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DUBAI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar addresses a ceremony on Living Indus Initiative at COP-28 Pakistan Pavilion.

Adapting Indus Basin key to adapt Pakistan to climate change: PM

Kakar suggests that "we need a minimum indicative investment between US\$11 and US\$17 billion over the next 15 years to mobilize from the public sector, private sector, citizens, and communities."

DUBAI (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said on Sunday that adapting Pakistan to climate change was vital to adapting the Indus Basin to the impacts of climate change as the majority of the population was linked to the river.

He said Pakistan's climate challenge was primarily a water challenge that needed immediate action to be addressed.

Addressing an event on 'Living Indus Initiative' held here at the Pakistan

Pavilion at the venue of the United Nations' 28th Conference of Parties (COP 28), the prime minister said Pakistan was the 8th most vulnerable country in the world to the impacts of climate change.

He said Living Indus was an umbrella initiative aimed at restoring the ecological health of the Indus within the boundaries of Pakistan, which was most vulnerable to climate change.

He maintained that the government of Pakistan was

clear on its priorities with the Living Indus. "This umbrella initiative emerged from extensive consultation with stakeholders, resulting in a set of 25 living interventions that emphasize nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based adaptation approaches."

The prime minister said what was more important was that the Living Indus initiative sought to mobilize a moment that prepared and restored a healthy Indus for today and tomorrow.

"And we are here to collaborate and give voice to our rivers. The Indus River needs a voice, and we are here to give that voice. The industry feeds us, and if we do not take care of it, it will not be there to take care of us," he remarked.

This initiative, he said, suggested that "we need a minimum indicative investment between US\$11 and US\$17 billion over the next 15 years to mobilize from the public sector, private

Continued on page 2

Caretaker Govt mobilizing all available resources for welfare of persons with disabilities: Domki

Fare not to be charged to disabled persons on Green buses

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial government is mobilizing all available resources for welfare of the persons with disabilities in the province.

This was stated by the caretaker Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Domki while addressing a gathering arranged by the Islamic Relief organization and social welfare department here at the Balochistan Boy Scouts Association headquarter on Sunday.

Prominent among those present on the occasion were Advisor to care-

taker Chief Minister, Ms Shania Khan, Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat, Director General social welfare, Tariq Javed Mengal were present on the occasion.

A large number of the disabled persons as well as representatives of the civil society and high ups of different departments were present on the occasion.

The Chief Minister on the occasion announced to exempt the disabled persons from fare in the Green bus service running in Quetta.

He said that no fare would be charged from the

persons with disabilities in the Green buses.

He said that implementation on the quota of jobs allocated for disabled persons would be ensured besides providing other necessary facilities to them in line with the country's and international laws.

He noted with concern that 10 to 12 percent suffer from different disabilities, and these have great importance for us and are near to our heart.

The Chief Minister stressed that we have to

Continued on page 2

Firing on passenger bus leaves 9 dead, several injured in Chilas

Monitoring Desk

CHILAS: Unidentified attackers opened fire on a passenger bus on Karakoram Highway in Gilgit-Baltistan's Chilas city, leaving at least nine dead and 20 injured.

The firing led to a collision between the bus and a truck. Resultantly, the truck caught fire.

The bus was traveling from Ghizar district of Gilgit-Baltistan to Rawalpindi, the police added.

Diamer DC Captain (ret'd) Arif Ahmad told reporters the injured and bodies were shifted to a nearby hospital. "An unfortunate incident occurred in which a cowardly act was done, targeting a bus that set off

from Gahkuch in Ghizer."

DC Ahmad said the bus bearing registration number BLN-4647 was owned by a private company. He said the "cowards" indiscriminately fired on the bus. "There are a total of eight bodies, out of which five have been identified and the rest are under process," he added.

Diamer police on Sunday lodged a first information report (FIR) and arrested six suspects in connection with an attack on an Islamabad-bound bus in Gilgit-Baltistan's (GB) Chilas a day earlier.

The official said all entry and exit points of GB had been closed and security in the region was on high alert.



ISLAMABAD: Group photo of Federal Minister Madad Ali Sindhi and Caretaker Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi along with others during the Sindhi Cultural Day event organized by Soormiyun at PNCA.

