

Independent

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No security compromises with undocumented foreign nationals: PM

Our ultimate aim is to build safer, more peaceful, and prosperous Pakistan; 65 terrorists killed in encounters were identified as Afghans; No responsible government can ignore such concerns. Whenever we raised this with the interim Afghan government, they advised us to "look inwards".

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has said that as Pakistan stood at the crossroads of history, it could no longer continue to compromise its national security by accommodating huge number of undocumented immigrants. He said the UK Government's plan to deport illegal immigrants to Rwanda was a sign of that pressure. The heated debate surrounding the proposal and the many efforts to derail the scheme illustrated the huge challenges for policymakers as they sought to balance human rights with hard realities. "Our ultimate aim is to build a safer, more peaceful and prosperous Pakistan—with associated benefits for our own people, for the region, and the wider world," the prime minister wrote in an article published in The Telegraph on Sunday. He said that the governments across the world were adapting to a new era of mass migration linked

to conflict, climate change, and economic opportunity. He said the UK Government's plan to deport illegal immigrants to Rwanda was a sign of that pressure. The heated debate surrounding the proposal and the many efforts to derail the scheme illustrated the huge challenges for policymakers as they sought to balance human rights with hard realities. "Our ultimate aim is to build a safer, more peaceful and prosperous Pakistan—with associated benefits for our own people, for the region, and the wider world," the prime minister wrote in an article published in The Telegraph on Sunday. He said that the governments across the world were adapting to a new era of mass migration linked

was also feeling the strain, prompting the announcement of tough new deportation measures. The situation in the United States was no easier, he remarked. "Pakistan's problem is of a different magnitude altogether. Over the last three to four decades, between four and five million migrants (roughly the population of Ireland) have arrived. Many have no right to remain. Despite being a non-signatory to 1951 Convention on Refugees (and its 1967 Protocol), we have generously accommodated the single largest caseload of refugees," the prime minister wrote.



KARACHI: Chairman Karachi Port Trust Syed Saad Din Raza Abdi meeting with Caretaker Chief Minister Sindh Justice (ret'd) Maqbool Baqar.

Kamran Tessori meets Baligh-ur-Rehman

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman and his Sindh counterpart Kamran Khan Tessori met and discussed matters of mutual interest besides ways to promote inter-provincial relations during a meeting at the Governor's House here on Monday. Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that everyone should play a positive role for a strong, prosperous, and stable Pakistan. He said that the improvement and stability in the country's economy bodes well for a bright future. The Governor Punjab further said that the ex-

change of educational and business delegations will strengthen inter provincial coordination. He further stated that both the provinces can benefit from each other's experiences in various fields. He informed his counterpart from Sindh about the steps taken to improve the quality of universities in the province. He said that educated youth are the asset of the country. He emphasized that along with education, there is a need to focus on their character building. On this occasion, Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori appreciated the initiative of opening the Governor House Lahore to the public in an organised manner.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani recording his condolence on the demise of AMIR of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in the visitor's book at Embassy of Kuwait.

CS, PEC Sindh discuss arrangements for general election

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Pak, Iran FMs discuss Gaza situation, recent terrorist attack in Iran

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Minister Jilani Abbas Jilani on Monday held a telephonic conversation with his Iranian counterpart Amir Abdollahian wherein they discussed the dire situation in Gaza as well as the recent terrorist attack that took place in South-eastern Iran. During the conversation, they discussed matters of bilateral importance and the regional situation, a Foreign Office press release said. Foreign Minister Jilani expressed Pakistan's deep concern over the dire situation in the Occupied Palestine.

ANP mulls seat adjustment with MQM-P, PML-N

KARACHI (INP): Awami National Party (ANP) contacted Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) and Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) on seat adjustment in Karachi for the upcoming general elections. According to sources, the ANP leadership and MQM-P discussed matters related to electoral alliance on several seats in Karachi. Sources revealed that the ANP Karachi leadership is not in favor of forming an alliance with Pakistan People's Party (PPP). Furthermore, several meetings have already held between ANP, PML-N and MQM-P in connection with seat adjustment for upcoming polls. Earlier, Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) refused to adjust its traditional seats with Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N). Sources told that MQM-P leaders have excused themselves from adjusting traditional seats with PML-N in Karachi.

Customs foil drug smuggling, arrests two

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Customs authorities made a significant drug seizure in the vicinity of the Northern Bypass, leading to the arrest of two individuals. Acting on a tip-off, the Anti-Smuggling Organization (ASO) intercepted a trailer traveling through the Katcha area from Sunday night to Monday, according to a spokesman for Customs on Monday. Upon inspection of the toolbox section's spare wheel, officials uncovered 57 packets of hashish weighing 70 kilograms. The confiscated drugs, estimated at a value of around 10.5 million rupees, were swiftly seized by customs officials.



LAHORE: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori meeting with Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House.

CM Sindh increases annual grant of IDA RIEU to Rs15 million

KARACHI (APP): The Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (Ret'd) Maqbool Baqar Monday declared that the Annual Grant of IDA RIEU will be raised from Rs10 million to Rs15 million. Additionally, he has supplied three pianos specifically for children with disabilities. He made this announcement while speaking at the opening ceremony of the inclusive Youth Parliament at IDA RIEU. President of IRWA Ida RIEU Welfare Association, Nadira Panjwani, Secretary of the Department of Differently Abled Persons, Taha Farooqi, and others received the pianos. He said that the IDA RIEU was doing a great service for the cause of education of differently abled children, therefore he has decided to increase their grant from Rs10 million to Rs15 million. The CM watched the differently abled children playing the piano. The four children had one piano, therefore he announced to get them three more pianos so that they could enjoy

playing their favourite music. Speaking on the occasion, Baqar said the role of IDA RIEU Schools & Colleges for the Blind & Deaf for taking this important initiative and congratulated all the participants selected for the significant event. The CM said that the Youth Parliament aimed at empowering diverse young voices for an inclusive Pakistan. I can see that it is inspired by the vision and mission of the IDA RIEU Welfare Association, which has been serving the cause of persons with disabilities for over a century. "The IDA RIEU Welfare Association endeavours towards providing quality education and rehabilitation services for the differently abled, empowering them and ensuring inclusiveness and equality," he said and added that the IDA RIEU was playing a lead role in creating a more accessible and equitable Pakistan. He said that with the efforts of IDA RIEU thousands of students have had



LAHORE: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari inquires about health of PPP senior activist Zubaidah Shaheen during meeting held at her residency in Lahore.

No one can exercise ECP powers SC nullifies BHC decision for changing delimitation of two constituencies

Can't object to constituencies delimitation after election schedule issued

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has declared null and void Balochistan High Court (BHC) decision on changing delimitation of two constituencies of Balochistan. A 3-member bench of SC presided over by Justice Sardar Tariq Masood nullified BHC decision on the petition against the delimitation of two provincial constituencies of Quetta, Monday. SC has said in the decision that objection cannot be raised on constituencies following the issuance of election schedule. The court accepted commission's appeal. Justice Athar Minallah said in his remarks it is the biggest test of Election Commission (EC) that general elections are held in transparent

Sarfraz Bugti joins PPP

Independent Report
QUETTA: The former caretaker Federal Interior Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti joined the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) just days after he resigned from office. "Respected leader Asif Ali Zardari came to Turbat and directed me to join PPP," Bugti told the party's workers convention in Turbat in the presence of the PPP co-chairman and other leaders, as he expressed delight to be entering into the general elections with PPP's support. The general elections will take place on February 8, 2024, after much fear of them being delayed again, but the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) issued the polling schedule on the Supreme Court orders, ending worries to an extent on the issue. Bugti hoped that peace would be restored in Balochistan under the leadership of Zardari. In a bid to provide better healthcare facilities to the locals, he urged the president to build a state-of-the-art hospital in Turbat, similar to that in Sukkur. "Will make the PPP a progressive party under your leadership," he promised to Zardari. The PPP is the party that would challenge the narrative against Pakistan, the former interior minister added.

