

# Independent

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DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Caretaker Prime Minister, Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar inquiring about the health of those injured in the Dera Ismail Khan blast during his visit of CMH Dera Ismail Khan.

## SC suspends verdict of nullifying civilians' trial in army courts

By 5-1 majority  
Verdict allows military trial of civilians held in connection with May 9 riots; Justice Hilali differs with majority decision

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court (SC) on Wednesday conditionally suspended its verdict dated October 23, in which it had nullified the trial of civilian accused in the army courts.

The Supreme Court allowed the trial of civilians to continue in military courts, but the final decision regarding the trial would be subject to the judgment of the apex court.

The court said that the trial of 103 civilians accused of May 9 riots would continue in army courts but the final judgments wouldn't be issued till the decision of the top court.

A six-member larger bench of the top court, headed by Justice Sardar Tariq Masood and comprising Justice Amin ud Din Khan, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Musarrat Hilali and Justice Sadaat Irfan Khan heard the intra-court appeals against the verdict in army courts case.

The decision was suspended by a majority of 5-1, as Justice Musarrat Hilali dissented from it.

During the course of proceedings, Justice Sardar Tariq Masood remarked that those who martyred the military men would not be tried now because the law has been repealed. He questioned that under which law the trial of these civilians who killed 23 soldiers yesterday, be done now.

He further said that after the repeal of Section 2 (1) D, where would the trial of terrorists be held.

Salman Akram Raja Advocate said that he would give arguments if he was allowed.

Defence Ministry's lawyer Khawaja Haris argued that the judgment dated 23rd October didn't mention that under which Articles of the Constitutions, the provisions of Army Act were declared unconstitutional.

## PM Kakar says Terrorists already lost war; reiterates unyielding "no surrender, no retreat" policy

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said on Wednesday that terrorists had already lost the war, emphasizing the nation's unwavering resilience against this scourge and preparedness to deliver a fitting response to terrorism.

"I want to tell the perpetrators that you have already lost the war. Only the declaration is yet to be made and the time is yet to be finalised. They are fighting a lost war and we are fighting a war already won by us, Alhamdulillah," he said talking to the media at the Combined Military Hospital after inquiring about the health of the soldiers injured in a terrorist attack that took place on Tuesday.

He said he was amazed to witness the strong conviction of the soldiers who were resolved to fight the terrorists even while being injured.

He said those supporting the war against terrorism would stand victorious in the world as well as the life hereafter but contrarily, the terrorists had not only destroyed their lives but would also rot in hell after their death.

The prime minister told the media that the Ulema stood with the state, peace and the whole society.

"With whom they are fighting? Do they want to frighten us with death? No one will be scared. They should fulfill the desire to fight us for any desired duration," he remarked.

He said the state was pursuing an unyielding policy of no surrender and no retreat.

## Federal cabinet approves country's first-ever "National Space Policy"

No possibility of change, extension in ECP's announced polls date: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MOITT) Dr. Umar Saif on Wednesday said that the federal cabinet has approved the country's first-ever "National Space Policy."

Speaking at a press conference alongside the Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi and the Caretaker Federal Minister for Health, he explained that the approved policy establishes the framework for utilizing Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Communication Satellites.

This authorization allows private companies to offer services to consumers in Pakistan, marking a significant milestone in the country's space program, he added.

The minister highlighted that this development signifies a crucial moment for Pakistan's space program, as it enables enhanced communication capabilities through advanced satellite technology.

The approval of the National Space Policy is expected to facilitate improved telecommunications services, fostering advancements in connectivity and information dissemination across the country.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi, Caretaker Federal Minister for IT & Telecom Dr. Umar Saif and Caretaker Federal Minister for Health, Dr Nadeem Jan addressing a press conference at PID Media center.



KARACHI: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf being briefed during his visit to Headquarters of Pakistan Maritime Security Agency.

## President promulgates ordinance to declare power theft a cognizable offence

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday promulgated an ordinance to declare the theft of electricity a cognizable offence.

Through the Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance 2023, the president amended the Section 462 (O) of the Pakistan Penal Code, 1860.

According to a Presidential House statement, the electricity distribution companies were earlier facing difficulties in the registration of FIRs of power theft incidents.

However, under the new ordinance, the incidents of electricity theft will be a cognizable offence.

After the Ordinance, theft of electricity will be a cognizable offence on the complaint of not only by officers of grade 17 or above but also the nominees of CEOs of electricity distribution companies.

The president issued the Ordinance under Article 89-1 of the Constitution.

The said ordinance will help curb power theft in the energy sector worth around Rs 590 billion.

## OIC expresses concern over Indian SC's verdict on IIOJK

JEDDAH (INP): The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has expressed concern over the recent verdict of Supreme Court of India upholding the illegal unilateral actions taken by the Narendra Modi-led Indian government that repealed the special status of occupied Jammu and Kashmir on 5 August 2019.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the OIC General Secretariat in a statement issued in Jeddah in reference to the decisions and resolutions of the Islamic Summit and the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers related to the Kashmir dispute reiterated its call to reverse all illegal and unilateral measures taken by the Modi regime since 5 August 2019 aimed at changing the internationally-recognized disputed status of the occupied territory.

## Nawaz Sharif demands accountability of 'conspirators'

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz supreme and three-time prime minister Nawaz Sharif on Wednesday said he did not believe in revenge but those 'conspiring' against his government must be held accountable.

Addressing the PML-N Parliamentary body meeting, Nawaz Sharif thanked Allah after his acquittal in the Al-Azizia and Avenfield reference.

Nawaz Sharif said cases against him were registered after the end of his government and his removal as prime minister. There was no proof of the allegations leveled against me, Sharif said. The former prime minister regretted, that he was removed as prime minister on 'Iqama' in Panama case in the end.

During Panama hearing words like Sicilian Mafia and Godfather were used against me, Nawaz Sharif said and asked do judges use these words?

The PML-N supreme stressed that vendetta wasn't his goal; however, the individuals responsible for the nation's sufferings should be held answerable.

## Imran, Qureshi indicted in cipher case again

ISLAMABAD (INP): Special court on Wednesday against indicted former prime minister Imran Khan and PTI vice-chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi in cipher case.

The special court Judge Abul Hasanat Zulqarnain heard the case against Imran and Qureshi. This was the second time that the PTI leaders were indicted.

During the hearing, both PTI leaders pleaded not guilty and said the indictment was 'fabricated'. They also stated that the indictment was 'illegal' and they would challenge it in a court of law.

Prosecutor Rizwan Abbasi informed the court that the statements of the witnesses will be recorded on Thursday.

## Pakistan, Turkey vow to boost collaboration in aviation industry

ISLAMABAD (APP): Combat Commander Turkish Air Force, General Ismail Güneykaya, called on Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu here on Wednesday.