Governor for increasing quota of jobs for persons with disabilities by 10 percent in Govt departments

Malik Abdul Wali Kakar asks to shift offices related to services and dealings with the PWDs in government buildings on ground floor in order to facilitate them; announces to open doors of Governor House for PWDs

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Kakar has called for increasing the quota of jobs for the persons with disabilities (PWDs) in all federal and provincial government departments at least 10 percent so as to fully benefit from their special capabilities.

The Governor was addressing the ceremony arranged marking the International Day of persons with disabilities at a local hotel here on Sunday.

The caretaker Minister Information, Jan Achakzai, former Federal Minister and Senator (Ret'd) Mrs. Roshan Khurshid Bharucha, Chairperson of Balochistan

Commission on Status of Women, Ms. Fauzia Shaheen, persons with different disabilities besides representatives of the civil society and other concerned government high ups.

The event was organized by a welfare organization serving for rights of the PWDs, Breaking Barriers.

The Governor Balochistan said that it is very important to address the issues being faced by the persons with disabilities. In this regard, the offices located in the government buildings dealing with their issues and services should be shifted on the ground floor to immediately remove the complaints and facilities the disabled per-

sons, he pleaded. He said that it is also very important to behave well with the special persons for formation of the civilized society.

Addressing the PWDs, the Governor said that he wants to bring the issues under discussion today which they face in practical life.

He said that he have opened doors of Governor House for resolving the issues of persons with disabilities.

The Governor said that he personally knows that the whole family of disabled persons suffer due to their presence, so it is commendable the role played by their families and other related people.

Sindh's diversity its strength, not weakness: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Sunday that Sindh has been a multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-ethnic unit for centuries.

Delivering his speech at the Sindhi Cultural Day ceremony here, he said Sindh had united different religions and races from different regions of the world.

"Sindh's diversity is its strength, not its weakness," Murtaza Solangi remarked.

The Sindhi Cultural Day this year was linked

with the celebration of Sindhi women's event, Murtaza Solangi said.

The minister said that humility and resilience were embedded in Sindhi culture like steel, which could be moulded but not broken.

He said it was significant that in the poetry of great Sindhi poet Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, seven ragas were named after women.

From Bhittai to Sheikh Ayaz, poets had highlighted the role of Sindhi women, Murtaza Solangi main-

Continued on page 2

Dr. Nadeem meets UAE Health Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan had a special meeting with the Minister for Health of the United Arab Emirates, Abdul Rahman bin Muhammad Al Awas, in Dubai on the sidelines of the COP 28 UN Climate change summit.

During the meeting, Dr Nadeem invited him to attend Global Health Summit in Islamabad.

He congratulated his counterpart on the successful conduct of COP 28.

Dr. Nadeem Jan also briefed his counterpart on the ongoing reform agenda in the health sector of Pakistan.

The minister informed his counterpart about the Global Health Security Summit to be held in January 2024. The minister informed that initially the Global Health Security Summit was scheduled to be held in December 2023.

Senior US officials to visit Pak to bolster bilateral talks

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan will witness back-to-back visits by senior US officials starting today, the foreign office spokesperson confirmed on Sunday.

"Pakistan and the United States continue to hold consultations on a range of issues," foreign office spokesperson Murtaz Zahra Baloch said in a statement. "To advance these consultations, exchange of visits also takes place."

Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration Julieta Valls Noyes is scheduled to visit the country from December 4 to 6, she said.

FO spokesperson said that Special Representative for Afghanistan Thomas West will be visiting Islamabad from December 7 to 9 while Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Pakistan Elizabeth Horst will pay a visit from December 9 to 12.

"These visits are a part of the ongoing negotiations with the US on several issues, including the situation in Afghanistan."



DUBAI: Federal Minister of Health Dr. Nadeem Jan had a special meeting with the Minister of Health of the United Arab Emirates, Abdul Rahman bin Muhammad Al Awas, on the sidelines of COP 28 UN Climate change summit.

Two Levies officials killed in exchange of fire with accused

CM grieved over martyrdom of two Levies cops in Duki

DUKI (INP): Two Levies Force personnel were killed in an exchange of fire with a proclaimed offender and his accomplices in Kali Marjanzai area of Loni in Duki district of Balochistan on Sunday.

According to details, a Levies Force led by Duki Assistant Commissioner Zahoar Ahmad Baloch and Assistant Commissioner Beebrag Lehri raided the house of a proclaimed offender, Amanullah Marjanzai.

Seeing the law personnel coming, the proclaimed offender and his accomplices opened fire on them.

As a result, two Levies officials, Qasim Baloch and Ubaidullah Achakzai, were martyred. While an accused also got injured by the firing of the law officials.

