender individuals, despite legal recognition, continue to be ignored. The challenge to the Transgender Rights Act and the continued violence against this community reveal deep-seated societal and institutional biases. Torture and custodial deaths remain unchecked, and the passage of the Torture and Custodial Death Act, while a positive development, requires rigorous enforcement.

This bleak landscape of human rights is reflective of a deeper malaise affecting the country's democratic fabric. The manipulation of democratic processes, the establishment's shadow over political life, and the selective application of justice all contribute to an environment where human rights are easily trampled upon. As Pakistan prepares for national elections, it is imperative that these issues are brought to the forefront. The protection of human rights is not just a moral obligation but a prerequisite for a stable and functioning democracy. On this Human Rights Day, let Pakistan recommit itself to these ideals, not just in rhetoric but in concrete actions.



Nawaz Sharif was an outcast in Pakistan—branded a convict, an absconder, and a proclaimed offender, marred by allegations of deep-seated corruption. He had been disqualified for life and ousted from the country. Sharif's persistent defiance in challenging the establishment had resulted in multiple confrontations, leading to repeated punishments. The prevailing, widely accepted perception was that the establishment, through extensive efforts, state resources, and manipulation of the judicial, administrative, and civil systems, had imprisoned him and orchestrated his exile. It seemed inconceivable that they would, in their right mind, reinstate him to a position of power.

Contrary to all expectations, Nawaz Sharif returned in a blaze of glory, defying every perception, estimate, and logic. He, once a convicted figure whose mere mention in the media was deemed a grave offense, transformed overnight into the media's darling—a remarkable shift akin to a magical transformation. Even the Interior Minister, who initially asserted Sharif's imminent arrest upon his return due to his convict status, hastily retracted, showering him with praise, acknowledging his eminence, and granting him VVIP treatment upon arrival.

In an astonishing turn of events, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) swiftly withdrew corruption charges against him, while the courts remarkably absolved him of allegations regarding ill-

gotten wealth in London—all seemingly within the blink of an eye. The sudden about-face in treatment and legal proceedings surrounding Sharif's return left an indelible impact, defying previous norms and expectations in a manner that resonated deeply.

However, a lingering unease persisted despite these developments. The intelligentsia, thinkers, analysts, and the general public found themselves deeply unsettled by the apparent manipulation of the country's systems, initially against Nawaz Sharif and then abruptly in his favor. Individuals with analytical minds grappled with this abrupt turn of events, finding it deeply disquieting, illogical, and difficult to comprehend. As they pondered various scenarios, ironically, many did not envision Mr. Nawaz Sharif reclaiming the position of Prime Minister for the fourth time.

The political analysts were assuming that the army as an institution has deep memories. It follows a cyclical process to ensure that armed forces remain adaptable, well-prepared, and continuously evolved to meet the challenges of dynamic and diverse conflict scenarios. The process began with the clear definition of objectives and parameters. Develop scenarios by creating a realistic setting that encompassed geopolitical factors, terrain details, and enemy capabilities. The war game unfolded through real-time decision-making. Data is meticulously collected on decisions, outcomes, and resource utilization during the war game. Insights gleaned from the war game guided the refinement of strategies, tactics, and operational planning, feeding back into future simulations and real-world military opera-

tions.

As an analyst with past experiences closely working with both civil and military establishments, I have no doubt that before absolving Nawaz Sharif of all allegations and attempting to reinstate him as Prime Minister for the fourth time, the army would have followed specific procedures. They would have developed various scenarios focusing on questions like (a) What if Nawaz Sharif returns as Prime Minister for the fourth time? (b) Why should he not receive support for a comeback, and (c) what if an alternative nominee representing Nawaz Sharif is appointed as Prime Minister?

Scenario A: Given the PTI's popularity, there's a need for a prominent leader with public appeal and experience to counter Mr. Khan. Nawaz Sharif, with his extensive experience and stature, could emerge as a unifying figure across various political factions. His ability to initiate dialogue and focus on economic stability and governance reforms makes him a strong counterweight to Mr. Khan.

Mr. Sharif's past accomplishments in economic development and public infrastructure can be highlighted through a strategic public relations campaign. He could reach out to disenchanted segments of society, pledging accountability and reforms to address previous concerns. Civil society, recognizing his experience and the call for stability, might lend support. The establishment could opt for a working relationship based on mutual respect and commitment to national interests, reinstalling him as Prime Minister for the fourth time.

To maintain control

over his ambitions, ensuring he holds a slim majority or no majority in Parliament, he might need to form a coalition government with members favored by the establishment. This would keep his government reliant on their support, keeping his authority in check.

Scenario B: Opposition factions and certain elements within the military consistently highlight Nawaz Sharif's past dismissals and allegations of corruption. They argue that his return to power could jeopardize national interests and financial integrity, reigniting past controversies and instability.

Nawaz Sharif, during his tenure as Prime Minister of Pakistan, had several notable confrontations with the military establishment. His political career was marked by moments of strained relations and power struggles with the military leadership. These confrontations often stemmed from differing approaches to governance, control over key policy decisions, and the exercise of authority. Sharif's attempts to assert civilian supremacy and consolidate power occasionally clashed with the military's influence and perceived interests, leading to tense standoffs and moments of significant political instability in Pakistan.

A substantial portion of the public remains skeptical of Sharif's leadership due to lingering allegations and a perception of political opportunism. His reinstatement as Prime Minister might spark protests and deepen social divisions, leading to increased unrest.