Earthquake of 5.8 magnitude jolts Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): An earthquake of 5.8 magnitude on Richter Scale jolted Islamabad on Monday afternoon, with no reports of any damage or casualty so far. According to an official of the National Seismic Monitoring Centre (NSMC) Islamabad, the epicenter of the earthquake was Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir with the depth of 133 kilometres. The NSMC official said the tremors were felt in Islamabad and surrounding areas, however, no damages had been reported.



KARACHI: View of damages after building collapsed due to gas cylinder blast occurred at gas cylinder filling shop while rescue operation and investigation is underway, located on Machar Colony area in Karachi.

PPP Workers convention in Turbat: PPP to make Balochistan 10 times better than now after coming in power, pledges Asif Ali Zardari

Independent Report
TURBAT: The President of Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians and former President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari has said that the PPP after coming in power following the upcoming general elections will start development projects in the fields of education, health and communication to speed up the development process in Balochistan, as well as will ensure supply of irrigation water to promote agriculture in the province. He said that in terms of development projects, "Balochistan will be the first" now, and "there is a lot of scope for Balochistan to move forward". While addressing the party workers' convention here on Monday, Asif Ali Zardari said that Balochistan is the heart of Pakistan. He urged that conflict does not bring prosperity, and added: We will beautify Balochistan, Balochistan has many resources. I will make Balochistan 10 times better than now. He said that during the party's previous government in the province, he provided funds but did not monitor the development projects. "Now I will supervise the development projects myself," he vowed. Former President pointed out that previous PPP governments in Sindh had build lining canals, as a result of which sugarcane is being cultivated in many uninhabited areas of the province.

Caretaker PM visits Kuwait; conveys deepest sympathies to new Amir

KUWAIT (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar visited Kuwait today to offer condolences over the sad demise of the Amir Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. During his meeting with the new Amir



Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Sabah, the Prime Minister offered his heartfelt condolences on behalf of the leadership, government and people of Pakistan.

PPP will surprise everyone if provided level playing field: Bilawal

LAHORE (INP) – Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto said on Monday if the PPP got a level playing field in Punjab, it would surprise everyone. Speaking to media, he said the regime of Nawaz Sharif proved no less than a dictatorship for the PPP workers. "The PPP is a political party and the doors of a political party should always remain open for discussion," he said. Bilawal said it was good to be in Lahore as the PPP was quite organised here. "Inflation, poverty



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf exchanging views with Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Pakistan Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi at Naval Headquarter.

Foreigners can not stay in Pakistan indefinitely without visa: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Monday said that foreigners including Afghan citizens could not stay in Pakistan indefinitely without a visa. Talking to "Hum News" the minister said that some foreign countries had criticized Pakistan for sending illegal immigrants back to their countries. "There are about 20,000 Afghans in Pakistan who worked with the US coalition forces," Murtaza Solangi said. The minister said that the Taliban government was established in Afghanistan on August 15, 2021, but the US and its allies were not yet able to shift these 20 thousand Afghans to their own countries. He said that everyone knew the treatment of illegal immigrants across the world. When illegal immigrants were drowning in Greece, no one came to save them, Murtaza Solangi recalled. Pakistan's record about illegal residents was very good as compared to other countries of the world, Murtaza Solangi opined. The minister said that millions of Afghan citizens legally present in Pakistan had access to all facilities including health, education and business activities. About the foreigners who do not have documents or visas, he said "we only asked them to go back to their countries". The minister said that Pakistan will have to decide how long foreigners could stay inside Pakistan.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

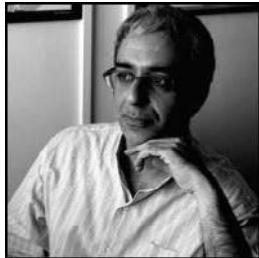
Giant leap

In what can fittingly be described as 'one giant leap for mankind', over 100 countries have agreed to transition away from fossil fuels at the recently concluded COP28 in Dubai. For the first time in the history of climate talks, there is strong evidence that nations are willing to shift towards cleaner energy sources. The summit's resolution to phase out oil, gas, and coal use, is a testament to the growing recognition that we must reduce emissions. If one is to be optimistic, this move — long overdue according to EU climate chief Wopke Hoekstra — could mark the beginning of the end of fossil fuels. However, the battle against powerful oil producers like OPEC, who argue for emission reductions without abandoning specific fuels, underscores the geopolitical challenges inherent in global climate negotiations.

COP28's success, heralded by environmentalists for finally addressing the 'elephant in the room', is a significant step forward. However, this is but one step in a long journey. The summit's agreement, while significant, does not fully address some critical aspects. For instance, the International Energy Agency points out that while the agreement includes their recommendations, like tripling renewable energy capacity by 2030, it fails to provide concrete measures for financing clean energy transitions in developing nations. Moreover, while the agreement recommits to net-zero GHG emissions by 2050, the path to achieving this goal is fraught with obstacles. The challenge of reducing emissions from agriculture and waste — a significant portion of global emissions — remains unaddressed. Scientist Emile Frison's remark that reaching the 1.5°C target is impossible without tackling food systems highlights the multifaceted nature of climate action. Additionally, the reliance on expensive and unproven technologies like carbon capture and utilisation is a concern. Critics worry that such technologies could justify continued fossil fuel use, undermining progress towards emission reduction. Moreover, the IEA's revised forecast indicating a robust near-term outlook for oil use contrasts sharply with the commitments made at COP28. This discrepancy between policy and practice is a reminder of the challenges of translating international agreements into tangible actions.

As we look towards the next iteration of the climate change conference in Baku, it is imperative to address these shortcomings. The IEA's emphasis on discussing finance mechanisms for clean energy in developing countries at COP29 should be a top priority. It is essential to ensure that the momentum gained at COP28 is not lost but rather built upon to create comprehensive, actionable strategies that address all facets of climate change, including the harder-to-reduce emissions from sectors like agriculture and waste. The journey towards a sustainable future is ongoing, and the decisions made now will shape the health of our planet for generations to come.

Songs of slaughter



Zarrar Khuhro

We all have soundtracks to our lives; background music that plays in our heads depending on our mood and situation. We know which songs we like to listen to when we are sad or happy — sometimes to magnify the mood and sometimes to dampen it — because music has the power to unleash and tame emotions. William Congreve was right when he wrote in 1697 that "Musick has Charms to sooth a savage Breast", but the reverse is also true: music also has darker charms that do not soothe, but inflame that breast, making it savage. In Israel's genocide in the Gaza Strip, music of the latter type has come to the fore. These are the soundtracks of genocide, the musical accompaniments to mass murder.