The meeting underscored several key areas of mutual interest with a special focus on bilateral training, progress of current joint ventures and exploration of further avenues of collaboration in the aviation industry, a Pakistan Air Force (PAF) news release said.



## Naval Chief hails PMSA for effective law enforcement at sea

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf on Wednesday visited the Headquarters of Pakistan Maritime Security Agency and appreciated for its effective law enforcement at sea.

Upon arrival, the Naval Chief was presented Guard of Honour by the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) contingent, a Pakistan Navy news release said.

The Admiral was briefed on Maritime Security Operations, carried out by Pakistan Maritime Security Agency to uphold regulations and rule-based order at sea and safeguard the maritime interests of the country.

The Chief of the Naval Staff expressed his satisfaction over the law enforcement functions being undertaken by PMSA and commended the collective efforts of all in fulfilling the National and International obligations in the maritime domain.

## Bilawal calls for national unity to wipe out terrorism from country

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Wednesday, strongly condemning the terrorist attack on police and security forces in D I Khan, called for national unity to wipe out the menace from the country.

Addressing the lawyers' convention, he said that the terrorism and extremism in their forms and manifestations could not be eliminated until all the stakeholders and political entities joined hands in the war against them. He said that the recent wave of terrorism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was regrettable as the people of the province, including police, youth, citizens and lawyers, had already made many sacrifices in the war against the menace.

He said many terrorists were languishing in jails before the Taliban government took over in Afghanistan, who were later released. Those who facilitated their settlement and release from the jails should be exposed and punished, he demanded.

Meanwhile Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said a vibrant and reinvigorated democratic process was the sole option to put the country's economy on a path of development and progress.

## KPGovernor, CM review law & order situation after DI Khanattack

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice @ Syed Arshad Hussain Shah and Governor Haji Ghulam Ali, on Wednesday, paid a visit to district D I Khan where they reviewed law and order situation.

They were also accompanied by the Chief Secretary Nadim Aslam Chaudhry and IGP Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur.

Both the dignitaries jointly chaired a meeting regarding law and order, held at the office of commissioner D.I Khan.

## Fazlur Rehman says JUI-F ready to form coalition govt with PML-N

ISLAMABAD (INP): Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that common citizens and law enforcers were being martyred in Dera Ismail Khan, Tank and South Waziristan daily. The Bajaur incident death toll has reached 80, he added. The JUI-F was still demanding the timely organisation of fair and free general elections despite the deteriorated law and order situation, said Fazl.

## Section 144 imposed in Islamabad to control environmental pollution

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory Administration (ICT) has imposed section 144 in Islamabad to control environmental pollution in federal capital.

On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon, the relevant officers are working to prevent environmental pollution and smog in different areas. Magistrate Sadar Zone Mir Yameen visited different areas and checked kiln factories.



PESHAWAR: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing to Peshawar High Court Bar Association, in Peshawar.

## Pak expects raising \$4.5bln this year: Shamshad Akhtar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar said Pakistan anticipates raising approximately \$4.5 billion from multilateral and bilateral sources, excluding the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the current fiscal year (2023-24).

In an interview with the official flagship Journal of ICMA International, the minister said for the second quarter (Q2), the government expects to receive over \$1.6 billion from these sources.

She said the major creditors include the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, adding the inflows comprise both project-based and program-based funds.

She said, negotiations for some program loans have been completed, and disbursements are expected. The country is currently meeting its debt obligations in a timely manner and intends to continue doing so in the future.

Talking about IMF programme, the minister said, as the first review of the Standby Agreement was successfully concluded, a Staff Level Agreement (SLA) has been reached. This is subject to approval by IMF's Executive Board and upon approval, Pakistan will have access to SDR 525 million (around US\$ 700 million).

On the existing economic situation, the minister said, despite domestic and global challenges during FY2023, fiscal and external sector stability has been achieved through various stabilization measures and structural reforms.

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**Maintainability of ZAB reference**

At the outset of hearing of presidential reference seeking revisiting the PPP founder and former prime minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (ZAB) murder case, a senior judge of the Supreme Court, Mr. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah has questioned the PPP counsel over the maintainability of the reference. SC's senior judge Justice Syed Masoor observed that matter pertaining to trial of ZAB had attained finality as a review petition had been dismissed earlier, so how can the apex court re-open the case that has already been concluded. It may be mentioned here that a nine-member bench of the apex court headed by CJP Justice Qazi Faez Isa heard the presidential reference seeking revisiting the ZAB murder case.

The apex court heard the attorney general and PPP counsel Farooq H Naek, and adjourned the hearing till second week of January, 2024. The court also appointed amicus curiae (friends of court) having expertise on criminal and constitutional fields for its assistance in the presidential reference. The proceedings were broadcasted live at the Supreme Court website. The CJP, while dictating the order of the court proceedings, noted that the application of Naek had become infructuous as the SC committee has already decided in that regard.

Justice Syed Mansoor observed that matter pertaining to trial of ZAB had already attained finality as a review petition had also been dismissed; therefore, the apex court had no jurisdiction to hear a second review petition. The judge asked Naek as to what decision the court could give, and asked him to assist the court on the question of maintainability. Meanwhile, the court after the hearing the matter, dictating its order and noted that Attorney General Mansoor Usman read out the presidential reference as well as the order of the court given on April 21, 2011, containing the questions to be addressed. The court noted down in its order that the reference was filed in 2011 and the last hearing was held in 2012.

It noted that in the same order a number of amicus curiae who were appointed among them some have passed away while some are alive. Ali Ahmed Kurd advocate, who was also among those amicus curiae has consented to assist the court, while Makhdom Ali Khan is also willing to do so as well, the order noted, adding that the court consider to appoint constitutional experts, particularly on the scope of Article 186 whereby the presidential reference was filed, and the question of maintainability of the reference. The order noted that it needed wisdom of criminal experts, so name of Justice (ret'd) Manzoor Ahmed Malik was proposed, and the parties supported it. Accordingly, subject to his assent, he is appointed as amicus curiae and he may submit a concise statement in this regard, the court noted and also appointed Khwaja Haris as amicus curiae. Haris was the Punjab advocate general when the case was earlier heard by the Supreme Court. The court also appointed Salman Safdar as amicus curiae on criminal side as well as Faisal Siddiqui advocate on constitutional side to assist it. Farooq Naek raised objections on the two lawyers.

The court, however, turned down the objections and held that it was its prerogative to appoint amicus curiae. The court also appointed Raza Rabani as amicus curiae on constitutional side besides appointing also former AG Khalid Javed Khan, Salahuddin Ahmed, Barrister Zahid Ibrahim and Yasir Qurashi as amicus curiae on constitutional side. Barrister Aitzaz Ahsan, however, refused to assist the court as amicus curiae.

**A people's poet**



**Mahir Ali**

"We live in a world where they say we communicate more, but the world stayed silent when slave trade was making money/ The world stayed silent when the Nazis started to kill trade unionists, people with disabilities, homosexuals, left-handed people and Jews/ And now in the age of the global village and mass communications the world is staying silent when Palestinians are being annihilated..."

