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

Nation should have no doubt about general elections on Feb 8: PM

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

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

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

To a question, he said he did not consider the general elections of the 70s as a benchmark either as many people had different opinions about those polls.

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

He said as the arrangements were in place, and he was hopeful that the caretaker government would be

able to give results in a relatively better way.

The prime minister said that he endorsed the Election Commission's denial of any delay in the polls. "They (Election Commission) have to conduct (elections). We are with them."

He said as per the Election Commission, the election schedule will cover 56 days, based on which the schedule should be announced by December 14.

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

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

To a question about the participation of Imran Khan or his party in the general elections, he said there was no restriction on him as yet. "However, if something unusual comes up, I can't say anything about it. As of today, they

are in a position to contest elections and they will contest."

About the disappearances and resurfacing of PTI leaders, the prime minister said such people went into hiding, fearing arrest for their involvement in attacks on state institutions on May 9.

He said while in hiding, they would have second thought to leave PTI or politics which was their personal decision.

He said that no evidence of "state coercion" had come to his knowledge, and even none of those people had spoken of "state coercion". Until then, it's just allegations, he added.

Prime Minister Kakar disagreed with the view that the decision of May 9 arson should be left to the people for elections. He also rejected the allegations of not having a level playing field.

Coming to the economic situation, he expressed his satisfaction with his government's efforts so far to improve the national economy.

Masses to decide in February 8 elections who will rule Pakistan: Solangi

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

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

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

He dispelled any doubt by some quarters about the holding of general elections. He pointed out that Preamble of the Constitu-

tion had indicated that elected representatives would ultimately run the affairs of the country.

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

Solangi said that multiple voices and slogans were the hallmark of democracy and no one should worry about the democratic norms. "Democracy does not harbour sheer silence just like a graveyard," he remarked.

He said at the moment, the performance of the next parliament and government could not be assessed in advance.

"We will hand over affairs of the country to the next government in a better state than the point when the caretaker government took over the charge," he added.

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

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

Addressing the inaugural session of Islamabad Conclave 2023 themed 'Pakistan in a changing world' organized by Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), he said Pakistan must consciously rediscover its vision in the wake of super power rivalries and interference of neighbouring states. The president, in this regard, emphasized close liaison among politicians and parliamentarians, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence for effective deliberations and policy-making.

President Alvi said Pakistan's strategic shift from geo-politics to geo-economic and the regional

situation in the wake of India's belligerence needed the policies in line with regional and systemic developments.

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

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

He regretted that even the gory imagery of Gaza killings could not shake the world's conscience, terming it a failure of the intellect of mankind.

The president recalled that decades ago, the world after several war-related massacres in Europe had arrived at the culmination

of peace treaties and bodies like the League of Nations and the United Nations (UN).

However, he pointed out that now every rule made by the civilized world as a lesson learned after several wars was being undermined.

Dr Alvi said allowing few states the right of veto power was in fact the first failure of mankind to bow before the vested interests.

War, he said, was not a solution to resolve any conflict and always resulted in a never-ending vicious cycle of violence.

He expressed disappointment over the approach of democratic countries supporting wars and said morality must be the anchor of human thinking.

He said the world at the moment direly needed the approach of love, empathy and forgiveness.



ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting on Task Force of Polio Eradication.

Three perish as fire erupts in shopping mall near Karachi's Ayesha Manzil

KARACHI (APP): At least three people perished after a fire erupted in one of the shops located in Arshi Shopping Mall adjoining Ayesha Manzil in Karachi central neighborhood, according to police and rescuers.

The mayor of Karachi, who was present at the site and overseeing the rescue efforts, confirmed the death of three people.

Wahab, in a post on X formerly Twitter, mentioned the discovery of a 'third dead body'.

In a previous post, Wahab said that two individuals with 'severe burn injuries' had been transferred to Civil Hospital. It remains unclear whether these individuals are among the deceased.

Nine fire tenders were deployed to extinguish the fire, with assistance from firefighters of the Pakistan Navy.

Terrorist Habib Ur Rehman gunned down in Kulachi Operation

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Security Forces on Wednesday gunned down Terrorist Habib Ur Rehman during an intelligence-based operation conducted in general area Kulachi of Dera Ismail Khan District.

According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the Army troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location, as a result of which terrorist Habib Ur Rehman was sent to hell.

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

"Sanitization operation is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area, as the Security Forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country," the ISPR said.