Recently, one such song topped the Israeli charts. Charbu Darbu (swords and strikes) celebrates Israel's murderous actions with lyrics that call Palestinians "rats and sons of Amalek", and calls upon Israelis to "write names on the bombs, for the children of the Gaza envelope". It also includes death threats against Bella Hadid, Dua Lipa and Mia Khalifa, who have been vocally opposed to Israel's indiscriminate mass slaughter.

In keeping with the psychopathic nature of Israeli society, the song was hugely popular, with Israelis posting videos of themselves dancing to it. Similar songs are favourites of the Israeli occupation forces too, with one group of soldiers dancing to lyrics that go: "We know our slogan: there are no

'uninvolved civilians'." Charming, coming from a military famous for murdering children, women and unarmed men.

This genre of music isn't recent, nor limited to Israel. In recent years, with the rise of the fanatical Sangh Parivar in India, Hindutva hate pop has also secured itself a large, growing audience. Lyrics to these popular tracks — which incite hate against the minority Muslim community — go like this: "Hinduo kaa hae Hindustan, Mullo jao Pakistan" (India is for Hindus, Muslims should go to Pakistan) and "Insaan nahi ho saalo, ho tum kasaayi; Bahut ho chuka Hindu-Muslim bhai bhai" (you're not human; you're butchers. Enough of Hindu-Muslim brotherhood).

Highly popular in Hindutva circles, these songs are played at Hindu supremacist rallies and marches through Muslim neighbourhoods, events that are almost always followed by violence and hate crimes. They also seem to enjoy official sanction as one of the singers, failed Bollywood singer Prem Krishnavanshi, recently received an award from Yogi Adityanath, the fanatical chief minister of Uttar Pradesh. In 1994, the world watched as the Rwandan genocide unfolded. In just four months, anywhere from 500,000 to 800,000 Tutsis were slaughtered by Hutu militants belonging to Interahamwe and their supporters in a murderous orgy where the weapons of choice were machetes and firearms. This genocide had its specific sound-tracks as well — songs that extolled the power of the Hutus and vilified the targeted Tutsis.

Prominent among the hate singers was Simon Bikindi who was indicted in 2005 by the International Criminal Tribunal of Rwanda on six counts for crimes perpetrated during the genocide, including one count of "direct and public in-

citement to commit genocide". According to the indictment, during broadcasts on extremist Hutu radio stations — known collectively as Radio Rwanda — "appeals on RTLM to attack the enemy were often preceded or followed by songs written and performed by Simon Bikindi". His music worked as a recruitment tool as well. Deeply involved in Rwandan cultural life, Bikindi was the director of a popular ballet company where "succeeding to the mobilising effects of his music, members of the ballet were re-c--routed into the Interahamwe militia, underwent military training and went on to kill Tutsis".

It wasn't just the Tutsis who suffered this lyrical violence as Bikindi also targeted what he saw as 'moderate' Hutus in songs with titles like Njewe nanga Abahutu (I hate these Hutus). These Hutus were also targeted by Interahamwe and their allied mobs. Neo-Nazis and white supremacists in the Western world have also used hate music, known as "hatecore" in those circles, to whip up supporters and for recruitment. According to the racism watchdog organisation, the Southern Poverty Law Centre, National Socialist Black Metal "has proven a potent recruiting force, especially among youth".

That this genre of music has deadly consequences is an established fact: in 2012, Wade Michael Page murdered six people at a church in Wisconsin, before killing himself to avoid capture. It emerged that he had been active in the hatecore scene for over a decade, playing for and listening to bands like Jew Slaughter, Final Solution, and Ethnic Cleansing. In Israel today, as in Rwanda, we see the consequences of this type of 'entertainment' applied on an industrial scale. -- Courtesy Dawn

Studying habits



Neda Mulji

We've often heard human beings are creatures of habit and many of us have become habitual complainers. Each working day seems to be a burden, each conversation drags us into the alleyways of despair. Habits also tend to mushroom fast and furiously through society until they become traps. Few can resist the growing tide of habits. Studying can be inculcated as a healthy habit in children; yet, we often see students resisting it, perhaps because it is presented as a chore.

A departure from habits, which become a comfort zone for many, would need some conscious forays into planning, reading, implementation. This brings us back to the question: what is our education system really teaching our children? A school leader sighed helplessly during a conversation: "Let's face it, our children don't read and they won't." Why do we give up so quickly? And how exactly will our children develop a growth mindset, ideals, dreams and perspectives without reading? How will they sustain professional careers without consciously reading to develop skills, learn and implement goals?

We often talk about 21st-century skills but choose to fester in our last century mindsets. There isn't much change in our classic brick-and-mortar schools in the last perhaps 50 years and students are still seen striving for grades, not thriving in their passion to study. If studying habits could be inculcated as

something to be proud of, we would find more students being driven by internal motivation.

Educators, for example, hope that they can teach creativity and critical thinking, and enable students to learn through collaboration and communication. Yet, there is little opportunity or expertise in classrooms to bring these wonderful skills into play. Most teachers find themselves racing against time and, in doing so, fall back on their default habit of reading to the children, explaining, paraphrasing and translating. The students have little agency in what they learn and how they get to practise it.

In a world where students get the immersive experience of being actors and players in their digital video-gaming experiences, we cannot expect them to turn into still and patient auditory learners in class. Not only the curriculum but also teaching practices require a shift towards replicating immersive learning experiences in class where students get an opportunity to lead, learn, argue, play and compete. We see very young children buying video games and diving deep into playing the very same day — they don't need any guidance to unravel even the most complex game. They teach themselves as they are motivated to do so.

Reading can do so. Reading is a motivating, immersive experience just like video games, especially if students are given digital opportunities. Where that isn't possible, involving children in reading groups, with hands-on projects related to books may be a good starting point to motivate primary-level students. Giving up on reading as a habit isn't an option as it is not only a skill for life, but also critical as a job requirement.

The habit of not reading or studying only for exams may be difficult to break but the investment of time and effort in developing good reading habits can pay dividends for life. For example, many students view reading and studying as a time-consuming, complaint-worthy activity that they have come to resist and resent. If we could motivate students to study and enjoy it exactly as they enjoy video gaming, there would be no pressure or reasons to complain. Studying habits develop as a proxy to strong reading skills. Most parents have fallen into the trap of coaxing and cajoling their children into studying, particularly memorising for tests and exams. Much of the learnt material is discarded from memory soon after the assessments.

For long-term sustained achievement, studying can be skillfully intertwined in the students' daily habits, especially if they are motivated by an internal drive. Much of that drive comes from enjoying the content, engaging with it beyond the classroom, and learning to experience studying, not as a chore but as necessary building blocks to growth and success. If these building blocks are ignored at the primary levels, students get into a firefighting mode at the secondary level where they cram the material before every exam which is not only distressful, but also sets them up for failure.

Excellence is often the result of consistent habits that are contributing to success, not short-term achievement based on a firefighting attempt at getting through exams. It's time to revisit the habits that our students have developed over time. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Belt and Road (Pakistan) Center launched to empower Pak-Changshu cooperation

BEIJING (APP): The Belt and Road (Pakistan) Center was officially launched in Changshu, China.

A delegation led by Gohar Ejaz, Minister of Commerce, attended the launching ceremony and had a meeting with Qin Meng, the mayor of Changshu city.