The outstanding British poet, novelist, broadcaster, actor and agitator Benjamin Zephaniah wrote those words several years ago but, like much of his verse, they remain potentially relevant. And alive. Unlike, depressingly, the poet himself, who died last week at the age of 65 just two weeks after being diagnosed with a brain tumour. To paraphrase his favourite Dylan Thomas poem, he went gently into the good night after a lifetime spent raging against the dying of the light.

"When I was young," he once noted, "there were two things I really wanted to see: a free South Africa and a free Palestine." That wish remained only half-fulfilled. In the former instance, his contribution was recognised by none other than Nelson Mandela. In 1982, the first single The Wailers recorded after Bob Marley's death was 'Free South Africa', with Zephaniah on vocals. Mandela heard it on Robben Island and, a decade later, sought out Zephaniah on his first visit to Britain, requesting him to host a 1996 concert in honour of Mandela.

There was no compar-

able progress on the Palestinian front. Zephaniah first visited the occupied territories in 1990, and the artistic consequence was a travelogue interspersed with poetry, Rasta Time in Palestine. Over the decades, his passion for the cause never wavered. Hardly any obituary has acknowledged that he was a patron of Britain's Palestinian Solidarity Campaign.

Born in Birmingham to parents from Barbados and Jamaica, he had a difficult birth and health issues pursued him into adulthood. Severe dyslexia led him to drop out of school in his early teens, and enter a life of petty crime that in one instance involved almost being beaten to death at a police station. By his late teens, Zephaniah realised that an early death beckoned unless he escaped his milieu, so he went to London and joined a different kind of gang — of poets and artists. He thrived, despite his abbreviated schooling and lack of further education. That was not unrelated to the fact that he had resolved at the age of eight to go vegan, and to earn his living as a poet. His reading woes as a dyslexic did not interfere with his determination to express himself.

He did so in ways that appealed to those who disdained poetry mainly attributed to dead white males. "Most people ignore most poetry because most people ignores most people," as the late poet Adrian Mitchell put it. Zephaniah did not follow that trajectory. He spoke directly to his burgeoning audiences, with little patience for abstractions, allusions or complicated imagery. Whatever he wanted to say, he said it straight, taking no prisoners.

Early adulthood in Thatcherite Britain meant there was no dearth of domestic topics, but he never resiled from keeping a sharp eye on global af-

airs. He lapped up the adoration of the literary establishment and was willing to assist the British Council in disseminating the gospel of British multiculturalism, but drew the line at kowtowing to the political establishment. Being offered induction into the Order of the British Empire in 2003 was a recipe for indignation.

As he wrote in The Guardian, "I woke up on the morning of November 13 wondering how the government could be overthrown and what could replace it", when he saw a letter from the prime minister's office. He went on: "Me? I thought, OBE me? [—], I thought, I get angry when I hear that word 'empire'; it reminds me of thousands of years of brutality, it reminds me of how my foremothers were raped and my forefathers brutalised... Benjamin Zephaniah OBE — no way Mr Blair, no way Mrs Queen. I am profoundly anti-empire."

Unlike the Palestinian poet Refaat Alareer — whom Abbas Nasir eloquently eulogised in his weekend column — Benjamin Obadiah Iqbal Zephaniah was not assassinated by an empire or its agents. He leaves behind a treasure trove of books and music or spoken word albums that will be cherished for generations to come. But his living voice — with its endearing lisp and Caribbean-flavoured Brummie tones — and his limitless compassion for the oppressed all across the world will be sorely missed.

Alongside a bunch of talented contemporaries and predecessors, he liberated poetry from the page and brought it to the people. "I think poetry should be alive," he once said, "you should be able to dance to it" — echoing Emma Goldman's century-old opinion: "It's not my revolution if I can't dance to it." — Courtesy Dawn

**Impotence of law**



**Adeel Wahid**

Arrests; rearrests; denial of bails; surfacing of new FIRs once bail is granted; trials behind closed doors with the die already cast. None of this is new, or even exclusive to Pakistan.

Formally, the judicial system remains intact: the robbed honourable judges still show up in court. Lawyers still get to make a few noises, smug in their delusion that their word may carry the day.

Nonetheless, there has been an overwhelming attrition of faith in the courts. The bulk of the blame has been put on the judiciary, that the judges, with the prefix 'honourable', were supposed to be the custodians of the people's rights. That they were to intervene, ensure protection, and stand between the wrath of the state and the people.

Such a huge ask from the judiciary was never realistic, and not even fair. First, the past has been one where precedents of capitulation exist in huge numbers, making it the norm, rather than an aberration. Second, judges, just like ourselves, are mere mortals, driven by ambitions, desires and fears. Only one of these things needs to be capitalised on. Third, and importantly, judges come from within the society they live in, and are not divorced from the ideas and ideals percolating in it.

And it is not only about the judges. In fact, the law — its promulgation, interpretation and enforcement — remains contingent on the beliefs, ideas and narratives that

have traction in society at large. One way to think about the law is that it remains strongly tethered to the mainstream notions of the populace.

Put differently, the law in a particular society can bear just as much burden or strain as the popular, prevalent ideas in that society allow it to bear. Especially so, in the context where expectations from the law and those who dabble in it — such as legislators, judges and the executive — is to serve as a protective mechanism both from the state itself, and all those, including private segments, who wield disproportionate power.

Take the example of domestic violence — an example from our ordinary lives, and not from politics. Laws may be in the books, police in the field (when not lined up to provide protocol to office holders), and the honourables in the courts. Yet, because of the idea of privacy of a household, that whatever happens in a home belongs in the private domain, the forceful subjugation of women has continued unabated. Despite the law's existence and despite the existence of the machinery of domestic violence are rampant.

Similarly, the Constitution says glorious things about fundamental freedoms. You and I, by virtue of being persons and citizens, are free to associate; free to assemble; free to think and say as we please. But then, not really. Free speech is a value we have failed to engender in our society. Muzzling voices at home, in schools and in universities, produces very few mavericks, and many, far too many, conformists.

And when those who can come after political parties — even the ones they manufactured

— and put political actors behind bars, we, the stunted of society, passively accept it. We know no other way. For our entire lives we have seen that those with relative power are going to abuse it unchallenged. This happens at all levels — in our villages, in the cities, in the panchayats, and in corporate boardrooms. Without the right ideals, it is hard to prop up the law.

Therefore, it is not sufficient to accuse and blame the law, that it has not been promulgated right, that only if the text said something else. And it is not enough to blame the robbed, the honourables, the mere flesh and bones, with pretensions of being saviours. In fact, we have to look deeper into our everyday practices, into the things we are taught at school and in our homes, in our everyday conversations and our thoughts. Have we, in our everyday lives, allowed people such as our spouses, our colleagues, our friends and our fellow citizens, to flourish? Have we given people respect irrespective of their family background, caste, and class? Have we produced an environment where our children can experiment with non-conventional thoughts, and, at least, harbour and express them, despite our convictions of them being wrong?