Decision taken to increase the number of city council committees to 37: Mayor

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that it has been decided to increase the number of city council committees to 37, and will work together with the political party that supports them to solve the basic problems of Karachi.

He expressed these views while addressing the press conference held on Wednesday at the lawn of the KMC head office.

On this occasion, Deputy Mayor Karachi Salman Abdullah Murad, People's Party Parliamentary Leader Najmi Alam, Chief Whip Karamullah Waqasi, Deputy Parliamentary Leader Dil Muhammad, Juman Darwan, and other officials were also present.

Barrister Murtaza Wahab said that he wants to bring everyone together in is to make a policy that benefits the people of Karachi. He is grateful to the opposition parties that they feel our seriousness regarding the solution of urban problems, so the Deputy Mayor Karachi talked to the representatives of Jamaat-e-Islami, in which they also showed seriousness, he added.



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

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

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

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

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

Aamer Farooq here Wednesday.

The court rejected chairman PTI petition. The court had reserved judgment on September 13 after hearing the arguments of the respondents.

It is pertinent to mention here chairman PTI had challenged EC October 21, 2022 decision.

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

Nawaz Sharif visits Chaudhry Shujaat after 15 years

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

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

The two parties have discussed electoral alliance and seat adjustments on

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

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

PML-Q leaders Chaudhry Wajahat Hussain, Salik Hussain and Shafay Hussain were also in the meeting.

However, no official statement was issued following the meeting.



LAHORE: Muslim League (PML-N) President, Nawaz Sharif along with Shabbaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz and others exchanges views with Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) President, Chaudhry Shujaat during meeting to discuss electoral alliance and seat adjustments on Gujrat seats, in Lahore.

Afghan authorities close Torkham Border for crossing

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

The border officials said the Afghan authorities have closed the border crossing for every kind of movement on their side as a protest. The Pakistani authorities were installing a signboard inscribed with "Welcome to Pakistan" at Torkham zero point upon which the Afghan authorities raised an objection and in protest closed the border.

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

This move not only harms bilateral trade but also widens the gap between brotherly people and countries besides, creating obstacles and delays in regional trade and transport movement.

CPEC paving foundation of sustainable development of Pakistan: Chinese CG

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

The people of Pakistan started reaping the benefits of the CPEC journey as several major projects have been completed while many more were in the completion process. These views were expressed by the Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Karachi, Yang Yundong in an exclusive interview with the Associated Press of Pakistan here at the Consulate.

Regarding progress on CPEC projects, Yang Yundong said the Gwadar Port had become opera-

tional for a few years, free zones were also in operation while the New Islamabad Airport, Sukkur - Multan Motorway and other major projects have been completed under the Economic Corridor.

The Consul General said the Havelian-Thakot section of Karakoram Highway, Jakla-DI Khan Motorway, Optical Cable, Eastern Expressway and Orange Line Metro Train Lahore projects were also completed which had started giving fruits to the common men. He said that so far 14 energy projects including the Qasim Port Coal Power plant, Hub Coal power plant and Thar Coal power plant have been completed and the people of Pakistan were reaping the benefits of the projects.



KARACHI: View of site after fire eruption at Furniture Market in a residential building after a fire broken out incident as the fire brigade and rescue officials are busy in extinguishing fire during rescue operation, located nearby Ayesha Manzil in Karachi.



SUKKUR: Peoples Party (PPP) Central senior leader, Party Syed Khurshid Shah addresses to participants during PPP Women Wing Convention, held in Sukkur.

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

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

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

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

A larger bench of Supreme Court (SC) under the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJ) Qazi

Faez Isa will hear the presidential reference.

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

First hearing was held on January 02, 2012.

First five hearings of presidential reference were conducted by 11-member larger bench of SC under former Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry.

The last hearing of the case was conducted by larger bench.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

ADB's vital support for Pakistan's development

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

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

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

It is America's war now



Zahid Hussain

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

times.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Deadly diplomacy



Mahir Ali

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

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

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

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

It was more or less

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Commerce News

Dr. Alvi for marketplace to promote Pakistani startups through linkages

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

messaging and awareness drives.

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

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

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



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



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

MOITT announces initiatives to empower freelancers

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

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

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

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

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

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

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

The overall exports to Afghanistan were recorded

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CG Indonesia visits SCCI

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

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

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

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

Efforts to promote technological innovation for crops growth

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

Top Chinese cotton producer welcomes collaboration with Pak

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

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

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

Independent Report

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



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

Minister hails medical team over recovery of domestic violence survivor

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

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

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

IDPD day observed in Peshawar

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

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

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

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

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

The meeting exchanged views on

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

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

Minister directs to expedite work on Journalists WEF

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

During a meeting of the Journalists Welfare Endowment Fund, he

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

Women should take legal ways to claim their rights: Ombudsperson

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Two people killed as trailer hit motorbike

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

According to the rescue source, the incident occurred due to the negligence of the trailer driver in which two persons died on the spot. The heirs of the deceased refused to take legal action.