"Changshu has experienced rapid economic development in the past decades, consistently ranking among the top four counties in China. Numerous Fortune 500 companies have settled and established factories in Changshu, with their products exported worldwide," stated Qin Meng.

"We hope to have a

better platform between Pakistan and China to promote exchanges and economic cooperation. The launch of the Belt and Road (Pakistan) Center which took place on 14th December will be a platform to provide comprehensive services for economic and trade activities, opening up new prospects for China-Pakistan cooperation."

The Belt and Road (Pakistan) Center in Changshu, China, is established with the support of the embassies and consulates of 29 Belt and Road countries, including Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, China Economic Net (CEN) reported. The center will

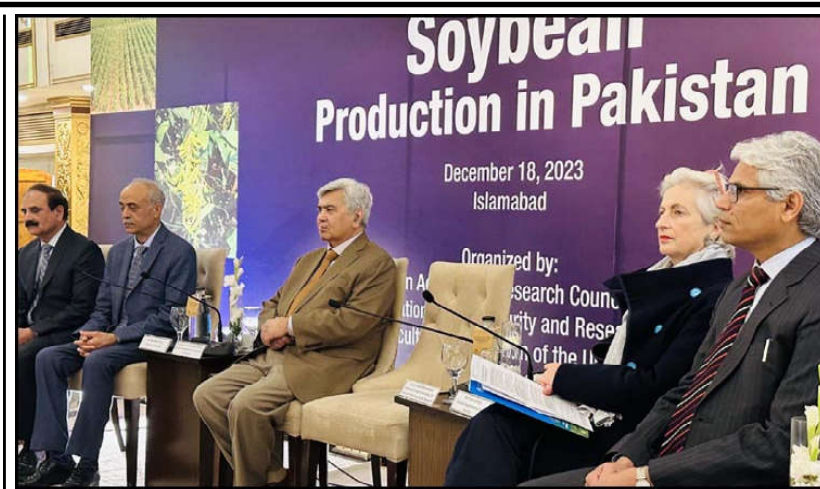
provide information and communication channels, organize regular economic and trade forums, and provide offline matchmaking and transaction services for enterprises of China and cooperating countries. Additionally, the center will create an entrepreneurial support platform specifically for overseas students studying in China, offering an excellent entrepreneurial environment and professional services.

Gohar Ejaz highly praised Changshu's achievements in economic and social development and expressed great anticipation for its future cooperation.

Rupee on recovery path; gains 05 paisa against Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Monday witnessed the 5th consecutive recovery session as it gained 05 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs283.20 against the previous day's closing of Rs283.25. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs 283.2and Rs286 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by Rs2.03 to close at Rs 309.35 against the last day's closing of Rs311.38, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen came down by 01 paisa and closed at Rs1.98; whereas a decrease of Rs2.02 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs359.53 compared to the last closing of Rs361.55.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Food Security & research Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik sitting on stage during the National Workshop on Soybean Production in Pakistan. Country Representative of FAO Ms. Florence Roll is also present.

Inflow of remittances thru exchange companies rises by 10 to 15 percent

ISLAMABAD (APP): General Secretary of the Exchange Companies Association of Pakistan (ECAP), Zafar Paracha, in a statement on Monday, said that the inflow of remittances into the country through exchange companies has seen a rise of 10 to 15% following the recent crackdown. Paracha said the crackdown launched by authorities has proved to be the most effective tool to bolster Pakistan's foreign reserves, said a press release issued

here on Monday. "We've seen a substantial rise in remittances flowing into the country through exchange companies, whose daily exchange values have been increased to \$50 million after the recent crackdown that helped us recover more than \$900 million in just a couple of months from the culprits dealing in the black market," he added.

The black market forex trade, or, in other words, remittances flowing

into the country through unregulated money operators like hawala and hundi, has caused a massive loss of more than \$4 billion to Pakistan in FY23. Its foreign reserves plummeted from \$12.9 billion to an alarming \$12.6 billion and are even decreasing further due to the black-market flow of remittances. "The ongoing countrywide crackdown against unlawful money operators gives hope to the nation's depleting foreign reserves."

Jawad meets President ECOSOC in Riyadh

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Jawad Sohrah Malik, on Monday engaged in a significant meeting with President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations Ambassador Paula Narvez.

The dialogue aimed at expanding the framework to enable women to participate freely as overseas workers. Ambassador Paula Narvez commended the dedicated efforts of Jawad Sohrah Malik in advancing these crucial agendas.

Gold rates up by Rs.400

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs400 and was sold at Rs 217,200 on Monday compared to its sale at Rs 216,800 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs 1,543 to Rs 186,214 from Rs 185,871 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs 170,696 from Rs 170,382, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram Silver remained stagnant at Rs 2,670 and 2,289.09 respectively.

SBP Governor calls on CM Punjab

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Jameel Ahmad called on Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi here on Monday. Prevailing economic situation, matters relating to the Bank of Punjab and the Punjab Provincial Cooperative Bank were discussed during the meeting.

CM Naqvi expressed his commitment to increasing production by implementing measures such as providing subsidies and soft loans to the farmers. Recognizing the need to alleviate the financial burden on small-scale farmers, he emphasized that fostering higher production is

paramount. The anticipated positive outcomes include widespread benefits from enhanced economic activities in the agricultural and other sectors, he noted.

The CM also highlighted the significance of achieving record cotton production in Punjab, projecting substantial savings of two billion dollars in foreign exchange. The CM pointed out that the rice export from Punjab has exceeded two billion dollars as the provincial government is following a policy of providing comprehensive facilities to investors and industrialists, foreseeing positive ramifications in the form of a thriving stock exchange.



LAHORE: Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Jameel Ahmad called on Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi.

Minister says: Punjab govt takes measures to resolve problems of business community

Independent Report
SIALKOT: Provincial Minister for Industries, Commerce, Investment, Skills Development/ Energy and Agriculture Punjab SM Tanveer has said that the Punjab government has introduced business-friendly facilities to resolve the problems of business community. The establishment of Business Facilitation Centers is a link of this chain, he added.

Policies will be formulated in consultation with all stakeholders to increase exports and strengthen the economy, he said and added that business activities will be promoted and the wheel of economy will move forward.

He expressed these views while addressing the meeting with the officials of different trade associations in Sialkot. SM Tanveer said that the business community has to play its role to get the country out of economic challenges. He said that the business community of Sialkot is a role model for other business communities of the country. He said that Sialkot is earning valuable foreign exchange for the country by exporting 3 billion dollars annually.



SAPM Jawad Sohrah Malik meets with President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at Global Labour Market Conference (GLMC) in Riyadh, KSA.

Steel industrialists demand withdrawal of PHL surcharge to boost industry

ISLAMABAD (APP): The steel industrialists on Monday demanded the withdrawal of the Power Holding Limited (PHL) surcharge to boost the industry and for playing a large role in the growth of the country's industry.

A delegation of Pakistan Association of Large Steel Producers (PALSP) led by its Secretary General Syed Wajid I. Bukhari visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and

Industry (ICCI) to highlight the issues being faced by the large steel producers due to the levy of PHL surcharge and other taxes on the electricity bills and demanded that the NEPRA should withdraw this surcharge to save the steel industry from collapse, said a press release issued here.

Khalid Javed, Nasir Khan, Dawood Khan, Javed Iqbal, Raza Farid, and others were in the delegation.