Given Imran Khan's popularity, the establishment might need to manipulate elections in favor of Nawaz Sharif, undermining the credibility of

the electoral process. Such interference could lead to widespread rejection of the resulting government. If allegations of election rigging gain traction, international financial institutions like the IMF might withhold support, worsening the country's already fragile economic condition. This could plunge the nation into further instability and turmoil. International partners are expected to express concerns about Sharif's potential return, fearing its impact on diplomatic relations and regional stability. This skepticism complicates efforts to secure international support for his administration.

Scenario C: To navigate resistance and controversies surrounding Nawaz Sharif's leadership, the Establishment might orchestrate conditions where Nawaz willingly presents his brother, Shahbaz Sharif, as a compromise candidate for the prime ministerial role. In this scenario, Nawaz Sharif could retain substantial influence behind the scenes, effectively guiding the party and Shahbaz in governance matters allowing him to maintain control while projecting a cooperative image to subdue opposition.

Unlike Nawaz, Shahbaz is perceived as less likely to challenge military authority. He has a history of cooperative dealings with the military, avoiding direct confrontations—something favored by the military in civilian leadership.

Shahbaz boasts a reputation as a competent administrator with a proven track record in delivering economic projects. He is expected to prioritize economic development, aligning with the military's desire for a stable and prosperous Pakistan. Maintaining a fa-

vorable relationship with the military gives Shahbaz more flexibility, a crucial factor for the military to retain a semblance of civilian control. His appointment ensures continuity, minimizing disruptions and safeguarding the military's interests.

Seen as a pragmatic politician willing to collaborate with different parties, Shahbaz's approach is valued by the military. They prefer leaders capable of navigating Pakistan's intricate political landscape without unnecessary conflicts.

Among the three scenarios, Scenario C emerges as the most promising compromise. By nominating Shahbaz Sharif as Prime Minister while retaining Nawaz Sharif's influence behind the scenes, it offers stability, continuity, and a leader perceived as more cooperative towards the military. This compromise could address concerns raised in other scenarios, providing a pathway to navigate the controversies surrounding Nawaz Sharif's leadership. It presents a strategic balance, potentially satisfying the military's preferences for a less confrontational leader while maintaining a sense of stability within the government.

Reflecting on the abrupt ousting and subsequent return to power of both Benazir Bhutto Shaheed and Nawaz Sharif, orchestrated by the establishment, it becomes apparent that history might repeat itself. In a few years, we could find ourselves recalculating and envisioning various scenarios for Khan's potential return to the power equation.

The pattern of leaders being removed from office and later reinstated seems to be a recurring theme, hinting at a possible similar trajectory for Khan in the future.

# “Will Nawaz’s hopes die down soon?”

By Qamar Bashir

Former Press Secretary to the President; Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France; Former MD, SRBC

## Commerce News

### Incentives to overseas Pakistanis to multiply remittances: LCCI

LAHORE (APP): Trust building, encouragement and the lucrative incentives to the overseas Pakistanis can multiply the foreign remittances which are the major part of the country's economy.

Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President Kashif Anwar, Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry and Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt said in a media statement here Sunday that the overseas Pakistanis are playing a great role in the economy of Pakistan through their remittances.

They said that the remittances in 2022-23 dropped by around four billion dollars to USD 27.3 billion. It is worth mentioning that in 2021-22,

the remittances stood at USD 31.3 billion. One of the main reasons of drop in remittances in 2022-23 was the difference between the inter-bank and open market dollar rate.

Since this issue is resolved now, it is expected that remittance will pose a sound growth in 2023-24. In the first three months of the financial year (July-September 2023-24), the remittances stood at USD 6.3 billion.

They said that the government should take measures to ensure that these remittances are invested in productive sectors. They said that foreign remittances could easily reach USD 50 billion in the next few years if the government announces

incentives on the investment made by expatriate Pakistanis. They said that the government should encourage the expats to invest in energy, agriculture, telecommunication and Information Technology. They said that a large number of overseas Pakistanis are keen to invest in Pakistan. They said that the government would have to discourage the Hawala system as annually billions of dollars are being sent through this illegal way.

The LCCI office-bearers said that at a time when the country is experiencing various economic challenges, rise in home remittances would provide much-needed support.



SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SAARC CCI) delegation led by its President Muhammad Jashim Uddin, along with businessmen from South Asia called on H.E Secretary General, SAARC, Ambassador Golam Sarwar on SAARC Charter Day at Kathmandu, Nepal.

### Disbursement of quarterly tranche (Oct-Dec) of Benazir Kafaalat continues

ISLAMABAD (APP): The disbursement of the quarterly tranche (October-December) of Benazir Kafaalat cash assistance to beneficiaries is continuing smoothly across the country. According to an official source, the payment process has already commenced across the country, including Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Kashmir, and Gilgit-

Baltistan simultaneously. The payment of Rs 8,500 per household is being disbursed among around nine million registered beneficiary families. The beneficiaries, in case of any complaint, can approach the nearest BISP Tehsil offices or call the toll-free helpline number 080026477 of the Benazir Income Support Program. The special control room has been activated in the BISP

headquarters to address the complaints of the beneficiaries promptly.

However, the beneficiaries can also contact them on WhatsApp numbers including 0305-917-1917 (Sindh), 0325-5365520 (Punjab), 0325-5365469 (Balochistan), 0325-5365476 (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit Baltistan.

### Buying dry fruits becomes a distant dream for common buyers amid soaring prices

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dry fruits as the most popular and consumed delight of the winter season have turned into a lavish commodity for a common man to buy due to the exorbitant rates amid the prevailing price hike situation.