The bodies of the Levies officials have been shifted to the Civil Hospital in Duki.

After the incident, another contingent comprising Levies Force and FC officials under the head of Deputy Commissioner Capt Fiaz Ali rushed to the scene.

The Levies Force has besieged the house of the

Continued on page 2

PM strongly condemns firing incident in GB's Chilas area

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar strongly condemned the firing incident on a passenger bus in Gilgit-Baltistan's Chilas area on Sunday.

The prime minister expressed deep sorrow over the martyrdom of innocent citizens in the previous day's incident.

He prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed souls in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved families to bear this loss with courage.



QUETTA: Senior Politician, Nawabzada Haji Lashkari Raisani addresses during celebration ceremony on the occasion of Sindhi Culture Day organized by Jamote Students Council Balochistan, held at Quetta press club.

Fazl firmly declares to take stand against those resorted to target Muslim Ummah

MULTAN (APP): Chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Sunday expressed JUI's commitment to fostering moderation in political discourse while maintaining and promoting religious identity.

While addressing to workers at Jhok Wanis, on occasion of Malik Sajjad Wains, a local political figure in JUI, Fazlur Rehman acknowledging the critical role of public leaders, emphasized his dedication to solving societal issues and dismantling prejudices in order to pave the way for a harmonious future.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman firmly declared to take stand against those who resorted to target Muslim

Ummah. Underlining ideology, belief, and attitude as the political foundation, he stressed the importance of compassion towards the impoverished and the collective responsibility of safeguarding their lives, wealth, and honor.

The chief outlined a policy of wisdom and fairness in dispute resolution, underscoring the historical sacrifices of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam elders as a testament to the people's trust. JUI always rejected sectarianism, Fazal added. He promised to serve people if voted to power. He also expressed resolve to propel the party forward, uniting communities, and fostering a future marked by justice, compassion, and resilience.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulber Khan with other people attending the funeral prayer of martyrs of Hudur incident by terrorist attack on passenger bus.



QUETTA: Provincial President ANP Asghar Khan Achakzai addressing the condolence reference in memory of Aziz Mama organized by Awami National Party.

ECP's delimitation: NA reduced to 366 Gen Seats, six slashed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), in its recent notification of the final list of constituencies, has revised the number of National Assembly (NA) general seats to 366, indicating a decrease of six seats from the previous count of 342.

The constituency list released by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) signifies a decline in the general seats of the National Assembly (NA) from 272 to 266. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) representation in the National Assembly has been reduced from 51 seats to 45.

After the process of delimitation, the National Assembly seats for the merged districts have been reduced to six from the pre-

vious 12. This adjustment aligns with the provisions of the 25th Constitutional Amendment, following the merger of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) with KP, and is determined by population considerations.

Punjab will have 141 general seats in the NA, Sindh 61, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 45, Balochistan 16, and three will be from Islamabad. Women will have 60 reserved seats, while minorities will have 10 seats.

Punjab would have 371 seats, of which 297 would be general seats. Sindh would have 168 seats, of which 130 would be general seats. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa As-

Continued on page 2

Pakistan women's team makes history with first-ever T20I win over NZ

Sports Desk

DUNEDIN: Pakistan women's team created history on Sunday, defeating New Zealand women by seven wickets in the first T20I at the University of Otago Oval in Dunedin. This marked the first win for Pakistan women's team over New Zealand women — also known as White Ferns — in the T20I format.

Chasing 128 to win, Pakistan's opening pair of Shawaal Zulfiqar and Muneeba Ali provided a decent 40-run start to the innings. Muneeba (23 off 24, four fours) was the first batter to return to the pavilion. At that stage, captain Nida Dar promoted herself up in the order and knitted 51 runs for the second wicket with right-handed batter Shawaal. 18-year-old Shawaal, playing her sixth T20I and first on New Zealand soil, scored her highest T20I score of 41 off 42 balls, smashing seven boundaries.

Following Shawaal's departure at the end of the 13th over with 91 runs on the board, Nida too was dismissed after a quick-fire 23 off 14 balls, including a four and a six.