PPP, ANP, QWP discuss seat adjustment with JUI-F

PESHAWAR (INP): The delegations of Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Awami National Party (ANP), and Quami Watan Party (QWP) visited Mufti Mahmood Markaz, the provincial secretariat of JUI-F and discussed seat adjustment in the forthcoming general elections with it, said Abdul Jalil Jan, the provincial spokesman of JUI-F here on Monday.

The delegation of PPP consisted of former provincial president, Syed Zahir Ali Shah, former KP Assembly Speaker Karamatullah Khan Chagarmati, Amjad Khan Afridi, Malik Tehmash Khan, and Misbahuddin

while the delegation of ANP consisted of the provincial president, Aimal Wali Khan, Senator Hidayatullah Khan, Khadim Hussain and Shakeel Umerzai.

Similarly, a delegation of QWP comprised of its provincial president Sikandar Hayat Khan Sherpao, Dr Farooq, Aad Afridi, and Fayyaz Khan also visited the provincial headquarters of JUI-F and held detailed negotiations regarding seat adjustment. During the negotiation team of JUI-F was represented by its provincial ameer, Senator Maulana Atta-ur-Rehman, Maulana Atta-ul-Haq Darwais, Senator Dilawar Khan.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi chaired a special meeting in which approval for desilting 15300 miles long canals accorded.

CM approves desilting of 15300 miles long canals in province

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi chaired a special meeting in which approval for desilting 15300 miles long canals was accorded.

A committee comprising Chairman P&D, Secretaries of Irrigation, Agriculture and Mines has been constituted to formulate the mode of desilting.

CM Mohsin Naqvi stated that water will be

provided to 3-4 lacs acres of land with the completion of desilting campaign across the province.

Secretary Irrigation Wasif Khurshed while giving a briefing on the desilting campaign to be carried out after ten years apprised that the canals of Mangla Dam will be closed down from 26th December to 13th January in the first phase. The canals of Tarbela Dam will be closed down from

13th January to 31st January in the second phase. The desilting campaign will be launched from 26th December in three phases after the closure of canals in Punjab.

The campaign of desilting will be formally launched from the first week of January across the province.

LIMS will provide a satellite image of the desilting situation across the province. The data

will be uploaded on the Irrigation Monitoring App at 10:am daily.

The police will register a case and initiate an action on finding an illegal water theft channel during the desilting campaign. Provincial Minister Amir Mir, Chairman P&D, Additional IG, Secretary Agriculture, Secretary Information, Secretary C&W, Commissioner and other officials attended the meeting.

KP CM approves appointment of BoGs of nine MTI hospitals

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister has acceded to the appointment of new chairmen and members of board of governors (BoGs) of nine MTI hospitals of the province after an approval of the Election Commission of Pakistan.

According to the notification of KP Establishment department, the appointment of the BoGs would be for a period of three years, adding that Ghulam Qadir Khan has been appointed as chairman of BoGs Hayatabad Medical Complex Peshawar, while Professor Mahfooz Hussain, Akhtar Naveed, Dil Roz and

Dr Muhammad Ali Chohan nominated are the members. Similarly, Malik Mushtaq Ahmad Dar has been appointed as chairman BoGs MTI-MMM DI Khan while Dr Muhammad Iqbal, Khalid Mahmood, Samin ullah Khan, Musa Khan and Esa Khan were appointed as the members.

Prof Dr Ejaz Hassan Khan was appointed as chairman of BoGs MTI-Bacha Khan Medical College, Swabi while Prof Mohammad Ishaq Khattak, Sher Bahadur Khan, Prof Noor Jehan, Muhammad Irfan and Prof Sajjad Muhammad Khan were appointed as the members.



FAISALABAD: A group photo of Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Faisalabad Maqsood Ahmad Lone along with Prof Dr Zill-i-Huma Nazli Vice Chancellor (VC) Government College Women University Faisalabad (GCWUF) with other officials after distributing certificates among women police on their completion of WOW (Women on Wheels) training program.

Work on 36 city roads to be started soon: Dr Jamal

RAWALPINDI (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare and Population Welfare Dr Jamal Nasir on Monday said that the repair and carpeting work of 36 roads including Asghar Mall Road would be started soon.

He said this while meeting a delegation of Anjuman Tajran Asghar Mall Road led by General Secretary of Markazi Anjuman Tajran Tahir Taj Bhatti.

He said that work on these projects would be completed at the earliest with "Mohsin Speed".

Dr Jamal said that a Business Facilitation Center would be set up soon in Rawalpindi to facilitate the business community of the district, adding representatives of 20 federal and provincial departments would be present in the facilitation centre, and all necessary NOCs for investment would be provided within two weeks.

Maulana Ashrafi meets KP governor

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Representative to the Prime Minister of Pakistan for Middle East and Interfaith Harmony, Maulana Tahir Ashrafi here on Monday met with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali at Governor's House. At the meeting, both discussed the security conditions and interfaith harmony in KP. The governor and Maulana Ashrafi also strongly denounced the atrocities of Israeli army in Gaza and the genocide of Palestinians. Ashrafi apprised the governor regarding steps taken for the interfaith harmony and welfare of Pakistanis residing in the Middle East.

Minister for collective efforts for betterment of healthcare system

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Health Minister Prof. Dr. Javed Akram has urged the stakeholders of healthcare sector to unite for the betterment of patients.

Speaking at a risk-based inspection training seminar hosted by the Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (PPMA) at a local hotel on Monday, the minister shared that he had faced terrorism-related cases in pursuit of enhancing the healthcare system. Emphasizing the significance of taking risks for success, he underscored

that patients held the utmost importance for him.

Expressing concern over the absence of a biotechnology plant and unsafe industrial practices in the country, Dr. Javed Akram advocated for a revolution in the country's biotechnology sector. He reiterated the need to transform the field of biotechnology within the nation. The minister stressed that the Drugs Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) should monitor both Good Clinical Practices (GCP) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).

LHC moved for nullification of mdcat final merit list

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has been requested to nullify the final merit list of mdcat.

The petition against final merit list of mdcat came up for hearing Monday.

The petitioner said marks were given to students of 2021 against rules in merit list.

Students of 2022 and 2023 have been affected by this decision.

The court has sought reply from university of health sciences and others with reference to final merit list of mdcat.

WSSP Officers get training in 'Asset Management, Energy Optimization'

PESHAWAR (APP): The Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP) completed a three-month online training programme on Monday in 'Asset Management and Energy Optimization' for 19 officers and staff members.

The training was conducted in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and German experts provided online instruction to the officers. During the training course, participants were educated on various aspects of solid waste

management, tube wells, and efficient energy utilization through 12 modules. After each module, participants were tested, followed by a comprehensive examination. Those who passed the exam received certificates. The primary objective of this training programme is to enhance operational efficiency and ensure the effective utilization of resources to reduce costs.

Zameer-ul-Hasan, General Manager of HR and PMER, distributed certificates to the officers who completed the training.

International News

Gaza's Al Shifa hospital a 'bloodbath' says WHO

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Gaza's Al Shifa hospital is providing only basic trauma stabilization, has no blood for transfusions and hardly any staff to care for a constant flow of patients, the World Health Organization said on Sunday.

After a UN visit to deliver medicines and surgical supplies, the team described the emergency department in the enclave's main health facility as resembling a "bloodbath".