The majority of the citizens especially those belonging to the low- and middle-income groups are finding it hard to buy their daily eatables like vegetables, fruits, wheat flour etc. due to the price hike situation so buying dry fruits is no more a priority for many.

The nutritional benefits of dry fruits cannot be ignored in terms of increasing the immunity level to fight diseases due to the cold weather in the ongoing Winter season.

Sajid Khan, a dry fruits seller at Karachi Company, said the price of

dry fruits has increased along with inflation. “Selling dry fruits is the only source of income for me and it would be difficult to feed my children and run household expenditures if I didn't earn maximum profit”, he said.

“The trend of offering discounts on special occasions is no longer limited to the clothes, food items and other accessories of daily life but also being adopted by sellers like me to attract buyers due to its high price”, Sajid Khan added.

He said that he sells almonds (without shell) at Rs. 2800 per kg, Walnut (without shell) at Rs. 2200, Pistachio for Rs. 3600, apricot for Rs. 1200, dried figs for Rs. 3200 and Raisin for Rs. 1700, dates Rs. 1200, Afghani Rewari for Rs. 1200 and Cashews for Rs. 3600.



QURTTA: A woman buying seasonal fruit Pomegranate from a roadside vendor.



HYDERABAD: Labourer women busy in sorting the good quality green chili at vegetables market.

### PCMEA calls for continuity in long-term export policy

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PCMEA) has welcomed the proposed roadmap of USD 100 billion exports under Vision Pakistan and called for continuity in such long-term export policies to ensure their success.

“After final preparation, it should be declared a national policy

and its draft should be protected so that any political situation and change of governments cannot affect it,” these views were expressed in a joint media statement by the PCMEA Senior Vice Chairman Usman Ashraf, Carpet Training Institute (CTI) Chairperson Ijazur Rahman and senior members here on Sunday.

### Railways collect Rs 67.3 million from ticketless passengers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has collected over Rs 67.3 million from ticket-less passengers during a crackdown during the last two months with the help of railway police and train staffs. “Around 51,347 passengers found traveling without tickets in different trains and collected the said amount from them, which is deposited in the official bank account of the department,” sources in the Ministry told APP.

They said that it was not the first time that action was taken on a large scale against ticket-less passengers, adding that these types of crackdowns had taken place daily.

The sources said that ticketless traveling was illegal, and those who were caught without a ticket were charged a ticket price for the whole journey of the train besides the penalty.

### Time to regulate real estate for common man’s benefit

ISLAMABAD (APP): Having one's own house is dream of every citizen. But in a society plagued with exploitation and weaker regulations, this dream often lands these citizens in real trouble when they fall prey to property tycoons.

Playing with their emotion of having a house, the housing societies' owners first trap them by showing pleasant dreams and then exploit them fleecing their hard earned money.

In a desire of having

their own abode, some invest their pension or gratuity money and others sell their ornaments or household. But, after sometime they come to know that either the society was illegal or the owner had invested the collected money elsewhere delaying development and possession of plots.

The investors are charged repeatedly either in the name of development charges or other expenditures other than the specified plots price as recently surfaced in the case

of a society in the suburbs of Rawalpindi. Social media is seen flooded with hue and cry by investors against owners of this society, the heirs of a big gun in real estate business, for massively charging development expenses.

“They have become a mafia. Weaker regulations encouraged them to act without fear. Under the garb of specific laws, they freely fleece the people,” said an investor Rashid Mahmood. “It is very rare that there is any compatibility in actual

land price and the price charged by buyers.”

There is dire need to transparently maintain the data of files or property selling by housing societies by the government departments not leaving the developers to play as per their will. Moreover, strict laws must be enacted to ensure that both the developer and the investor or end user could equally benefit from these projects.

In many cases the societies' owners disappear with the investors' money

leaving them in lurch. Many societies' owners sell the same plot or file more than once to earn double or triple money against the actual price, flaring disputes among the owners and leaving them to stand for years to settle disputes.

Astonishingly these developers sometimes operate hand in glove with the government authorities with a few among them becoming so influential that they have a say in making or breaking the governments.

## No seat adjustment or alliance with anyone in Punjab: Javed

SHEIKHUPURA (INP): Javed Latif – a diehard PML-N leader – on Sunday said they had neither formed any alliance nor would go for seat adjustment with any other party in Punjab – a statement which follows reports of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) finalising a long list of constituencies to get three-time prime minister Nawaz Sharif's endorsement.

Addressing a ceremony in his hometown, Latif said the PML-N hadn't enjoyed a level-playing field – a term which is part of political debate nowadays because of the PTT's narrative – so far and added that the party's supremacy was getting justice at a snail's pace.

Anyone creating

doubts about general elections wasn't sincere to Pakistan, he remarked and stressed that Nawaz was the last ray of hope for the people of Pakistan.

He said every party deserved level-playing field, but not the one attacking sensitive installations. "The party targeting sensitive installations is a terrorist [group], not political [entity]."

"We do not take the assertions made by Bilawal [Bhutto Zardari] seriously," said Latif, who is considered a close aide of Nawaz and believed to be regularly explaining his viewpoint on different issues.

Why they should take Bilawal's statements when even his father [Asif

Ali Zardari] didn't do so, he remarked – a reference to the interview in which the former president had told a private TV channel that his son [the PPP chairman] was inexperienced.

These remarks were in complete contrast to the speeches delivered by Bilawal who has been presenting himself as a prime minister material.