Why then put the burden on the law, an artificial construct, when our lived experiences are a continuous testament and reflection of exactly the things that are then projected broadly in society? Yes, the law's impotence has to do with the deficiencies in our governance and judicial structures. But it has more to do with the absence of ideals in our society. — Courtesy Dawn

**Commerce News**

**Pakistan needs significant transformation in insurance industry: Dr. Shamshad**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue, and Economic Affairs, Dr Shamshad Akhtar said Pakistan needs significant transformation in the insurance industry to address its fundamental challenges while catching up with global trends to maximize the value proposition of this industry.

While addressing a two-day International Insure Impact Conference 2023, organized by the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), she asked the insurance industry to recognize that the risks are growing, both globally and nationally, demanding adequate coverage for people and businesses, said a press release issued here by SECP.

The Minister also gave a keynote address at the session, where a large number of industry experts, professionals, and officials from the insurance and financial sectors were present.

Dr Shamshad said that Pakistan needs to track and embrace emerging trends in the insurance sector adding that the global insurance industry is undergoing technological advancements, evolving customers' expectations, and a pressing need for sustainable practices.

She advised concentrating on lifting the low penetration ratio of the insurance industry. She said that SECP's 5-year

strategic plan will set the tone for future policy, legal, and regulatory landscapes. Incorporating the recommendation of the insurance industry reform committee would be a step in the right direction.

She suggested focusing on mainstreaming global best practices, reducing the cost of doing business, digitizing the operations, and making effective use of technology generally.

SECP Chairman Akif Saeed, in his welcome address, informed the participants about SECP's determination to work closely with industry stakeholders to align a strategic vision, propel economic growth, and cater to rising community aspirations.



LAHORE: People of Christen Community are buying different decorating stuff from shop during the celebrations of Christmas.

**PPIB announces financial close of mega Thar coal power project**

ISLAMABAD (Online): Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PPIB) today announced Financial Closing of country's largest Thar coal-fired Power Project by M/s Shanghai Electric Corporation, China. The signing ceremony was held in the office of PPIB which was graced by Mr. Shah Jahan Mirza, Managing Director, PPIB, Mr. Meng Donghai, Chief Executive of the Project Company i.e.

Thar Coal Block-1 Power Generation Company and Mr. Zhou Bo, Chief Executive Officer of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), Karachi Branch. Other high-level officials of PPIB and Project Company Sponsors were also present.

Having the generation capacity of 1320 MW, Shanghai project has been implemented under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy and Power, Muhammad Ali called on President Dr. Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

**OICCI takes lead in shaping private sector climate action at COP28**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) demonstrated its commitment to driving meaningful climate action at COP28 by hosting a pivotal high-level dialogue in collaboration with the Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC).

Nestled within the exclusive Blue Zone of the Pakistan pavilion in Expo City Dubai, the dialogue, themed "Decarbonization and the Role of the Private Sector", tackled pressing issues such as mobilizing

private capital for achieving Net Zero carbon emissions, evaluating carbon market efficacy, and fortifying public-private partnerships.

The distinguished panel comprised experts from various sectors, such as Dr. Karen Olsen, Carbon Market Advisor, United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), Dr. Charles Ehrhart, Global Head Climate Risk, Resilience; Adaptation, Partner, KPMG International, Dr. Anis Nassar, Lead Decarbonization;

Circularity. World Economic Forum (WEF), Fiona Duggan, Global Sustainability Senior Manager for Climate Advocacy, Unilever, Lina Osman, Regional Head of Sustainable Finance — West, Standard Chartered Bank, and Angelo Sartori, Director Regional Engagement, Verra, said a news release received here on Wednesday.

The panel underscored the urgency for businesses to decarbonize supply chains, emphasizing affordable levers such as circularity.

**Consul General of Turkiye visits PCJCCI Secretariat**

LAHORE (APP): Consul General of the Republic of Turkiye Durmus Bastug visited Pakistan-China Joint Chambers of Commerce and Industry to discuss trilateral relations among Turkiye, Pakistan and China, here at PCJCCI Secretariat on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by the executive committee members of PCJCCI and many top notch business leaders from both Pakistan and China.

PCJCCI President Moazzam Ghurki said that Pakistan, Turkiye and China are three brotherly countries and they could complement each other's economy in many fields, therefore, they should focus on promoting trade and economic ties to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. He added that Pakistan has gained market access in traditional sectors such as leather, rice, dates, mangoes, cutlery, and sports goods.

**Commissioner for providing fertilizers to farmers at fixed rates**

SARGODHA (APP): Commissioner Sargodha Muhammad Ajmal Bhatti has issued instructions to deputy commissioners to meet the demand of fertilizer at fixed rates across the division. The commissioner chaired a meeting in which steps taken to provide fertilizers at fixed rates to farmers were reviewed. Deputy Commissioners, Director of Agriculture (Extension), Agrochemicals, FFC, Agritech.

**Gohar, Wu Qingwen explores avenues for enhances trade ties**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Commerce Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz and the esteemed Mayor of Suzhou Municipal Government, Wu Qingwen explored avenues for enhanced economic and trade ties, underlining their commitment to building stronger bilateral relations.

In a significant stride towards fostering international cooperation, the Commerce Minister engaged in a highly productive meeting with the esteemed Mayor of Suzhou Municipal Government, said a press

release issued here.

The meeting witnessed an exchange of ideas and discussions on the immense potential for collaboration between Pakistan and Suzhou.

The discussions were inspired by the #BRIMeeting, resonating with the Belt and Road Initiative's vision for connectivity and collaboration.

As both nations look to leverage this momentum, the focus remains on identifying and capitalizing on new opportunities for trade and economic growth.



SIALKOT: Secretary Industry and Commerce Punjab Ehsan Bhatta visits and addressing Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

**China, Pakistan to tap new cooperation in textile industry**

BEIJING (APP): The Vice President of China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Textiles (CCCT) Zhang Xinmin held talks with Minister for Commerce and Industry, Dr Gohar Ejaz here. They discussed China-Pakistan textile and garment investment and trade, the development of Pakistan's textile industry, and the promotion of cooperation between the two sectors.

Pakistan's textile sector is often referred to as the backbone of its economy and employs 40-45% of its total labour force. During the meeting, Zhang mentioned that the textile and garment industry chains of China and Pakistan are highly

complementary, and the two countries have great potential for cooperation in the cotton industry and trade. China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Wednesday: "At present, the global supply chain pattern is undergoing significant changes. China and Pakistan can seize this opportunity to collaborate on organizing professional textile and garment exhibitions, trade and investment forums, business matchmaking activities, and entrepreneurial delegation exchanges," added Zhang.