Police have registered a case and started investigation.

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

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

It has been said in

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

International News

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

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

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

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

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

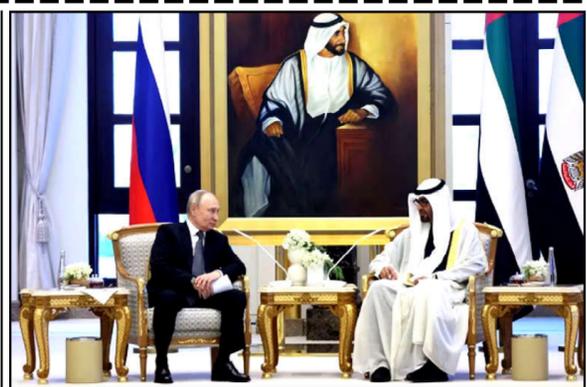
In Abu Dhabi, President Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan welcomed his "dear friend" Putin, while UAE jets greeted him with a fly-past trailing the colours of Russia's flag. "Our relations, largely due to your position, have reached an unprecedentedly high level," Putin told him. "The UAE is Russia's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

Putin said Russia and the UAE cooperated as

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

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

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



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

COP28 deal may demand phase-out of fossil fuels

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Iran sends up rocket with test living capsule

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

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

Qatar emir slams 'shameful' inaction on Gaza crisis

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

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

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

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

Its foreign ministry said that GCC summit was aimed at forming a united approach to end the aggression in Gaza. "Now the ceiling should be raised to talk about a sustainable truce" that could lead to ending this unrest, Majed Al-Ansari, spokesperson for Qatar's foreign ministry, told Al Jazeera.

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



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

Sudanese warring parties dig in as Jeddah talks falter again

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

Monitoring Desk BERLIN: The chancellor of Germany and president of Brazil expressed hope Monday that decades-long negotiations might soon yield a finalized free trade agreement between the 27-member European Union and a bloc of four South American nations. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva told reporters in Berlin that they support the trade deal for the EU and Mercosur, comprised of Brazil, Argentina,

Paraguay and Uruguay. The two blocs are holding a summit Thursday in Rio de Janeiro, but final approval of a preliminary trade agreement has remained elusive. "We are strongly committed to ensuring that the agreement is now finalized swiftly," Scholz said after a meeting of senior officials from both countries in the German capital.

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



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

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

JUI-F chief urge Muslim World not to recognize Israel

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prominent religious scholars and leaders representing diverse schools of thought on Wednesday gathered at the Jinnah Convention Centre for the National Conference titled "The Sanctity of Al-Aqsa Mosque and Responsibility of the Muslim Ummah." Organized by Majlis Ittehad-e-Ummah Pakistan, the conference saw a joint declaration expressing full solidarity with the freedom of Al-Aqsa Mosque and condemning the oppression faced by Palestinian brothers.

Addressing the gathering, the religious scholars and leaders highlighted Israel's relentless aggression, branding it as a violator of international law since its illegal establishment. They emphasized the recent brutal bombings in Gaza, resulting in the martyrdom of over 15,000 Palestinians, including 6,000 children and numerous women. They declared these actions as war crimes against humanity, targeting mosques, churches, hospitals, and even newborns. The Ulema and Mashaykh criticized Western powers for their complicity in supporting Israel's crimes through financial, practical, and military assistance. They called for an immediate end to the brutal bombings, war crimes, and all forms of support for Israel. They asserted that the entire land of Palestine belonged to its original inhabitants, condemning the unjust settlements established by Zionists. They urged the people of Palestine to resist this aggression, emphasizing the religious duty of Muslims to support the cause. Labelling the current conflict as a grand defensive Jihad rooted in pure Islam, the scholars and leaders stressed liberating the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Land of the Last Prophet Peace Be Upon Him from Zionist dominance. They demanded basic rights for the people of Palestine according to United Nations resolutions, calling for an end to military intervention, the siege on Al-Quds, Gaza Strip, and the West Bank, and the permanent opening of the Rafah border.