"We will reply when Mr Zardari speaks up," he told the gathering, adding that Zardari was used to refute Bilawal regularly.

He also advised the PPP to contest elections on the basis of its performance and said it destroyed Sindh during the 15-year-long rule in the province.



**PESHAWAR:** A delegation of teachers and students from Balochistan Residential College Zhob in a group photo with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali during their study tour.

## Punjab CM orders effective measures to prevent canal water theft

LAHORE (INP): On the instructions of Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi, desilting of 1,112 canals of the province will be launched from December 26 which will last until January 20.

In this regard all the divisional commissioners have been assigned the task of monitoring the desilting of canals which is being conducted after a gap of ten years. The Chief Minister while chairing a meeting on Sunday in Lahore directed that the commissioners will

remain in the field during the desilting and will supervise all other matters.

He instructed that attention should also be paid to the repair of canals along with desilting.

Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi ordered to take effective measures to check canal water theft.

The CM directed that administrative officers should take effective action in their respective districts to address water theft.

In the meeting, measures to prevent water

theft and desilting programs were reviewed.

Additional Chief Secretary, Chairman Planning and Development Board, Secretaries Agriculture, Irrigation, Food, Information, Commissioner Lahore and concerned officers of Agriculture Department attended the meeting.

Provincial Agriculture Minister SM Tanveer and all Divisional Commissioners participated in the meeting through video link.

## Minorities play a vital role in the development of the country; Dr Jamal

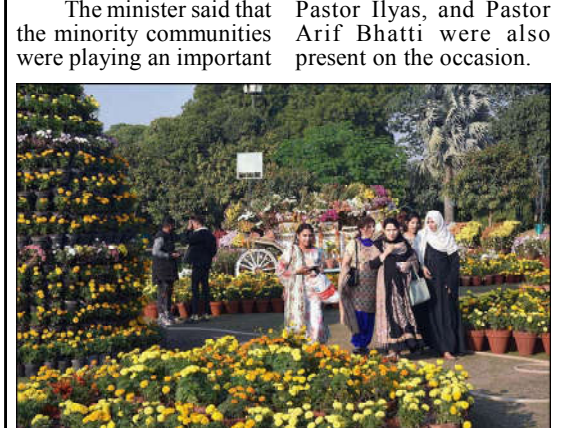
RAWALPINDI (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Health and Population Welfare Punjab Dr Jamal Nasir on Sunday said that minorities played a vital role in the development and progress of the country and were an integral part of the society.

He expressed these views while addressing a function organized in connection with Christmas celebrations at the IFGF Church.

The minister said that the minority communities were playing an important

and constructive role in the development of the country while leaders and followers of all religions played a key role in communal harmony in Pakistan.

Dr Jamal congratulated the Christian community on the coming Christmas and also cut the cake. A large number of Christian communities including Pastor Justin Javed, Pastor Frank Al-Aziz, Pastor Saber Khurshid, Pastor Manwar, Pastor Ilyas, and Pastor Arif Bhatti were also present on the occasion.



**LAHORE:** People visit and enjoying flower show at Race Course Jilani Park.

## Wealthy work together to reduce poverty; DG NAB

RAWALPINDI (APP): Deputy Chairman of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Justice @ Sohail Nasir on Sunday emphasized that all the wealthy people needed to work together to reduce poverty.

While addressing the seminar on "Jinnah's Vision for Eradication of Poverty" organized by Jinnah Iqbal South Asian Forum (JISAF) at Anjuman Faiz-ul-Islam complex, he said that there was a lack of self-accountability in our society, adding every poor person who has health and safety should consider why he is poor.

"Working hard can change the financial position so we all should work tirelessly to

overcome our shorts", he added.

Justice (R) Sohail Nasir on the occasion announced to bear the expenses for the complete education of two children in the Jinnah Iqbal Education System and said that "we should do a lot of work for the promotion of education."

He paid tribute to the chairman of the forum, Rana Abdul Baqi, who every year distributes warm quilts and monthly rations to deserving families. Forum Chairman Rana Abdul Baqi, referring to the speeches of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in April 1943 and November 1944, said that the Quaid-e-Azam had declared that the new state of Pakistan.



**MULTAN:** Visitors are taking a keen interest in the calligraphy exhibition on the second day at Punjab Council of Arts.

## PPP mulls seat adjustment with ANP in Karachi, KP

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leadership have contacted Awami National Party (ANP) on forming an electoral alliance and seat adjustment in Karachi and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) for the upcoming general elections.

Sources said that PPP has discussed seat adjustment with ANP on Karachi's two National Assembly (NA) seats.

Moreover, the two parties also discussed forming an electoral alliance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for the upcoming elections.

PPP and ANP are

likely to make a seat adjustment in Peshawar, Swabi, Charsadda, Malakand, Mardan, Karak, Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan (DI Khan), say sources. The latest development comes a day after ANP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) President Aimal Wali Khan met PPP Parliamentarians President Asif Ali Zardari and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at the Zardari House Islamabad.

They discussed on electoral alliance and seat adjustment in KP province for the forthcoming general elections.

## Punjab Transport dept provides relief to rickshaws

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Transport department has provided relief to ensure fitness of rickshaws till January 2.

Official sources said on Sunday that it was a golden opportunity for rickshaw owners to get fitness of their rickshaws done and get immunity from fine.

Immunity from fine had been given till January 2 and fine would be applicable once the relaxation date would end.

## PFA discards 1,000kg substandard meat

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) enforcement teams raided a meat processing unit in Shamkay Bhattian and discarded 1,000kg substandard and stinky meat, and lodged an FIR against the unit owner with the police station concerned.