The WHO said there were hundreds of wounded patients, with new ones arriving by the minute and trauma injuries being stitched on the floor, with almost no pain management available. Only four hospi-

tals of 24 working in north Gaza before the war with Israel began have even partial service, and three of those are barely functioning, the WHO said.

The WHO said it was urgently gathering information at the Kamal Adwan hospital, where Gazan authorities said Israeli forces this week used a bulldozer to smash through the perimeter of a site Israel said was used by Hamas fighters. The group which governs Gaza has denied using the Kamal Adwan or other hospitals for militant activities.

Israel has also said Al Shifa, which it had occupied earlier in the war, had been used by Hamas.

Tens of thousands of Palestinians are believed to

remain in north Gaza, after Israeli forces pushed most of the population to the south during the first days of the bombing campaign and ground war that began after the Oct. 7 Hamas attacks on Israel.

Gazan health authorities under the Hamas government say that more than 50,000 Palestinians have been injured during the Israeli operation, and 19,000 killed. The WHO said "tens of thousands" of displaced people were using the Al Shifa hospital for shelter, describing severe shortages of safe water and food.

Gaza is home to 2.3 million people, most of whom have been displaced from their homes by the offensive.



German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius and Lithuanian Defence Minister Arvydas Anusauskas sign an agreement for further deployment of thousands of German troops to the Baltic country in Vilnius, Lithuania.

Iran petrol stations hit by cyberattack

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Iran's Oil Minister Javad Owji on Monday confirmed that a nationwide disruption to petrol stations was caused by a cyberattack.

A hacking group that Iran accuses of having links to Israel claimed it carried out the attack which disrupted services at petrol stations across the country on Monday, Iranian state TV and Israeli local media reported.

Owji had earlier told Iranian state TV that services had been disrupted at about 70% of Iran's petrol stations and that

outside interference was a possible cause. He later said 1,650 petrol stations were operational. The ministry supervises 3,800 petrol stations.

Iran's state TV news said a group called Gonjeshke Darande or "Predatory Sparrow" had claimed it was behind the disruption. Israeli local media outlets also reported the claim.

"This cyberattack was carried out in a controlled manner to avoid potential damage to emergency services," the group said in a statement on Telegram.

More than 300 rescued from floodwaters in northeast Australia

Monitoring Desk
BRISBANE: More than 300 people were rescued overnight from floodwaters in northeast Australia, with dozens of residents clinging to roofs, officials said on Monday. Cairns Airport was closed on Monday due to flooding and authorities were concerned that the city of 160,000 people will lose drinking water. While rain was easing in Cairns, severe weather warnings were in place in nearby Port Douglas, Daintree, Cooktown.

Egypt's Sisi sweeps to third term as president with 89.6pc of vote

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has swept to a third, six-year term as Egypt's president, winning 89.6% of votes in an election in which he faced no serious challengers, the National Election Authority announced on Monday.

The election took place as Egypt struggles with a slow-burning economic crisis and tries to manage the risk of spillover from the war in Gaza, which borders Egypt's Sinai Peninsula.

Some voters said the eruption of conflict in Gaza had encouraged them to vote for Sisi, who has long presented himself as a bul-

work of stability in a volatile region - an argument that has also proved effective with Gulf and Western allies providing financial support to his government.

Voting in Egypt was held over three days on Dec. 10-12, with the state and tightly controlled domestic media pushing hard to boost turnout, which the election authority said had reached 66.8% - above the 41% recorded at the last presidential election in 2018. The election featured three other candidates, none of them high profile. The most prominent potential challenger halted his run in October, saying officials and thugs had targeted his supporters.



Bulldozer tracks are seen in the area where tents were erected outside the Kamal Adwan Hospital by displaced people. Palestinian authorities have accused Israel of razing the area as people slept.

Rare snowfall in southern China as deep freeze grips the north

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: The cold weather sweeping China brought rare snowfall on Monday as far south as the province of Guangdong, while temperatures in the chilly north plunged to near historic lows for the month.

In a week of unexpectedly frigid weather, temperatures have fallen to lows below zero in northern areas, disrupting road, rail and air transport and even causing a brake failure in a commuter train in Beijing, the capital. Forecasters early in November had predicted a warmer winter this year due to the El Nino phenomenon,

while warning that temperatures could fluctuate after one of the warmest Octobers in decades.

On Monday in Guangdong, where snow is generally limited to the northernmost areas, snowfall blanketed the top of a mountain in a city just 80 km (50 miles) north of the provincial capital Guangzhou by the coast. A low of 8 degrees Celsius (46.4 Fahrenheit) was forecast for Guangzhou, compared to the province's typical early winter temperatures that hover in the double digits.



State Emergency Service personnel evacuating people from flood waters in far north Queensland, Australia following heavy rain and flooding from ex-tropical cyclone Jasper.

Thousands flee as Sudan's army, paramilitary forces battle for aid hub

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces battled the army outside the central city of Wad Madani, pressing an attack that has opened a new front in the eight-month-old war and forced thousands to flee, witnesses said. Crowds of people - many of whom had taken refuge in the city from violence in the capital Khartoum - could be seen packing up belongings and leaving on foot in video posted on social media.

"The war has followed us to Madani so I am looking for a bus so me and my

family can flee," 45-year-old Ahmed Salih said. "We are living in hell and there is no one to help us." He said he planned to head south to Sennar.

Sudan's army, which has held the city since the start of the conflict, launched air strikes on RSF forces to the east of the city, the capital of Gezira state, as it tried to push back the assault that started on Friday, witnesses said.

The RSF responded with artillery and RSF reinforcements were seen moving in the direction of the fighting.

British MP Layla Moran's family trapped in Gaza church

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: British politician Layla Moran in a series of tweets raised alarm about Israeli attacks on a church in Gaza City, where members of her family have been trapped along with hundreds of others for several days and where two Christian women were shot dead by an Israeli sniper on Saturday.

Separately, Pope Francis on Sunday deplored the killing of the two women, and once again suggested Israel was using "terrorism" tactics in Gaza.

There are reports that nearly 300 people, including children and the sick, are seeking shelter in the Holy Family Catholic Parish.

The two Christian women, identified as Nahida and Samar, were shot dead by an Israeli sniper while inside the grounds of the church, with reports of seven others wounded.

"I am desperately worried for my extended family in Gaza City,

Bulldozers crush Gazans sheltering outside hospital

Monitoring Desk
GAZA: The Israeli military has bulldozed displaced Palestinians who were camped outside the Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza, killing scores of civilians, including women and children, who were sleeping in their tents when the demolition occurred.

In what was once the courtyard of the Kamal Adwan Hospital in the northern Gaza city of Beit Lahiya, Palestinians wade through the rubble,

searching for corpses, AFP reported.

The sound of one of them sobbing breaks out while he wraps a body to prepare for burial.

In a statement on Saturday, Hamas accused Israeli troops of having carried out a "horrific massacre" inside the hospital where they said Israeli forces "fired at patient rooms", arrested staff, and destroyed tents of displaced people with bulldozers.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi addressing the event to celebrate Award Winning Project Green Presidency, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President for improving energy efficiency to curb climate change impacts

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday called for improving energy efficiency, adopting sustainable practices, and changing attitudes and priorities to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change.