Gohar Ejaz stated that the textile industry accounts for over 60% of Pakistan's total exports and holds great significance for the country's economic development.

## CM Naqvi visits civil hospital, reviews various development projects in Sialkot

SIALKOT (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi paid a detailed visit to Government Sardar Begum Civil Hospital Sialkot and Allama Iqbal Medical Teaching Hospital here on Wednesday and also reviewed various development projects.

The chief minister came to know during the visit that Sardar Begum Hospital lacked medical facilities; beds were damaged and walls were dilapidating. Due to the sewerage passing through the hospital, there was a smell of sewerage water everywhere and students classrooms were in poor condition.

The attendants of the patients were forced to sit on the floor. Taking notice

of the situation, Mohsin Naqvi announced the hospital and redesign of the hospital and said Sardar Begum Civil Hospital would be upgraded soon. It would cost Rs 210 million, and 21,000 square feet area of the hospital would be upgraded.

CM Mohsin Naqvi visited various wards, met patients and inquired about the treatment facilities in hospital. He inspected the Emergency, ICU, Gynecology, Lab and other wards. He also went to the basement, ground and first floor and expressed his displeasure over the bad condition of the classrooms. The CM listened to problems of elderly woman in hospital and gave instructions to the

deputy commissioner to solve them. The chief minister also visited Allama Iqbal Medical Teaching Hospital and reviewed progress on upgradation project of the hospital. He inspected the ongoing construction activities in the hospital and said that the upgradation project of Allama Iqbal Teaching Hospital would cost Rs. 700 million. He said that the 65 per cent of upgradation work at Allama Iqbal Teaching Hospital had been completed. Naqvi said that 100,000 square feet area of Allama Iqbal Teaching Hospital would be revamped while the remaining 50,000 square feet area of the hospital would be upgraded in the second phase.



SIALKOT: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab, Mohsin Naqvi is visiting Allama Iqbal Teaching Hospital.

## Govt. spending hefty amount on health sector to benefit people: Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali Wednesday said the government was spending a hefty amount to improve the healthcare system for the facilitation and benefit of the masses.

He was addressing the convocation of Rehman Medical College as a Chief Guest. The ceremony was also attended by Caretaker Health Minister, Qasim Jan, Health Advisor, Dr Riaz Anwar, Vice Chancellor Khyber Medical University,

Dr Zia-ul-Haq, Chairman RMI, Dr Muhammad Rehman, faculty members, and students. He said that a maximum portion of the budget was being spent on health as the government must ensure the provision of health facilities to people.

Governor lauded the position of RMI in the medical field and said that the medical profession is being given due respect by society and doctors must work for maximum relief of ailing community adding dedication and attitude of

## Minister emphasizes pivotal role of research in societal impact

LAHORE (APP): In a compelling address at the Lahore Garrison University's two-day conference on Frontiers in Applied Biological Sciences on Wednesday, Caretaker Punjab Health Minister Professor Dr. Javed Akram emphasized the pivotal role of research in societal impact.

He underscored the importance of collaboration between academia and industry, particularly in the vast field of biological sciences.

Dr. Akram highlighted the urgency for Pakistan to focus on biotechnology, expressing concern over the absence of a single biotechnology

plant in the country compared to China's 3,000 facilities. Propelled by the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi, Dr. Akram revealed plans to establish biotechnology parks in Pakistan.

Anticipating Pakistan becoming the world's third-largest country in population within two decades, Dr. Akram emphasized the need for progress in gene editing and improving lab skills. He announced a comprehensive screening program, making Thalassaemia screening mandatory for every class 10 student across the province.



HYDERABAD: Journalists of Hyderabad Press Club are gathered and waiting for their turn to get their driving license during Computerized Driving License Camp at press club premises in Hyderabad.

## Symposium held to promote the Tourism and Cultural heritage of Chitral

PESHAWAR (Online): Wali Khan were the Chief guest.

Secretary Tourism Mutahir Zaib, DG Tourism Barkatullah Marwat, GM planning and Marketing Ali Syed, GM Culture and Tourism Sajjad Hameed and Manager Events Haseena Shaikat also graced the event. Tourism and information Minister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakahel, addressing the ceremony, emphasized the need to promote tourism. He stated that the event was arranged to showcase the rich culture of Chitral.



LAHORE: Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi and Dr Arshad Muhammad are giving a briefing to the media about the performance of the department at Ombudsman office.

## Minister for NMDs chairs steering committee meeting

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged Districts, Industries, Commerce and Technical Education Dr. Aamir Abdullah chaired a meeting of the Special Steering Committee formed regarding Newly Merged Districts at Civil Secretariat here on Wednesday.

During the meeting, the committee reviewed

progress on various tasks assigned to relevant departments by the Special Task Force and Steering Committee in previous decisions. Additional Chief Secretary Planning and Development Department Syed Intiaz Hussain Shah, officers of the Pakistan Army, secretaries of the Department of Health, Industry, Irrigation, Communications.

## Five SHOs reshuffled in DI Khan

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Station House Officers (SHOs) of five police stations in Dera Ismail Khan were reshuffled on Wednesday.

According to the police spokesman, District Police Officer Dera, Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani issued transfer and posting orders of five SHOs.

## Two bodies found in Ghazi Brotha water channel

ATTOCK (APP): Police have found two bodies in the Ghazi Brotha water channel in an unrecognizable, mutilated condition on Wednesday.

According to Police, the Attock Saddar Police Station reported two dead bodies found in the Ghazi Brotha water channel in a mutilated condition within the limits of Attock.

## LHC seeks reply from govt, others on plea against doctors' strike

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Wednesday sought a reply from the Punjab government and other respondents on a petition against young doctors' strike in government hospitals till December 18.

The court also sought reports from medical superintendents of the hospitals concerned in connection with the matter.

Justice Ali Baqar Najafi heard the petition filed by a citizen, Zeeshan,

## DC launches 5-day anti polio campaign

PESHAWAR (APP): Deputy Commissioner Lakki Marwat Rehmat Ali, alongside District Health Officer Dr. Abdu Gul and other health department officials, officially kicked off a five-day anti-polio campaign on Wednesday.

He started the campaign by administering anti-polio drops to a child here at DC office. The anti-polio drive will continue till December 18, which aims to vaccinate all children under the age of five.

Deputy Commissioner Rehmat Ali appealed to the parents to ensure the administration.

## International News

## Nations reach deal at COP28 to transition away from fossil fuels

DUBAI: Representatives from nearly 200 countries agreed at the COP28 climate summit on Wednesday to begin reducing global consumption of fossil fuels to avert the worst of climate change, a first-of-its-kind deal signaling the eventual end of the oil age.

The deal struck in Dubai after two weeks of hard-fought negotiations was meant to send a powerful signal to investors and policy-makers that the world is united in its desire to break with fossil fuels, something scientists say is the last best hope

to stave off climate catastrophe.