The raid was conducted under the supervision of PFA Director General Muhammad Asim Javed on Sunday.

## Despite efforts, smog continues to haunt authorities

LAHORE (APP): Unbridled growth, ill planned development projects and poor time management by the city authorities had led Lahore to endure another smoggy winter, once again maintaining its unfortunate position as the most polluted city during last week of November.

Even a smart lockdown for three days a week and ban on vehicular traffic on the Mall road on Sunday

could not change the situation exposing millions of historic city residents to different pollution related diseases.

Environmentalists and common people believe that untimely initiation of projects like Controlled Access Corridor on Bund Road, Shahdara, Akbar Chowk and Imamia Colony flyover and other construction work contributed to already injurious airborne dust particles.

## LWMC working on plan for dust free Lahore

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Waste Management Company has started implementing a plan to make the provincial capital dust free as per the direction of caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi.

According to LWMC sources here on Sunday, mechanical washing and sweeping of roads have been started during night shift in the supervision of Chief Executive Officer Babar.

# International News

## UN chief says he will not give up appeals for ceasefire in Gaza

**Monitoring Desk**  
DOHA: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Sunday he will not give up appealing for a humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza, adding that the war undermined the credibility and authority of the Security Council.

Guterres was speaking at the Doha Forum conference as Washington vetoed on Friday a proposed UN Security Council demand for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in the war between Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas.

"I urged the Security Council to press to avert a humanitarian catastrophe and I reiterated my appeal for a humanitarian ceasefire to be declared," Guterres said.

"Regrettably, the Security Council failed to do it, but that does not make it less necessary," he said.

"I will not give up," Guterres added.

Qatar's Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani told the gathering that Doha will continue to pressure Israel and Hamas for a truce despite "narrow-

ing" chances.

Qatar, where several political leaders of Hamas are based, has been leading negotiations between the group and Israel.

Sheikh Mohammed said hostages were released from Gaza because of negotiations and not because of Israel's military actions.

The head of UNRWA, the UN aid agency for Palestinians, said the dehumanization of Palestinians has allowed the international community to tolerate Israel's continued attacks on Gaza.



**Demonstrators wave flags and carry placards while calling for a ceasefire in Gaza during the 'National March for Palestine' in central London.**

## China, Japan trade blame over confrontation near disputed islands

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: China and Japan accused each other of maritime incursions after a confrontation between their coast guards in waters around disputed islands in the East China Sea.

China's coast guard said on Sunday that a Japanese fishing boat and several patrol vessels intruded the previous day into waters around the tiny islands, called Diaoyu in China and Senkaku in Japan. The uninhabited islands are controlled by Japan but also claimed by China.

China's coast guard said in a statement it had taken necessary measures in accordance with the law to warn away the Japanese vessels.

Japan's coast guard said on Saturday that two Chinese maritime patrol boats left Japan's territorial waters around the islands after receiving warnings. It said its patrol vessels were protecting a Japanese fishing boat that had been approached by the Chinese ships.

Similar incidents occurred in November and October. Asian maritime disputes involving China have been escalating. China and the Philippines traded accusations on Sunday over a collision between their vessels in a part of the South China Sea each nation claims.

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## At least 11 dead after violent clash in central Mexican town

**Monitoring Desk**  
MEXICO CITY: A violent confrontation between suspected criminals has left at least 11 people dead in the town of Texcaltitlan in central Mexico, state security officials said on Friday.

Eight of the deceased were suspected to be tied to criminal activities, the security ministry for the state of Mexico said in a statement, adding that three victims were members of the community.

State police were working with the National Guard and other authorities to provide more details on the incident, the statement added.

## Washington, allies to 'stand up' for stability in Taiwan's periphery

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said on Saturday Washington and its Asia allies would "stand up" for stability across the Taiwan Strait, and reiterated their commitment to freedom of navigation in the disputed South China Sea.

His comments came during a joint briefing with his Tokyo and Seoul counterparts, after a trilateral meeting in South Korea. Late last month the top diplomats of South Korea, Japan and China — North Korea's key

ally and Washington's rival — reaffirmed the need to hold a trilateral summit at the "earliest" possible time. The United States and its Western allies have increased "freedom of navigation" crossings by naval vessels in both the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea, to reinforce that both are international waterways, angering Beijing.

"We will continue to stand up for peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and freedom of navigation in the east and South China Seas."



**Argentina's new Vice President Victoria Villarruel and Argentina's President Javier Milei embrace during their swearing-in ceremony at the National Congress, in Buenos Aires, Argentina.**

## Navalny camp sets strategy to disrupt Putin's path to new term

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: With his hands on all the levers of power in Russia, Vladimir Putin appears unbeatable in a presidential election but opposition activists scent a chance to show he is vulnerable. Putin declared his candidacy for another six-year term on Friday and there is no serious rival to challenge him, with opposition leader Alexei Navalny serving more than 30 years in prison and other critics also jailed or in exile.

With the Kremlin in full control of state media and able to decide who can and cannot run, the Navalny camp says this is not a real election. But it sees the 100-day campaign window as a

rare opportunity to draw Russians into a political conversation and convince them that the Ukraine war and the economic strains it has brought are problems of Putin's making.

"Of course it's impossible to beat Putin in the 'elections'," top Navalny aide Leonid Volkov told Reuters. "The aim of our campaign is to change the political agenda in Russia."