ADB approves \$658.8mln financial support for Pakistan's sustainable development

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved this week three projects amounting to \$658.8 million to help Pakistan achieve its goal of more inclusive and sustainable growth and development. The projects would focus on improving domestic resource mobilization; rehabilitating schools damaged by the devastating August 2022 floods; and enhancing agricultural productivity to improve food security, a news release said on Wednesday.

of-living crisis and super-floods and return to the path of long-term development that is sustainable and inclusive," ADB Director General for Central and West Asia Yevgeniy Zhukov said. "This multifaceted approach is part of ADB's strategic engagement in Pakistan and cohesively deploys our program lending and project investments to enhance support for Pakistan's efforts to improve its economic situation and enhance the quality of life for its people," he added. The Improved Resource Mobilization and Utilization Reform Programme would support

the government to realize its ambition of achieving economic growth that is sustainable, broad-based, and inclusive. The \$300 million policy-based loan would support the initiative's first subprogram, which focuses on laying the foundation for reforms to policies, laws, and institutional capacity that would improve domestic resource mobilization and utilization. The programme is helping to transform tax administration, public expenditure management, and other institutional structures to strengthen resource mobilization including non-debt resources such as private investment and savings.



BAGHDAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrami of Pakistan being received by Iraqi Deputy Foreign Minister, Mohammed Hussein Mohammed Bahr-Aluloom along with a delegation at state lounge on his arrival at Baghdad.

Commissioner for supply of clean tested drinking water to citizens

HYDERABAD (APP): Commissioner Hyderabad Syed Muhammad Sajjad Haider on Wednesday visited Rohri Canal Water Supply system and Ultra-Filtration Plant and took serious notice of the supply of sub-standard drinking water to the masses. He was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Zahid Hussain Rind and Mayor Nawabshah Municipal Corporation Qazi Rasheed Bhatti. Instructing the officials

of the Public Health Department (PHD), he said that the department shall ensure to supply clean tested drinking water to citizens. He said that the material used to clean potable water shall be used in standard quantity while serial-wise boards shall be installed at all water supply ponds. The Commissioner was dissatisfied for not adding Chlorine to water at the filtration Plant and instructed the PHD to mix Chlorine in the stipulated quantity.



HYDERABAD: Activists of Jamat-e-Islami (JI) are holding protest demonstration against changing name of Zeal Pak High School, outside Zeal Pak in Hyderabad.

Modern facial recognition system shuts down at Karachi airport

KARACHI (INP): The modern facial recognition cameras installed to identify suspects and wanted individuals at Karachi's Jinnah International Airport have reportedly shut down, sources said on Wednesday. Sources claimed that the advanced facial recognition system was installed a few months back at the international departure of the Karachi airport to bar the suspected and wanted individuals from fleeing the country became non-operational.

national Airports across the country. Sources indicated that the 'lack of interest' of appointed authorities played a vital role in failing to operate the advanced system. It is worth mentioning here that back in March 2023, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has been given control of modern facial recognition cameras installed at Karachi's Jinnah International Airport.

The aviation authorities built a control room at Karachi airport for 24/7 monitoring of passengers and visitors via the high-tech camera system. The control room was handed over to the FIA immigration officers.

PM orders emergency polio eradication plan for high-risk areas

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

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

Expressing the recent report of police cases, the prime minister regretted that the crippling disease,

which was eradicated from the globe, still existed in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

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

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

The prime minister lauded the efforts of international community and development partners in polio eradication.

AHK representative Germany keen to expand business ties with Pakistan

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan's representative in the German Emirati Joint Council for Industry and Commerce (AHK) Muhammad Usman, Wednesday, said that the German government and businesses were keen to strengthen business and investment ties with Pakistan.

Germany desires to expand ties of German Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) with Pakistan and it would be fully facilitated by AHK that has established

Pakistan's desk in Dubai, said Muhammad Usman who led the AHK trade delegation during its visit to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI).

Deputy Head of Mission at the German Consulate in Karachi Andreas Wegner, President KCCI Iftikhar Ahmed Sheikh, chairman of the chamber's subcommittees and KCCI Managing Committee members were also present on the occasion, said a statement issued here.



KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Sindh Information Secretary, Aajiz Dhamrah addresses to media persons during press conference, at Karachi press club.

Martyred police constable buried with full police honour

LARKANA (APP): A Sindh police Constable, Khalid Hussain Abro, who was martyred in an encounter with dacoits in Kashmir-Kandhot district, Tuesday night, was laid to rest with full police honours at his ancestral graveyard in village Usman Khan Jumarani, some 10 kms away from Larkana city, on Wednesday.