With back-to-back wickets falling, the experienced pair of Bismah Maroof and Aliya Riaz got together and

guided the team to a seven-wicket win with 10 balls to spare. Aliya returned unbeaten on 25 off 12 balls. Her innings included two fours and a six, the latter of which she struck on the second ball of the 19th over to finish the match. Bismah was undefeated on 13 off 18 balls, hitting a four. Earlier, after opting to bat first, the White Ferns were restricted to 127 for six courtesy of a fine bowling display by the touring side. Right-arm fast Fatima Sana, who missed the Bangladesh tour due to injury, capitalised on the overcast conditions and bowled a spell of four overs, giving away only 18 runs and bagging three wickets. Nida, Diana Baig and Aliya took a wicket each.

For New Zealand, Maddy Green was the top run-getter, scoring 44 not out off 28 balls, hitting four fours.

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Pakistan Women celebrate as they dismiss a New Zealand batter in the first T20I at the University of Otago Oval in Dunedin, New Zealand



KARACHI: Sunni Tehreek (PST) Chief, Sarwat Ijaz Qadri addresses his supporters during General Workers Meeting held in Karachi.

PML-N, other parties table initial proposals for seat adjustment in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): Different likeminded parties, which are set to give the PPP a hard time in Sindh, have prepared an initial draft for seat adjustment in Karachi, while trying to gain maximum through a joint strategy. It is because of the fact that Karachi — the country's largest city and economic hub — decide who will rule Pakistan and Sindh given the share of seats it has both for national provincial legislatures.

The latest delimitations announced the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) means Karachi will now have 22 National Assembly and 47 Sindh Assembly seats thanks to the huge multi-ethnic population it houses.

So, the PML-N, which initially struck a deal with the MQM-P for seat adjustment on the basis of a long-term understanding on different issues, has proposed that its candidates should be backed on four national and nine provincial constituencies — with Nawaz Sharif trying to build a national image of his party by having represen-

ation across the country. Earlier this week, the MQM-P presented a draft constitutional amendment, seeking to empower local governments by giving them control over various subjects while ensuring financial independence. And the PML-N agrees to the idea in principle.

On the other hand, the ANP (Awami National Party) wants one national and five provincial assembly seats covering those neighbourhoods where the Pashto-speaking people are in majority. The JUI-F and the GDA — mainly representing the Pir Pagra-led PML-F — are eyeing five and two national as well as provincial constituencies.

On the other hand, the MQM-P is ready for seat adjustment with other parties in Malir district and the Lyari — an area which is part of Karachi South district.

However, the final decision on these recommendations would be made the central leaderships of these parties after detailed consultations at a joint meeting, which is expected to be held after December 8.

NDMA showcased Pak strategic project Green Pak Initiative at COP28

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Sunday showcased Pakistan's strategic project Green Pakistan Initiative during a plenary discussion "Strengthening Delivery: Aligning development, humanitarian and climate finance" organised by IFAD and Green Climate Fund (GCF) at the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28) at UAE meeting.

Chairman NDMA, Lieutenant General, Inam Haider Malik participated in a special session and highlighted Pakistan's Proactive Disaster Management enhancing indigenous capacities to prevent and minimise disaster losses, a news release said.

He also discussed climate-smart agriculture collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The Chairman NDMA stressed the need to provide climate

finances to undertake projects in disaster-hit countries like Pakistan.

He also held a meeting with Practice Manager, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, South Asia Region, World Bank, Abbas Jha at COP28, Dubai. Both discussed possible collaborations with WB for long-term sustainability and extended scope of National Emergencies Operations Center (NEOC) operations, capacity strengthening interventions. The World Bank official assured of their support and potential collaborations to strengthen the overall disaster risk management (DRM) system in the country. At another side-line meeting with the CEO IRC, David Milliband, the NDMA Chairman apprised of the operations of the NEOC established at the NDMA and its critical role in anticipating disasters well in advance to ensure timely actions for saving losses.

In the 1973 delimitation, ex-Fata had eight NA seats, aligning with the previous census. Under General Pervez Musharraf's administration, the merged districts were allocated 12 seats.

The ECP has declared general elections for February 8, 2024, and the polls will follow the recently released constituency lists.

Caretaker..

Continued from page 1

work together for welfare and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities.

We have to make them realize that they are second to none and are equally talented.

In addition to this, we also have to create easiness for them besides bringing positive change in the social behaviours, adding he stressed.

However, he noted with contentment that steps are being taken to make them useful citizens of the society.

We would welcome the suggestions to be made in this regard, he assured.

He said that although the legislation is there for providing jobs to the persons with disabilities at the federal and provincial level, but still there's a need to make implementation on it. The commemorative shields were given to the persons with disabilities on the extraordinary services in different sectors.