The Kremlin says Putin will win another six-year term because he commands overwhelming support across Russian society, with opinion poll ratings of around 80%. So far only three people have declared their intention to run against him.



**Rohingya Muslim men are inspected by an Indonesian military officer, following their arrival in Blang Raya, Pidie, Aceh province, Indonesia.**

## Fight fire with fire: Controlled burns stem California blazes

**Monitoring Desk**  
SANTA CRUZ: In a forest in northern California, a line of people spread out through the trees, setting fire to shrubs and fallen branches in an act of intentional arson aimed at making the woodland better able to cope with future conflagrations.

The operation near Santa Cruz is part of a growing number of prescribed burns intended to reduce the amount of fuel that can feed natural wildfires in an era when human-caused climate change is increasing the likelihood of devastating blazes.

"The best way to fight fire is with fire," says

Portia Halbert, senior environmental scientist with California State Parks, who is supervising the burn.

Before the undergrowth is ignited, the earth is turned with shovels to create a containment line.

Branches and shrubs too close to fully grown trees are removed, and hoses are deployed to stop flames from getting out of control. The idea is to encourage the fire to consume only the forest floor, without spreading to the oaks and redwoods that loom over it. When wildfire breaks out in the future — as it certainly will — it will have less fuel and will burn cooler and slower.

## King Charles selects coronation photo for Christmas card

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: A photograph of Britain's King Charles and Queen Camilla newly crowned in Buckingham Palace after their coronation has been chosen for the royal couple's Christmas card, Buckingham Palace said.

Charles was crowned king in May, eight months after he ascended to the throne, in a majestic ceremony at London's Westminster Abbey that traces its history back more than 1,000 years.

Camilla, Charles' second wife, was crowned queen. Charles is pictured wearing the Imperial State Crown, Robe of Estate and Coronation Tunic, while Camilla wears Queen Mary's Crown, Robe of Estate and a dress designed by Bruce Oldfield.

The photograph was taken by Hugo Burnand in the Throne Room, the palace said.

## Iran says reviving nuclear deal 'useless'

**Monitoring Desk**  
TEHRAN: Iran said on Saturday that attempting to revive its landmark nuclear deal with world powers that was effectively scrapped by former US president Donald Trump was increasingly "useless".

"Today, the more we advance, the more the JCPOA becomes useless," Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said in a speech to students at the University of Tehran, using the initials of the official name of the nuclear deal.

In 2015, Iran agreed to

curbs on its nuclear programme in exchange for a lifting of sanctions.

But while the deal was signed with several world powers — including China, Russia, Britain, France, and Germany — it was rendered effectively useless when the United States unilaterally withdrew under Trump in 2018.

With the US reimposing sanctions, international banks and businesses have stayed away from Iran for fear of falling foul of US regulators.

## Iranian Nobel winner to start hunger strike in prison

**Monitoring Desk**  
OSLO: Nobel Peace Prize winner Narges Mohammadi will begin a new hunger strike from her prison cell in Iran as the prize is awarded in Oslo on Sunday, her family said on Saturday.

Mohammadi, who has campaigned against the compulsory wearing of the hijab and the death penalty in Iran, will go on hunger strike "in solidarity" with a religious minority, her brother and husband told a press conference in the Norwegian capital on the eve of the Nobel award ceremony.

## Mushaal Mullick hails AAPP establishment, underscores significance of aesthetic medicine

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Advisor to the Prime Minister for Human Rights Mushaal Mullick on Sunday hailed the establishment of the first Association of Aesthetic Physicians of Pakistan (AAPP) here and underscored the significance of aesthetic medicine on the occasion.

She was the chief guest at the inauguration of the first Association of Aesthetic Physicians of Pakistan (AAPP) which was marked as a significant milestone in Pakistan's medical sector.

Mullick, in her address, highlighted the importance of this historic moment, expressing pride in the establishment of the association in Rawalpindi.

She emphasized the alignment of this achieve-

ment with the belief in Allah's appreciation of beauty, as seen in the colorful and beautiful universe He created.

Her speech underscored the significance of aesthetic medicine, a field she described as both challenging and rewarding.

The event also saw the participation of notable figures such as Shabzad Ali Khan, Vice Chancellor of Health University, and Dr Anees Ahmed, Vice Chancellor of Riphah International University.

Dr Samina Mohsin, President of the association, and Dr. Shamaila A. Khan, the General Secretary, were present as well, along with esteemed estheticians from across the country.

Dr Mohsin, in her

welcome speech, introduced the guests and presented a documentary on aesthetic medicine. She spoke about the growing global interest in this field, emphasizing its distinction from traditional beauty practices and highlighting recent academic advancements in aesthetic medicine.

The event concluded with Mullick and other dignitaries presenting commemorative shields to the guests, symbolizing the promising start of the Association of Aesthetic Physicians of Pakistan.

Mullick's presence and words at the event underscored the government's support for this emerging field and its potential impact on the medical landscape in Pakistan and beyond.



ISLAMABAD: President Association of Aesthetic Physician Dr Nafisa Mohsin and General Secretary Dr Shumaila presenting a shield to special advisor to the prime minister of Pakistan on human rights and women empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick during a ceremony at a local hotel in the city.

## Speakers for inter-agency data sharing to ensure climate resilient cities

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Speakers at a panel discussion on data sharing for climate resilient cities have demanded the government to ensure inter-agency data sharing, use of cutting edge technology and accessible information platforms to ensure climate resilient cities in Pakistan.