COP28 President Sultan Al Jaber called the deal "historic" but added that its true success would be in its implementation. "We are what we do, not what we say," he told the crowded plenary at the summit. "We must take the steps necessary to turn this agreement into tangible actions." Several countries cheered the deal for accomplishing something elusive in decades of climate talks. "It is the first time that the world unites around such a clear text on the need to transition away from fossil fu-

els," said Norway Minister of Foreign Affairs Espen Barth Eide.

More than 100 countries had lobbied hard for strong language in the COP28 agreement to "phase out" oil, gas and coal use, but came up against powerful opposition from the Saudi Arabia-led oil producer group OPEC, which argued that the world can slash emissions without shunning specific fuels.

That battle pushed the summit a full day into overtime on Wednesday, and had some observers worried the negotiations would end at an impasse.



HANOI: President Xi Jinping and Nguyen Phu Trong, Vietnam Communist Party's General Secretary, attend a welcome ceremony at the Presidential Palace.

## Biden backs Ukraine, warns against allowing Putin to win

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden told President Volodymyr Zelensky on Tuesday that the United States will not abandon Ukraine in its desperate fight against Russia, even as Republicans signaled opposition to extending US war funding. Standing alongside the Ukrainian leader at a White House press conference, Biden vowed: "I will not walk away from Ukraine and neither will the American people."

And he said that allowing a Ukrainian defeat would mean Russian President Vladimir Putin "and would be aggressors everywhere will be emboldened."

Zelensky, who spent the morning talking to Republicans and Democrats in Congress, signaled cautious optimism that the stalled US aid flow will restart. "I got the signals. They were more than positive. But we know that we have to separate words and particular results. Therefore we will count on particular results," Zelensky said.

But the united front at the White House contrasted with growing division up on Capitol Hill, where leading Republicans are insisting that renewing Ukraine aid will depend on Democrats.

## Japan PM to axe ministers over fundraising scandal

TOKYO: Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Wednesday announced he would make changes to his cabinet as he seeks to stem the fallout from a fundraising scandal that has further dented public support for his embattled administration.

The premier told a press conference he would make the changes on Thursday, just three months after a previous cabinet overhaul.

"I will take the lead in fighting to rebuild the ways of the Liberal Democratic Party to restore trust in politics."

## Human Rights Watch call on UK to halt arms exports to Israel

LONDON: Human Rights Watch and other civil society groups have called on the UK government to stop transfers of arms to Israel, amid concerns that they might be used to commit "war crimes" against Palestinians. It comes as Israel continues its two-month-long campaign of airstrikes and ground assaults in Gaza, during which more than 17,000 Palestinians, many of them women and children, have been killed, according to Palestinian officials.

In a detailed letter on Tuesday, the groups said that since 2015, UK au-

thorities have authorized sales of military equipment to Israel worth at least £474 million (\$595 million), including components for combat aircraft, missiles and tanks, other technology, and small arms and ammunition. "The UK provides approximately 15 percent of the components in the F-35 stealth bomber aircraft currently being used in Gaza, including the rear fuselage and active intercept system, ejector seats, aircraft tires, refueling probe, laser-targeting system, and the fan propulsion system," it said.



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Finance Minister Christian Lindner, and Economy and Climate Minister Robert Habeck present the 2024 budget in Berlin, Germany.

## Security breach in Indian parliament, man jumps into lawmakers' area

NEW DELHI: A man jumped into the lawmakers' area of the lower house of India's parliament on Wednesday, in a major security breach on the 22nd anniversary of a deadly attack on the complex.

TV channels showed a man wearing a black jacket jump from the visitors' area into the lawmakers' seating area, climbing over tables of lawmakers.

White and yellow coloured smoke could be seen in the chambers in a photograph posted on social media by a lawmaker and shown on India Today TV channel.

Lawmakers told TV channels that the intruder

shouted some slogans they could not make out and there was a sound and some smoke.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was not in parliament at the time. India Today said the intruder had smoke cans hidden in his shoes and lawmakers fled the chambers as the cans released smoke.

TV channels showed the man jumping over two rows of lawmakers and trying to enter the aisles by evading security personnel. The man was later shown being taken away by police outside the building. The lower house stopped proceedings soon after the incident but resumed business about an hour later.



Mahsa Amini's representative, Iranian lawyer Saleh Nikbakht, European Parliament President Roberta Metsola, Afsoon Najafi and Mersedeh Shahinkar from the "Women, Life, Freedom" movement in Iran pose during the 2023 European Parliament's Sakharov Prize ceremony at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, eastern France.

## Hunger rises in Gaza as UN prepares to vote on ceasefire resolution

CAIRO: Hunger was worsening among Palestinians in the besieged Gaza strip, aid agencies said, as the United Nations General Assembly prepared to vote on Tuesday on an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in the two-month-old conflict between Israel and Hamas.

Hundreds more civilians have died in Israel's assault on Gaza since the U.S. on Friday vetoed a

Security Council resolution calling for a ceasefire.

Most of Gaza's 2.3 million people have been driven from their homes and residents say it is impossible to find refuge or food in the densely populated coastal enclave. The U.N. World Food Programme has said half of the population is starving.

"Hunger stalks everyone," UNRWA, the U.N. body responsible for Palestinian refugees, said on X.

## Indian SC's verdict cannot change India's status as occupier in J&K

SRINAGAR (INP): Political experts and analysts based in Srinagar have said that Jammu and Kashmir is not India's internal matter but has been an internationally-recognized disputed territory on the UN Security Council's agenda for the last over seven decades. According to Kashmir Media Service, the political experts and analysts in their interviews and statements said the Indian Supreme Court's biased and one-sided verdict can't change the fact that New Delhi remains in occupation of Jammu and Kashmir. They said the Indian judiciary has always acted as a tool to validate India's illegal occupation over Jammu and Kashmir. They added that the Indian apex court has no right to decide the legal status of the internationally-recognized disputed territory.

## Dozens injured in missile strikes on Kyiv

KYIV: Russian missile strikes damaged a hospital and residential building in the Ukrainian capital on Wednesday, injuring at least 45 people, the city's mayor said. Several explosions were heard in the city, with air raid sirens sounded soon after that.

"In total, 45 people were injured in Dniprovsy district as a result of the enemy attack. 18 of them were hospitalized, including 2 children. 27 received medical help on the spot, including three children,"

## US intelligence assesses Ukraine war has cost Russia 315,000 casualties

WASHINGTON: A declassified U.S. intelligence report assessed that the Ukraine war has cost Russia 315,000 dead and injured troops, or nearly 80 percent of the personnel it had when the conflict began, a source familiar with the intelligence said on Tuesday. The report also assessed that Moscow's losses in personnel and armored vehicles to Ukraine's military have set back Russia's military modernization by 18 years.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi addressing the concluding ceremony of the Conference on Sustainable Mountain Sports Tourism, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Govt framing National Maritime Policy for dev. of sector: SAPM

KARACHI (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Maritime Affairs, Vice Admiral (ret) Iftikhar Ahmed Rao, Wednesday, said that government was framing National Maritime Policy to develop the sector for realizing the growth potential and reap benefits of blue economy. He was addressing as chief guest at Passing out Parade of 60th batch of Pakistan Marine Academy (PMA). As many as 94 cadets graduated in disciplines of Nautical Sciences (48) and Marine Engineering (46).