"Transitioning to renewable energy sources, improving energy efficiency, and reforestation are key to curb the adverse impacts on the planet's climate and ecosystems," the president said while addressing an event with respect to a project "Green Presidency of Pakistan" here at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

He said the modern world with changing priorities and attitudes, was becoming dangerous which must be stopped to curb the adverse impacts of climate change. The Green Presidency of Pakistan is a flagship initiative under which a one-megawatt solar PV system was installed, along with effective implementation of energy conservation and efficiency measures. The president said the initiative would result in a reduction in energy usage by Aiwan-e-Sadr by 42.5%.

This energy savings is equivalent to a reduction of 3,144 tonnes of greenhouse gases or a plantation of 142,090 mature trees. "It is a matter of great pleasure that, out of 129 projects from around the world, the Green Presidency Project of Pakistan has been conferred with the prestigious award of "International Energy Project of the Year 2023", he added.

He also expressed gratitude to the Association of Energy Engineers USA for recognizing with the esteemed Best International Energy Project of the Year Award for 2023. He also called for promoting peace in the world and discouraging wars that were a big cause of deviating the world's focus on mitigating global warming.

He said despite contributing less than 1% in carbon emission, Pakistan suffered huge losses in last year's devastating floods that occurred due to global warming and climate change. He recalled that by mid 20th century, the people were conscious about utilizing the natural resources despite abundant resources, but now the priorities had been changed, the needs and wants had been mixed due to which they started using abundant resources for their ease.

He said the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had also taught for consuming the natural resources with utmost care by demonstrating the same in his life. The president pointed out that the world was witnessing a much-needed transition towards clean energy in the wake of climate change. "The need for plentiful, sustainable energy that doesn't disrupt the delicate balance of the Earth's atmosphere may be the single most important issue facing this generation."

He said the decisions to be made and the technologies to be developed over the next few decades would have profound implications for geopolitics, wildlife, food production, and almost every sphere of human endeavor.

He maintained that stakeholders from a range of fields including the architectures could play their role in efficient energy conservation. Further he said the children should also be engaged to make them aware about the value of natural resources and impacts of climate change.

The new generation should also be taught this way, he added. Earlier the president gave away souvenirs to the project director, head of the project, and representatives of Engro.

Madad Ali overturns FDE's restrictions, empowering teachers to seek redressal at ministry

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhvi has stepped in to overturn restrictive measures imposed by the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) that hindered teachers and staff from approaching the offices of the Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training (MOFEPT). The FDE had issued a circular just days ago, asserting that seeking resolution from MOFEPT without prior permission was a violation of conduct rules, potentially leading to disciplinary action.

The circular, which raised concerns among educators, not only restricted staff from accessing the ministry but also warned of consequences if this directive was defied, even after work hours.

Principals were instructed to prevent their staff from approaching the ministry, creating an atmosphere of constraint and limiting avenues for issue resolution. However, responding promptly to the growing concerns, Education Minister Madad Ali Sindhvi took to Twitter, asserting that teachers and staff are indeed allowed to visit the Ministry for the submission and redressal of genuine and pressing issues, without compromising their official duties. In a tweet, he went on to emphasize that the FDE should have sought clearance from the ministry before issuing such a restrictive circular, questioning its validity and necessity.

Minister's intervention is being widely appreciated as a step toward empowering teachers and recognizing their crucial role in educating the young generation. A teacher told APP on the condition of anonymity, hailed the minister's decision and noted that this move opens a direct channel for teachers to voice their concerns, particularly regarding issues such as time scale and rental ceiling problems. He expressed optimism that the Minister's involvement would foster a closer connection between teachers and the ministry, demonstrating that the minister is a public figure committed to addressing the concerns of educators.

Election Commission contempt case: LHC declines plea to immediately halt Imran's jail trial

LAHORE (APP): A full bench of the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday declined a plea to immediately halt the jail trial of Imran Khan, former chairman of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), in the Election Commission contempt case.

The three-member bench, headed by Justice Aalia Neelum, heard Imran Khan's petition against his jail trial in the contempt case.

At the start of proceedings, Justice Aalia Neelum questioned Imran Khan's counsel in connection with the office's objection about missing certified copies in the petition.

In response, the counsel, Ishtiaq A. Khan, clarified that they had not received certified copies but had obtained copies from the website.

To which, Justice Aalia Neelum commented that the case could not advance until the office objection was resolved and questioned the court's jurisdiction to hear the matter.

At this, Imran's counsel asserted that the LHC possessed the authority to hear this case. He further submitted that the LHC Rawalpindi bench had forwarded an identical case to the principal seat for hearing while replying to the court suggestion for approaching the Islamabad.

PTA launches 'cyber security awareness week' to safeguard cyber threats

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director General (DG) Cyber Vigilance Pakistan Telecom Authority (PTA) Muhammad Mukaram Khan Monday on Cyber Security awareness week stressed employees and general public for taking proactive steps in safeguarding their digital lives, assets, and sensitive mobile data information.

Talking to PTV news channel said he said that cyber security Awareness weeks to share its leading cyber security experience and success stories with the public with its social media awareness drives which would help for maintaining the safety of the digital space and protecting institutions as well as individuals from cyber-crime.

As part of this awareness-raising initiative, PTA is encouraging small to medium-sized businesses, individuals, and families to use strong passwords, to turn on multi-factor authentication, to be wary of unsolicited messages and report them, and to always keep their software updated. He emphasized the importance of including cyber-bullying, phishing, online fraud and safe practices on social media, as well as privacy and personal data protection, in the campaign.

Cyber-security awareness week 2023 is a PTA initiative to enhance cyber awareness among consumers related to government and private organizations, he added. The campaign will be executed on PTA's social media platforms from December 18 to 24 and will feature bilingual content in the form of GIFs, short videos, and static images.

NADRA rejects reports of blocking CNICs of PTI leaders

PESHAWAR (INP): National Database Registration Authority (NADRA) has rejected the media reports regarding blocking CNICs of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders.

The spokesman of NADRA said on Monday that neither the authority has taken any such action nor any court has issued directives in this regard.

He made it clear that blocking CNIC was a complete legal procedure.

The NADRA has not taken any action in this connection, neither the interior ministry has issued directives to block CNICs of PTI leaders, therefore, spreading rumours should be avoided, the spokesman urged. It should be mentioned here that earlier a section of media reported that NADRA has blocked the PTI leaders who were declared absconders in May 9 riots cases.

ECP reveals updated voters' registration statistics

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has unveiled the comprehensive data, outlining the total number of registered voters across the nation.

The ECP conveyed that 53.87 percent of the country's voters are male, while 46.13 percent are female.

The ECP's commitment to transparency is evident in this disclosure, providing citizens with accurate electoral information. According to the latest data, the total number of registered voters now exceeds 128.5 million.

Within this demographic, over 69.2 million individuals identify as male, constituting a significant portion of the electorate.

PTI intra party election: EC reserves judgment

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission (EC) has reserved judgment in PTI intra party election case.

During the hearing of the case barrister Ali Zafar requested the EC to reject the petitions against intra party election of PTI.

A five members bench of EC presided over by the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) took up the petitions for hearing with reference to intra party elections of PTI Monday.

Chairman PTI Barrister Ali Gauhar, Barrister Ali Zafar, Niaz Ullah Niazi, Akbar S Babar and other petitioners appeared before EC.

PTI counsel said when the people are elected unopposed then elections are not needed. Our office bearers were elected unopposed. No procedure is there for intra party election in any law.