The Advisor for social welfare presented a souvenir to the Chief Minister.

ECP's..

Continued from page 1

sembly will have 145 seats, of which 115 will be general seats. The Balochistan Assembly will have 65 seats, of which 51 will be general seats.

Significantly, three Waziristan districts — Lower South, Upper South, and North — now share a single seat, consolidating their previous separate representations. South Waziristan, split into two districts, and North Waziristan, formerly with one seat each, now have a combined representation.

Moreover, Orakzai, the former FATA district, has integrated with Hangu, resulting in the consolidation of their respective seats into a single constituency.

Two seats in Kurram district, previously divided on sectarian lines, have now merged into one.

In the 1973 delimitation, ex-Fata had eight NA seats, aligning with the previous census. Under General Pervez Musharraf's administration, the merged districts were allocated 12 seats.

The ECP has declared general elections for February 8, 2024, and the polls will follow the recently released constituency lists.

APC pledges to revitalize Christian Personal Laws

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a landmark All-Parties Conference (APC) on 'Christian Personal Laws' hosted at a local hotel, representatives from major political parties, minority community leaders, and diverse civil society groups convened to advocate for a comprehensive revision of long-standing 'Christian Personal Laws'. Over two hundred participants, including PML-N, PPP, ANP, PTI, MQM, and the Quami Awami Party, along with clergy leaders, lawyers, journalists, and human rights advocates, joined

forces to emphasize the pressing need for an update to the outdated Christian Divorce Act 1869 and the Christian Marriage Act 1872. Prominent leaders of the Christian community, backed by religious scholars, have meticulously crafted an updated draft addressing crucial aspects such as marriage, divorce, custody, maintenance, inheritance, and adoption.

Former Senator Farhatullah Babar expressed his commitment to include this reform in the party manifesto for upcoming general elections.

PPP calls on parties and institutions to unite for 'stronger Pakistan'

KARACHI (INP): Emphasizing that Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) had no ill-will towards any political party, former Sindh minister and ex-MPA Sharjeel Inam Memon on Sunday stressed the need for all political parties and the state institutions to sit together for a stronger Pakistan.

Addressing a press conference in Karachi, Sharjeel Memon said that the people of Pakistan were fed up with the politics of confrontation. At the same time, however, he asked former prime minister and PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif to list a single hospital the PML-N government had built so far. "Why not compete with the PPP government in the health sector," he challenged Nawaz.

Memon further said that best basic health facilities were available to people in Karachi.



KARACHI: Karachi University (KU) Vice Chancellor, Khalid Mehmood Iraqhi visiting the examination hall during the Entry Test 2023.

MQM-P blames PPP led Sindh government for 15yrs of bad performance

HYDERABAD (APP): The Member of Rabita Committee of Muttahida Quami Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) Syed Waseem Hussain has said the bad performance of the Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP's) Sindh government during the last 15 years is self-evident.

Addressing the party's workers in Latiabad's Kohsar area here on Sunday, Hussain pointed out that even dog bite medicines were not available in the government hospital though the dog bite cases continuously surface in the city every other day.

He blamed the PPP's Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari for trying to deceive the public by misportraying the party's

bad performance as the party's accomplishments.

He questioned how the PPP could go to the public to seek votes with such poor performance.

The MQM-P's advocate Dilawar Qureshi maintained that when his party was in the government they launched projects

in the health, education, sports and other development sectors. He claimed that the people continued to benefit from those projects. The party's Hyderabad chapter leader Zafar Ahmed Siddiqui credited the MQM-P for securing an order from the apex court for the population census.

Other local leaders also addressed the workers on the occasion.

Two Levies officials..

Continued from page 1

proclaimed offender.

The PO is wanted by the police in an extortion case of Rs100 million and other serious crimes.

Meanwhile, the caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has expressed deep grief and sorrow over martyrdom of two Levies force personnel during exchange of fire in Duki.

In an official condemnation issued here on Sunday, the Chief Minister paid homage to the martyrs who embraced martyrdom while performing duties.

He said that the Levies cops embraced martyrdom while fighting against

the criminals bravely.

He also appreciated the Director General Levies, Deputy Commissioner Kohlu and district administration Sibi on successful operation against the criminals with coordination.

The caretaker Chief Minister said that we are proud of the bravery of our brave jawans of levies force who embraced martyrdom in the line of duty.