Wing Commander Shahbaz Rangers Larkana, SSP Larkana Syed Abdul Raheem Sherazi, ASP City Larkana Atif Ameer, Father of martyred police jawan Mushtaq Ahmed Abro, police officials, family members and relatives.

A smartly turned-out contingent of the Larkana Police jawans presented the guard of honour and last respects to the martyr constable. While DIG Police Larkana, Commissioner Larkana, SSP Larkana laid floral wreaths at his grave. DIG Larkana Range Nasir Aftab while talking to the media said that the accused involved will be arrested very soon. SSP Larkana Syed Abdul Rahim Sherazi also expressed sympathy with the family members and paid tribute to his departmental services.



LARKANA: Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGP) Larkana Range, Nasir Aftab, SSP Larkana Abdul Rahim Shirazi, Rangers Colonel and others are attending funeral prayers of Police constable Khalid Hussain Abro, who was martyred by bandits while patrolling in the limits of Gablu police station of Kandhot/Kashmore district last night by attacking the police mobile, held at Police Headquarters in Larkana.



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

Excise, Taxation dept collects Rs 58.91 billion taxes in 5 months

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Excise and Taxation Department collected taxes amounting to Rs.58.91 billion during the first 5 months of the current financial year.

Director General Excise and Taxation Sindh Aurangzeb Panhwar informed that total tax collection by the department from July to November 2023 remained at Rs 58912.732 million, said a statement issued here on Wednesday.

He, while sharing the details of tax collection in 5 months of FY2023-24, said that a collection of Rs.3827.509 million was made under motor vehicle tax while Rs.51615.081 million was collected under infrastructure cess.

PIA gets back one of two stranded planes in Indonesia

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) got back one of its stuck planes in Jakarta, Indonesia due to a lease dispute, reported on Wednesday.

The planes were stuck in Indonesia over a lease dispute for two years.

As per details, Airbus 320 flew back to Pakistan from Jakarta via Bangkok at 10:30 pm on Tuesday.

Senior officials of PIA management received the aircraft, which has now again become part of the PIA fleet. The other one, an Airbus A320 stranded in Indonesia is expected to reach Pakistan within a couple of days.

With the induction of Airbus A320 in the PIA fleet, the total number of Airbus has reached 16.

The Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has paid \$26 million to the leasing company. It is to be noted that a high-level delegation of PIA led by the aviation secretary held talks with the leasing company in Malaysia in October, this year.

Police arrest two drug peddlers, recovered marijuana

HYDERABAD (APP): Police in its continued drive against narcotics and criminals on Wednesday arrested two drug peddlers and recovered marijuana from their possession. SHO Hatri Police station Ziyad Ali Noonari along with his team conducted a raid near Dargaah Hussain Shah arrested two drug peddlers Habibullah and Jawed Khichi and seized 1540 kg of marijuana from their possession. Police have registered cases against suspects under the substance of Narcotics Control Act.

Pakistan urges India to ensure safety of minorities particularly Muslims

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

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

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

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

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

The court imposed a fine worth Rs1,00,000 on petitioner for six-year delay in payment of the 'mehr' amount to his wife and also directed him to pay the expenditures of litigation to the woman.

A three-member bench, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa issued the three-

page written order in an appeal filed by a citizen Khalid Pervaiz.



NAUNDERO: District Council Larkana, Chairman Aijaz Ahmed Leghari along with others take keen interest in Sindh Topi (traditional caps) and Ajrak dresses at a stall during exhibition in connection Sindh Culture Day organized by Sartiyoon held at Public Park in Naundero.

New meat prices for Karachi notified, profiteers warned of strict action

KARACHI (INP): District administration Karachi on Wednesday fixed the new government prices for mutton meat in the metropolis.

A notification regarding new prices for mutton meat was issued by the office of Karachi Commissioner Muhammad Saleem Rajput. As per notification, the mutton price was fixed at Rs1,700 per kg, while the sheep and lamb meat prices were fixed at Rs1,490 and Rs1,590 per kg, respectively. The profiteers have been warned of strict action for selling the meat against

the government's fixed rate. Pakistan's weekly inflation remained elevated, marking a 41.90 percent year-on-year increase in the week ending on November 16, mainly due to the rising cost of gas, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) said. Measured by the Sensitive Price Index (SPI), the weekly inflation also increased by staggering 9.95pc on a week-on-week basis, according to official data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).