The SAPM appreciated professional services of Pakistan Marine Academy for providing training in nautical and marine engineering fields as well as conducting compulsory seamanship training, certificate courses and post sea specialized courses.

Vice Admiral (ret) Iftikhar Ahmed Rao appreciated the positive role Pakistan Marine Academy is playing in the country's shipping industry and also felicitated the graduating cadets who were ready to induce themselves into much desired process of national building.

Terming cadets as the backbone of the blue economy he stated that you have chosen a profession that has immense importance nationally as well as internationally as marine transportation being the most economical and environment friendly medium occupied significance in global trade and nations who realized its importance became great powers.

Seafarers are backbone on this industry that offers opportunities of bright future to youth as it was expected that global requirement of seafarer officers in the industry would be around 90000 by 2026, he noted. He urged the cadets that they will be the sailing ambassadors of Pakistan in the world so they must excel while maintaining international standards and earn not only good name for the country but also contribute in development of national as well as global economy.

Referring to efforts for upgrading PMA into higher education institution in fields of Nautical Sciences and Marine Engineering, the SAPM said that government was formalizing National Maritime Policy and we are recommending to establish National University of Maritime Sciences and Technology and PMA would be a hub of the university.

## SC decides to hear all lifetime disqualification cases together

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court (SC) has decided to hear all identical cases pertaining to lifetime disqualification under Article 62(1)(f) of the Constitution together.

These cases, and any others involving the same question, should be fixed for hearing in early January, 2024 before a bench constituted by the committee under the Act, the court said in its written order pertaining to the hearing of an appeal of JUI-F's former MPA Meer Badshah Qaisrani against his lifetime disqualification. The apex court said that the general elections of 2008 required candidates to have a minimum graduation qualification. Some candidates made misdeclarations in their requisite nomination papers, some produced degrees from unrecognized institutions and others fake degrees to show eligibility of their participation in the general elections. This court had disqualified all such candidates and some also faced criminal prosecution. It said that the petitioner was convicted for a period of two years, and "we are informed that his appeal against conviction is pending before the Multan Bench of the Lahore High Court." However, the learned counsel for the respondent states that the period of disqualification is for five years as per section 232(2) of the Elections Act, 2017, which provision was enacted through the Elections (Amendment) Act, 2023, promulgated on 26 June 2023.

## COMSTECH, Huawei join forces to fortify OIC's Scientific Landscape

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministerial Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) COMSTECH and Huawei Technologies Pakistan have forged a strategic partnership to bolster national cybersecurity and advance capabilities in areas crucial to the OIC member states including cybersecurity, AI, and 5G.

In an effort to address the escalating importance of cybersecurity in the digital era, the collaboration between COMSTECH and Huawei aims to elevate the cybersecurity proficiency of OIC member states.

This includes a focus on security management, incident response, vulnerability management, and staying abreast of emerging security technologies.

Huawei, a global leader in digital transformation, networking, and communication technologies, is well-positioned to contribute to the development of the digital economy.

The collaboration will see joint efforts to expand the frontiers of science and technology, transcend engineering bottlenecks, and bring responsible and secure ICT technology to all industries.

Sharing his views on the occasion, Ethan Sun, CEO of Huawei Pakistan said, "The MoU lays the foundations for OIC member states to access opportunities to promote cybersecurity awareness through knowledge sharing and training courses. Huawei is ideally positioned to share experiences, global best practices, and methodologies that have proven successful."

## Pakistan's huge scope of sports tourism needs regulation, infrastructure facilities: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday said Pakistan had immense potential for sports and adventure tourism, however stressed effective regulation and improved infrastructure to explore the untapped sector.

Addressing the concluding ceremony of the third Sustainable Mountain Sports Tourism Conference, he said the provision of facilities was the top factor in the development of domestic and sports tourism.

The event themed 'Revival of Mountain Glory' was organized by the Alpine Club of Pakistan and gathered the country's renowned mountaineers including Samina Baig, Naila Kiani, and Sajid Sadpara among others who won titles by scaling the highest peaks of the world.

President Alvi said Pakistan was blessed with incredibly serene natural beauty, particularly its northern areas where the mountains and snowy peaks were a big source of attraction for tourists and trekkers.

He mentioned that the country's scenic Malam Jabba and Naltar areas offered amazing skiing facilities and had huge potential for adventure sports. Also, the Hunza Valley has the world's best treks amidst the gigantic mountains of Karakoram, he added.

The president, however, stressed the need to put in place a tourist regulatory mechanism to promote domestic tourism.

He emphasized ensuring facilities for tourists such as easy access to destinations, better roads, clean hotels and guest rooms, and trained human resources.

He pointed out that the unregulated influx of tourists caused nuisance of traffic jams and disruption of the civic system. In this regard, he proposed proper management and development of new tourist destinations to shift the quantum of visitors.

The president also called for raising consciousness among the general public to be kind towards the environment while exploring tourist places.



ISLAMABAD: Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof Dr Nasir Mahmood giving shield to Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhi during 3rd International Conference on "Modern Trends in the Arab Novel in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century" organized by AIOU at Academic Auditorium.

## 'We need to promote Arabic literature in Pakistan': Madad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhi on Wednesday said that we need to promote Arabic literature in Pakistan.

He said this while addressing the opening session of the two-day international conference on "Modern Trends of the Arab Novel in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century", at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU).

The minister said, "Learning Arabic is considered essential for every Muslim. In Pakistan, there is a need to promote Arabic literature. This conference is on a unique and most important topic."

"I congratulate the vice chancellor and the entire team, and I am grateful for the invitation to participate in this conference," he added.

The Department of Arabic at AIOU is organizing a conference, with the participation of 13 scholars from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Thailand, Malaysia, Oman, Algeria, Nigeria and Syria in person, and 15 international scholars joining the conference online.

On the occasion, the minister emphasized the importance of this unique conference, as the people are not familiar with the modern Arabic novel.

Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, expressed his gratitude to the Federal Minister, Madad Ali Sindhi, for attending the conference as the chief guest.

He also mentioned that Islamic scholars from all over the world are participating in the conference and presenting their research papers, which will provide a real picture of Arab society.

Dr. Nasir said that the presence of foreign scholars at the conference would be beneficial for the promotion of Arabic literature. He believes that Arabs have a unique history and their language is very broad, which allows the Arab society to relate to its civilization and culture.