"An inter-agency data sharing governance system would be established that will involve creating a new centralized entity with the mandate to acquire, store or stream all available data from relevant agencies or empowering existing agencies by hazard type within their jurisdiction mandate to manage data acquisition and dissemination efficiently, with a focus on scalability, cybersecurity and privacy", Awais M. Sumra, Federal Secretary, Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiative at a session on "Using data to build climate resilient cities in Pakistan", organized at Conference of Parties (COP28), Dubai in Pakistan Pavilion, a news release said.

"The first generation multi hazard early warning system focused on communication flood forecast or drought forecast either to the government agencies or to the people, but they

didn't include the information of early action or anticipatory action. Early warning actions can be made more effective if we include early action information into that", Dr Asim Zia who is a Professor of Public Policy and Computer Science in the Department of Community Development and Applied Economics and the Director of the Institute of Environmental Diplomacy and Security (IEDS) at the University of Vermont. It is critical to include early warning and early action in short term planning as well as long-term planning, he added. We need to have advisories at household level that will save the lives of many people.

Crowdsourcing technologies and citizen/community science approaches by deploying sensors can provide critical data for model calibration and validation to forecast air quality and water quality. Operational agencies, e.g. EPA, can also deploy sensor networks to collect real-time air quality and water quality data.

He said that there is need to establish an inter-agency data sharing governance system. Currently, there are some good examples of data sharing (e.g. PMD with WAPDA, IRSA

and Indus Commission to generate short to medium term flood forecasts) that can serve as successful examples. Data flows in many cases are, however, either non-existent or non-operational.

Flows of data between NDMA and operational forecasting agencies (PMD, FFC, SUPARCO, GCISC) need to be improved both ways, i.e. NDMA monitoring data of hazards can be used through "active learning" to improve the forecast skill of agency models, while improved forecast skill of these models from operational agencies can be used to beef up the communication capacity of NDMA to its downstream agencies (e.g. PDMAs, district government etc.), e.g. through improved visualizations of hazards and their impacts.

There are some opportunities to improve resource efficiency by reducing the redundancies among different agencies for data collection, and clear enunciation of "operational" agency mandates. Currently, there is some overlap among SUPARCO, PMD and NDMA that could be reduced by clear enunciation of operational goals of each of these agencies.

## Solangi rebuts social media reports about GB, vows legal action against rumour mongers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister of Information and Broadcasting, and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Sunday strongly rebutted different rumours circulating on social media regarding Gilgit-Baltistan. The rumours suggested that a proposal to hand over GB to another country for 50 years was under consideration.

In a post on X formerly Twitter, the minister said there was no truth in such rumours.

He added that no such

news was published by any newspaper. Those spreading this fake news to achieve their nefarious designs would face legal action, the minister vowed. Earlier, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting through its social media account also rejected the news as fake. "Disseminating fake news is not only unethical and illegal but it is also disservice to the nation. It is the responsibility of everyone to reject irresponsible behaviour. Reject #FakeNews," it wrote on X.

## SSP commended officials for effective steps in crime combating

ISLAMABAD: Following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Senior Superintendent of Police (Operations) presided over a crime meeting. The meeting was attended by all Zonal DPOs, SDPOs and all incharge police stations.

SSP Operations reviewed the performance of the all police stations in detail and commended the

performance of the police officials for effective measures in crime combating.

SSP Operations also emphasized the need for continued vigilance and proactive measures. He directed all Zonal DPOs to boost the campaign against drug peddlers in different areas of the city adding that a special crackdown against proclaimed offenders and absconders should be started immedi-



ately. He further directed the officials to ensure the arrest of the suspects elements involved in vehicle and motorcycle theft especially against those involved in murder cases adding that the ratio of challan of the cases and recoveries should be increased.

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## Foolproof security being ensured at High Security zone

ISLAMABAD: Following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police is ceaselessly dedicated to preserving law and order within the federal capital, a public relations officer said.

He said that, to fortify the security of the high security zone, personnel stationed at different security checkpoints diligently executing their responsibilities, meticulously verifying

documenting vehicle information.

The high security zone encompasses pivotal government and private establishments, diplomatic missions, and other vital assets, necessitating an unwavering focus on their safeguarding. Government personnel entering the high security zone are now mandated to display their departmental identification cards. Additionally, individuals with private business within the high security zone are urged to carry their requisite



the particulars of individuals accessing the high security zone and meticulously

documentation and extend their full cooperation to on-duty personnel.



ISLAMABAD: Women take part in a cycle and motorcycle rally at Fatima Jinnah Park in Federal Capital, titled "Run or Walk to Support Campaign Invest to Prevent Violence against Women and Girls."

## Sanjrani commemorates Intl Day of human rights with a call for global unity

ISLAMABAD: In observance of the International Day of Human Rights, the Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani has released a message, emphasizing the significance of upholding universal human rights principles to build a just and equitable world.

The Chairman applauded the efforts marking the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the theme for 2023, 'Freedom, Equality, and Justice for All.' The theme resonates deeply in a world facing unprecedented challenges, emphasizing the crucial role human rights play as a guiding compass through complex global issues.

The message underscored the importance of recognizing both progress made and challenges ahead.

It addressed the ongoing inhumane campaigns, particularly the collective punishment by Israeli occupation forces in Gaza and the wave of Indian atrocities in occupied Jammu and Kashmir following illegal actions of 2019. The Chairman stressed the urgent need for collective international action to protect human rights in the face of such blatant violations. The Chairman Senate emphasized the profound and multifaceted impacts of human rights violations on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015. Human rights, the Chairman asserted, are not only intrinsic to the SDGs but also essential for their effective implementation, positioning the protection of human rights as both a moral imperative and a strategic necessity for sustainable development worldwide.