He said that we would not let the bereaved families of martyrs alone.

He also directed to the concerned authorities to complete the process of payment of the compensation and other incentives to the bereaved families under Shuhada package imm.

Achakzai emphasizes vital role of persons with disabilities on Int'l Day

QUETTA (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Information and Public Relations Balochistan, Jan Achakzai, delivered a compelling address underscoring the significance and pivotal role of persons with disabilities on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

In his statement, Minister Jan Achakzai acknowledged the invaluable contributions of individuals with disabilities to society, emphasizing the need for inclusive policies and societal support to ensure their active participation in various spheres of life. He highlighted the importance of recognizing and celebrating

the abilities and accomplishments of persons with disabilities, fostering a more inclusive and accessible environment for everyone.

The minister further emphasized the government's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and addressing challenges faced by persons with disabilities. He outlined ongoing initiatives aimed at creating a more inclusive society, including accessibility measures, awareness campaigns, and partnerships with relevant stakeholders.

Minister Jan Achakzai urged the community to join hands in building a society that embraces diver-

sity and empowers persons with disabilities to thrive. He called for collective efforts to break down barriers and eliminate stigma, fostering an environment where everyone, regardless of ability, can contribute meaningfully to the community. The International Day of Persons with Disabilities serves as a platform to raise awareness about the rights and challenges faced by individuals with disabilities worldwide. Minister Jan Achakzai's address serves as a powerful call to action, urging society to unite in creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for persons with disabilities.

Members of national security workshop visits Miranshah NW

PESHAWAR (APP): The members of national security workshop belonging to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa visited tehsil Miranshah of North Waziristan district.

During the visit, local peoples' welfare, establishment of durable peace, development projects and positive effects of the fore-sighted strategies were analyzed.



KARACHI: Renowned Writer Mustansar Hussain Tarar addressing during a closing ceremony of 16th Aalimi Urdu Conference at Arts Council.

China provides 25 lightning detectors to Pakistan

BEIJING (APP): China has supplied Pakistan with 25 weather detectors valued at \$1 million to establish a very low-frequency (VLF/VF) lightning network.

The primary aim is to enhance the lightning warning capabilities of the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) and mitigate the impact of lightning-related disasters on both lives and properties.

According to a report, these detectors are deployable across various regions of Pakistan where lightning poses a threat to life and property.

"This contribution from China is a valuable gift that Pakistan will be utilizing for the first time. This collaboration underscores the importance of the Sino-Pak partnership in bolstering preparedness and response capabilities," an official said.

Regarding the detectors, an MoU was signed between PMD and the Institute of Electrical Engineering of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (IEECAS) in September 2023 in Beijing. Sahibzad Khan, Director General PMD, while leading a four-member delegation, held a detailed discussion with Dr. Yaohua Li, Director, IEECAS-led delegation, to initiate and promote the establishment of a VLF/LF lightning detection network in Pakistan to improve the lightning warning capability of PMD and to reduce the casualties and property losses caused by lightning disasters. According to a report, these detectors are deployable across various regions of Pakistan where lightning poses a threat to life and property.



KARACHI: The QR code on water tankers is mandatory after the CEO Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation Syed Salahuddin made QR code mandatory for water tankers on all water hydrants.

Adapting Indus..

Continued from page 1

sector, citizens, and communities." He said Pakistan launched 'Recharge Pakistan', which was the first concrete step towards the Living Indus.

"This flagship project with an international climate finance of nearly \$78 million is central to our efforts in reducing future flooding and drought impacts," he added.

The Recharge Pakistan project under the Living Indus framework will not only benefit millions of our citizens but also serve as a model for climate innovation on a global scale.

PM Kakar, on the occasion, also called upon vari-

ous stakeholders, including scholars, architects, poets, and literary people, to contribute towards the global efforts of addressing the climate change issue by raising their voices in their articles, sermons, addresses, and poetry. Later, talking to the students of Pakistan's orphan school, KORT Education, who won the prestigious Zayed Sustainability Prize here at COP28, the prime minister said the students had made every Pakistani, including himself, proud as they had done a wonderful job.

He said the new generation was very talented and would make the future of the country; hence, they needed proper attention.



ISLAMABAD: Players in action during CAS-Serena Hotels International Squash Championship for Men & Women-2023 organized by Pakistan Squash Federation in collaboration with PAF & Serena Hotels at Mushaf Squash Complex.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi cutting the ribbon to inaugurate the Sindhi Cultural Day organized by Soormiyun at PNCA.