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Youth Affairs, Sayad Wasi Ahmad addressing during signing ceremony of "Letter of Intent" between PMYP, HEC and British Council, Higher Education Commission, in Federal Capital.

## HEC, British Council, PMYP to jointly work on Green Youth Movement

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission, British Council, and Prime Minister's Youth Programme have entered a new partnership to collaborate in their flagship programmes aimed to contribute to the economic and social development of the Pakistani youth.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister Mr. Wasi Shah was chief guest of the signing ceremony, which was attended by Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Executive Director HEC Dr. Zia Ul Qayyum, Country Director British Council Mr. James Thompson and other notables from the three sides.

Deputy Secretary Prime Minister's Youth Programme Dr. Muhammad Ali Malik, Advisor (Global Engagement) HEC Mr. Awais Ahmed and Country Director British Council Mr. Hampson signed the Letter of Intent (LoI). The tripartite collaboration will be focused on the outcomes of the Prime Minister Youth Programme's Green Youth Movement, HEC's Green Youth Movement, and the British Council's Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative (PYLI). The primary objectives of the collaboration are to provide essential capacity-building and technical support to Green Youth Movement (GYM) clubs, develop training content.

## IHC instructs police to recover missing ex-MPA

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday instructed the police to recover missing former MPA Chaudhry Arshad till December 19.

An IHC bench heard the case filed by Rasheed Begum, the sister of missing MPA, seeking early recovery of the victim. The petition said that Chaudhry Arshad was abducted by some policemen from Sector F-8/3 of the Federal Capital.

The Senior Superintendent of Police (Operations) Islamabad appeared before the court and expressed anonymity about the missing person. He said that Chaudhry Arshad was not in the custody of Islamabad Police.

## Dense fog to engulf few plain areas of Punjab: PMD

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dense fog is likely to persist in few plain areas of Punjab during the next 24 hours reducing the visibility level, according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD)'s forecast.

Fog/smog is also likely to persist in upper Sindh, plain areas of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during morning and night hours.

IG Police (Islamabad) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan addressing during the "Guy Talk Initiates Conversations on Masculinity in Pakistan" As Organized by The Swedish Embassy at local hotel in Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: IG Police (Islamabad) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan addressing during the "Guy Talk Initiates Conversations on Masculinity in Pakistan" As Organized by The Swedish Embassy at local hotel in Federal Capital.

## PTA unveils Cyber Security strategy

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) on Wednesday unveiled its Cyber Security strategy for Pakistan's telecom sector, a comprehensive and ambitious plan set to span from 2023 to 2028.

This strategy is a significant step in the implementation of the National Cyber Security Policy - 2021 and marks a monumental stride towards bolstering digital security in the country's rapidly evolving telecom sector.

According to PTA, the strategy is built on six foundational pillars, each targeting a specific aspect of cyber security, such as legal framework, cyber resilience, proactive monitoring and incident response, capacity building, cooperation and collaboration, and public awareness.

The strategy emphasizes a multi-stakeholder approach, fostering active collaboration between public and private sectors, regulatory bodies, telecom operators, private security firms, academia, and civil society.

PHC says: Level playing field be given to all political parties including PTI

PESHAWAR (Online): Peshawar High Court (PHC) has ordered level playing field be given to all political parties including PTI. The court further ordered that chief secretary should take action against those behind giving discriminatory treatment.

PHC has issued written decision regarding the case in connection with permission for PTI workers convention.

Justice Ijaz Anwar has written this 5-page decision. It has been said in the court's decision holding election is constitutional obligation of Election Commission (EC) and care taker government. It is binding on care taker government to assist EC in elections. It is not job of care-taker government to influence the election or to make such bid which influences transparent election.

The decision said level playing field be given to all political parties including PTI. EC should summon report from DOS on daily basis. No discriminatory treatment should be given to any party. The political party should report the matter of discriminatory treatment to chief secretary and chief secretary should take action against those found involved in discriminatory treatment. The court said in its decision that PTI is resorting to this court repeatedly that FIRs are being registered against its workers and level playing field is not being given to them.

## CPO Security addresses Quaid-e-Azam University students on drugs awareness

ISLAMABAD: Following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCCPO) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police has launched an awareness campaign in federal capital to eradicate drug abuse and secure the young generation from the curse of narcotics.

As part of this initiative, the Capital Police Officer Security Division conducted an enlightening lecture at Quaid-e-Azam University, focusing on the damages of substance abuse and measures for prevention. The lecture witnessed participation from professors, students, and university staff.

The Capital Police Officer highlighted the detrimental effects of drug usage, especially among the youth, emphasizing its threat to both health and future prospects.

Abbasi declares not to participate in elections

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan: Former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, speaking outside the NAB court in Karachi on Wednesday, announced his decision not to participate in the upcoming general elections. He expressed frustration with the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and called for a justice system based on fairness and transparency.

Abbasi questioned the motives behind his five-year legal case, which culminated in his acquittal by the High Court earlier today. He demanded accountability for former NAB Chairman Javed Iqbal.

Orderly room held with focus on addressing police officials' concerns

ISLAMABAD: Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad, Muhammad Sarfraz Virk conducted an orderly room session at the traffic police headquarters, with the aim of promptly and effectively resolving institutional and personal matters affecting police personnel.

The orderly room serves as a dedicated platform to prioritize and address the concerns raised by police officers and officials, emphasizing the importance of their welfare and timely issue resolution.

During the session, officials from the Islamabad Capital Police actively participated, bringing forth a range of personal and official concerns for discussion with the Chief Traffic Officer. Immediate directions were issued to resolve pressing matters, with senior officers tasked to address remaining issues promptly. Sarfraz Virk highlighted various measures taken to enhance the welfare of police personnel. These initiatives include improvements in residence facilities, enhanced healthcare provisions, and an elevation of educational standards.

EU, AFD sign MoU to spearhead new climate initiative in Punjab's urban centers

ISLAMABAD (INP): A memorandum of understanding was signed between the EU and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) here on Wednesday to spearhead a new climate initiative in the urban centers of Punjab.

EU Ambassador Dr. Riina Kionka and Deputy Director AFD Eastern Europe, Middle East and Asia, Ms. Julie Marsaudon signed the agreement.

The project aims to improve access to drinking water and sanitation services by installing 200 kilometers of new water supply pipes and providing 55,000 new connections.

It focuses on enhancing capacities, increasing water treatment capacity by 135,000 cubic meters per day and bolstering urban water governance. The initiative will improve the access of 400,000 individuals to drinking water.

## EU, AFD sign MoU to spearhead new climate initiative in Punjab's urban centers

ISLAMABAD: European Union Ambassador to Pakistan Dr Riina Kionka signing the agreement along with Country Director AFD Pakistan Vincent Thevenot following the Europe collaboration about new climate initiative set to address crucial water challenges in the urban centers of Punjab, at Federal Capital.



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