## Human Rights Day has no meaning for IIOJK's oppressed people: APHC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has said that Human Rights Day has no meaning for the oppressed people of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), as they have been deprived of all their basic rights and freedoms enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

The APHC incarcerated leaders, Shabbir Ahmed Shah and Nayeem Ahmed Khan, in their separate messages from New Delhi's infamous Tihar jail said, "Occupied Jammu and Kashmir is the only region of the world where the entire population has been deprived of all human rights."

They said, "The worst situation in IIOJK demands the attention of all international bodies, including the United Nations and the

powerful countries of the world." Jailed APHC leaders Molvi Bashir Ahmad Irfani and Bilal Siddiqi in their separate messages from the IIOJK jails, saying, "Celebrating Human Rights Day is like rubbing salt on the bleeding wounds of Kashmiris, as the United Nations has made no sincere effort to restore their rights and they continue to suffer under tyranny and subjugation." They deplored that over one million trigger-happy troops were committing heinous crimes against humanity in IIOJK to intimidate the Kashmiris into submission, according to KMS, APHC leaders, including Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sopori, Abdul Ahad, Yasmeen Raja, Ms. Hafza Bano, Syed Bashir Andrabi, Khawaja Firdous, Fayaz Jafari, Syed Sibte Shabbir Qumi.



ISLAMABAD: Children's are enjoying Sunday Holiday at Japanese Park in the Federal Capital.

## IRSA releases 84,900 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 84,900 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 38,200 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1487.30 feet and was 87.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 19,500 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1167.70 feet, which was 117.70 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 4,800 cusecs and 26,000 cusecs respectively.

## AIOU to host Int'l moot on Modern trends in Arabic Novel

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Department of Arabic (Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies) of the Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is organizing a two-day international conference on "Modern Trends in the Arabic Novel" on December 13-14 as a part of its Golden Jubilee celebrations. According to Chairman, Department of Arabic, Dr Abdul Majeed Baghdadi, the conference will feature 13 scholars from countries such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Thailand, Malaysia, Oman, Algeria, Nigeria, and Syria who will be physically present, while 15 international scholars will participate online. In addition, faculty members, experts, researchers, and intellectuals from all over the country will also be participating in this conference.

The Federal Minister of Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhi, along with the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia,



ISLAMABAD: Women are busy buying Christmas decorating items on a stall during Christmas Bazaar in Federal Capital.

## DG Human Rights emphasizes the importance for academic institutes

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director Federal Ministry of Human Rights Abdul Sattar, through a written communication with the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Higher Education Commission, and Provincial Education Departments, has emphasized the importance for academic institutes to prepare the youth against the threat of cybercrimes, said a press release issued here.

While referring to MoHR's mandate under the Rules of Business 1973, he also shared that the Ministry has been conducting seminars on human rights education, awareness, and sensitization in collaboration with various educational institutions across Pakistan on specific themes.

He has conveyed that preparing our youth against the threat of cybercrimes, as a global challenge, is a need of the hour for which all stakeholders need to join hands with each other. Keeping in view their important role in sensitization on cyber security and cybercrimes, educational institutions have been requested to channelize their efforts to promote the positive use of information and communication technology, besides preparing youth against cybercrime-related threats.

## ACC U19 Asia Cup Azan Awais hammers century to help Pakistan U19 beat India U19 by eight wickets

ISLAMABAD (APP): The fifth game of the ACC U19 Asia Cup saw Pakistan U19 inflict an eight-wicket defeat on India U19 at the ICC Cricket Academy Ground in Dubai on Sunday.

Azan Awais, following an undefeated half-century against Nepal, scored an unbeaten century to take the team over the line while chasing 260, according to information made available here by the Pakistan Cricket Board.

Pakistan won the toss and elected to field first. Indian opening batter Adarsh Singh hit a half-century (62, 81b, 4x4s, 1x6) to recoup the momentum for his side following the loss of two wickets inside the first 12 overs.

A 93-run stand between the captain Uday Saharan (60, 98b, 5x4s) and Singh helped restore control



in the innings. However, when Singh fell to left-arm spinner Arafat Minhas in the 32nd over, the innings once again faltered. Pressure mounted on the Indian batting as successive wickets fell. A quick half-century by Sachin Dhas (58, 42b, 2x4s, 3x6s)

took India U19 to a respectable total as they finished at 259-9 in 50 overs.

The Pakistan pace attack delivered well with right-arm quick Mohammad Zeeshan picking up four wickets, having taken a six-wicket haul in the previous game. His fel-

cheaply in just the fifth over, Pakistan U19 remained in control of the chase.

A 110-run partnership between Shahzaib Khan and Azan Awais ensured that Pakistan U19 dominated the Indian bowling after the first wicket fell. The partnership was broken in the 28th over when Shahzaib was caught off Murugan Abhishek's bowling, after scoring a half-century (63, 88b, 4x4s, 3x6s).

Pakistan captain Saad Baig, replacing Shahzaib at the crease, produced a quality half-century (68 not out, 51b, 8x4s, 1x6). Azan and Saad put up an undefeated partnership of 125 runs to see Pakistan U19 through. Azan was the star of the match as his superb century (105 not out, 130b, 10x4s) ensured that Pakistan U19 remain in a commanding position throughout the chase.

Pakistan U19 cruised to the target with much ease, doing so in 47 overs and eight wickets in the bag. Despite losing opening batter Shamyul Hussain