Member commission remarked schedule can be given in intra party election.



BEIJING: Ambassador of Pakistan to China Khaili Hashmi speaking at an Investment Opportunities Conference organised by Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing.

Court will pass order about delimitations as per SC directives: IHC CJ

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday declared that it would pass orders on petitions about delimitations keeping in view the directive of the Supreme Court.

Chief Justice Aamer Farooq heard the cases pertaining the delimitations in various constituencies.

During the course of proceedings, law officer of the Election Commission of Pakistan Zehran Anees informed the bench that the top court had declared all the complaints pertaining to delimitations filed after December 14, as ineffective.

The chief justice said that he would do consultation with other judges of the high court, and issue orders keeping in view the directives of the top court.

Meanwhile, a single member bench comprising Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir issued notices to the ECP in petitions against delimitations of two constituencies including PS-41 and PS-42 of District Sanghar.

Nawaz Sharif says: PML-N always abided by law despite excesses

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Supreme Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif said on Monday that the country would have been in a much better condition if the development process of his government had not been stopped.

Addressing a PML-N parliamentary board meeting here, he said his government had built motorways, set up power generation plants, dams and many other projects of public welfare whereas in Karachi the drinking water project could not be completed unfortunately.

He said that when the PML-N was in power the world acknowledged that Pakistan would soon become an economic power.



HYDERABAD: Medical students hold protest in favor of their demands outside of HPC.

Ambassador Hashmi says: Pak, China focus on B2B cooperation, investment, technology transfer

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan Ambassador to China, Khalil ur Rahman said on Monday that engineering, construction, carbon neutrality, new energy, energy storage, mining development, green and sustainable development and other fields will be the key to future cooperation between Pakistan and China.

"Now we have entered the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), our focus is more on business-to-business cooperation, investment and technology transfer between the two countries, which is also in line with the vision of the leaders of the two countries," he said in his speech at the Pakistan-China Exchange Conference on Investment Opportunity held at the Pakistani Embassy in Beijing.

The conference was aimed at strengthening cooperation in engineering construction, carbon neutrality, new energy, mining and other fields.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakhtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party Mahmood Khan Achakzai meeting with Amir Jamali Ulema-e-Islam Maulana Fazlur Rehman.

SECP issues FAQs on category-wise voting for election of directors

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has issued a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding the concept of category-wise voting for the election of directors.

This concept was recently introduced through amendments in the Listed Companies (Code of Corporate Governance) 2019, said a press release issued here on Monday.

The introduction of category-wise voting aims to address practical challenges faced by listed companies in election of independent directors and female directors, ultimately promoting diversity on the boards of listed companies.

Following the regulatory amendments, SECP has issued FAQs to provide additional guidance to stakeholders and address common questions related to the implementation of this new concept. The FAQs explain important concepts such as the calculation of votes for each category, procedures for unopposed elections in a category etc.

These FAQs are expected to simplify the understanding of the regulatory context, address practical concerns, and facilitate the implementation of the category voting concept.

This initiative is anticipated to contribute to the promotion of best standards of corporate governance, ensuring diversity on the boards of listed companies, and encouraging greater inclusion of women.

The aforementioned FAQs are available on the SECP website for easy access and reference.



KARACHI: The participants of a 'Christmas Aman Rally' passing through Jackup line Road to culminate at Karachi Press Club (KPC).



BRUSSELS: Ambassador of Pakistan to European Union, Belgium and Luxembourg Anna Baloch visited Embassy of Kuwait in Brussels to offer condolence on the sad demise of His Royal Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, late Emir of Kuwait.

LHC orders release of Sher Afzal Marwat

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday ordered the release of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senior Vice President Sher Afzal Marwat.

Justice Shehram Sarwar Chaudhry passed the orders on a petition filed by Khalid Lateef Khan, the brother of Marwat, challenging his detention.

During the proceedings, Advocate Khawaja Mohsin Abbas submitted a reply on behalf of the caretaker Punjab government, wherein it was submitted that the Lahore deputy commissioner had issued a notification for detention of Sher Afzal Marwat and the petitioner should have approached the relevant forum first against it. The reply further requested to dismiss the petition.

However, the petitioner's counsel opposed the plea, submitting that the detention was illegal and unconstitutional.

SC neither makes rules for body search at airports nor seeks exemption: Spokesman

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court's spokesman on Monday clarified that neither the body search rule for the families of judges at airports was not made by the apex court nor its exemption sought. The Registrar had simply pointed out an anomaly, which was that the spouses of retired Supreme Court judges were exempt from body search but those of serving judges were not.

Addressing the Aviation, the letter further said, "Your letter while resolving the anomaly does not offer an explanation. And, neither the ASF nor the Government of Pakistan is concerned about the security breach."

It said, "The facts are that the coincidental timing of the letter, written 66 days ago, now coming into the public domain; immediately on Justice Isa's departure from Pakistan.

It said, "In the interest of full disclosure kindly also disclose the Registrar of the Supreme Court's letter of 21st September, 2023 to correct the misconceptions."

It said, "The body search exemption rule was not made by the Supreme Court nor was exemption sought. The Registrar had simply pointed out an anomaly, which was that the spouses of retired Supreme Court judges were exempt from body search but those of serving judges were not."

The spokesman, in a statement, said that a letter had been written to the Secretary Aviation and Director-General of the Airport Security Force.

The letter stated, "This is with reference to Aviation's letter of 12th October, 2023, which surprisingly found its way to the media immediately after Justice Qazi Faez Isa and his wife left Pakistan for Turkey during the Supreme Court's winter vacations."

It said, "In the interest of full disclosure kindly also disclose the Registrar of the Supreme Court's letter of 21st September, 2023 to correct the misconceptions."

Sanjrani felicitates leadership, people of Qatar on National Day

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani on Monday extended warm congratulations to the leadership and people of Qatar on the occasion of their National Day.

Commending the visionary and astute leadership of His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, the Amir of Qatar, and Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, he said that their unwavering commitment to progress and peace has garnered global admiration.

Sadiq Sanjrani said, Qatar's leadership has played a pivotal role in resolving longstanding global conflicts, notably in mitigating the Afghanistan crisis. In the face of the current escalation and humanitarian crisis arising from the barbaric Israeli bombing of Gaza, Qatar's exemplary efforts to bring about peace are unparalleled. Emphasizing the strong bonds of friendship between Pakistan and Qatar, rooted in shared religious, cultural and people-to-people ties.



KARACHI: Members of Christen Community are busy in shopping at Boheri Bazaar during preparation following the celebrations of Christmas in Provincial Capital.

PML-N believes in country's progress: Ahsan Iqbal

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Secretary General Ahsan Iqbal said on Monday that PML-N Quaid Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif had best record of serving the people of Sindh.

Talking to media here, he said that whenever Nawaz Sharif came to power he made unprecedented efforts to establish and maintain peace in Sindh. He said that in April 2022 a unity government was formed and it was not a political alliance. He said that unity government was made on one point agenda and that was to save the country from default.

Ahsan Iqbal said, "It is power of democracy that when it comes to national interest, difference of opinion never hinder parties to get together for country's betterment." He said all political parties would contest general elections with their own manifesto, adding that decision would be of people. He appealed to the people of Sindh to give a chance to the PML-N to serve them and the party would not disappoint them.