FGEHA to complete Green Enclave-II in 2025

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) would complete the development work of Green Enclave-II residential project of the government employees by 2025.

"The work of the first part of the project Green Enclave-II (Commoners Sky Garden) is going on vigorously. The Housing Authority Green Enclave II-Project is a joint venture of FGEHA, a subsidiary of the Ministry of Housing and Construction, with Sky Garden to provide low-cost plots/flats to government employees," an official told APP.

He said, "Work on the

first part of Green Enclave-II was progressing towards completion, which consisted of about 11,000 kanals of land, and the development work on about 2403 kanals of the first part consisting of (A, B, C, D & E) blocks of Phase-I to be completed by the end of 2025 while 20 per cent work is completed in Block D."

The road work and other facilities would also be completed soon as per promises made by the Housing Authority would be fulfilled within the stipulated time period, he added.

To a question, the official replied, "FGEHA is planning to start new residential projects in eight

major cities of the country to provide housing to government employees and general public."

"The authority has already received several applications from land owners, companies and firms interested in the mega projects," he added.

He said the applications were invited from land owners, developers, firms and eligible individuals for the supply of land for housing schemes (plots, houses and apartments) projects in major cities of the country.

The procedure for applications and selection was being followed as per Joint Venture Regulations 2020, he added.

32nd Int'l Day of Persons with Disabilities being celebrated

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 32nd International Day of Persons with Disabilities is being celebrated in the country as well as across the globe on Sunday (today).

This day aims to promote the rights and well-being of people with disabilities in all spheres of society and development.

The theme for this year is "United in action to rescue and achieve the SDGs for, with, and by persons with disabilities."

According to the United Nations, there are an estimated one billion people living with disabilities worldwide, facing many barriers to inclusion in many key aspects of society.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is a UN day that is celebrated every year on December 3.

The day is about to raise awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of political, social, economic, and cultural life. WHO joins the UN in observing this day each year, reinforcing the importance of securing the rights of people with disabilities so they can participate fully, equally, and effectively in society with others and face no barriers in all aspects of their lives.



ISLAMABAD: A woman is distributing sweets among the children's during Annual Christmas Market organized by German Embassy at a local hotel in the Federal Capital.

HIV/AIDS cases on the rise in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): The alarming surge in HIV/AIDS cases persists in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), with a total of 6,305 individuals testing positive from 1998 to October 2023.

According to Kashmir Media Service, as per official data, 1,452 HIV-positive patients have succumbed to the disease during the same period, while 3,583 individuals are currently undergoing anti-retroviral therapy (ART). An additional 521 patients have discontinued follow-up.

The official revealed that Govt Medical College, Jammu, has reported 5,154 cases of HIV, with 1,274 fatalities, 470 discontinuing follow-up, and 2,782 individuals currently on ART.

Similarly, at Soura Institute of Medical Sciences, Srinagar, 776 patients are registered in HIV care until October 2023, with 152 deaths, 35 discontinuing follow-up, and 473 on ART. In ART Kathua, 375 patients are registered in HIV care, with 26 deaths, 16 discontinuing follow-up, and 328 on ART. The health officials emphasized the impact of social stigma on deterring people from undergoing HIV tests, contributing to the escalating number of infections over the years.

Wanted member of bike lifter gang arrested; three stolen bikes recovered

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police Khanna police team have arrested a wanted member of a bike lifter gang involved in numerous bike theft activities and recovered three stolen motorbikes and a mobile phone from his possession, a public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police had categorically started a crackdown against criminal

elements in order to save the precious lives and property of citizens. Following these directions, the Khanna police team used technical and human resources and succeeded in apprehending a wanted member of a former jailbird bike lifter gang member involved in numerous theft activities.

The accused was identified as Shahzaib. Police team also recovered three stolen motorbikes and a mobile phone from his possession. Cases have already been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway.

Int'l mountain day to be observed on Dec 11

ISLAMABAD (APP): International Mountain Day, themed "Restoring Mountain Ecosystems," will be observed on December 11 across the world to highlight the significance of the mountains and their people's lifestyles.

According to details, the United Nations General Assembly nominated December 11 as "International Mountain Day" in 2002. However, beyond their aesthetics, mountains play a crucial role in our planet's well-being, impacting global ecosystems, climate, and communities.

This theme was selected to fully include mountains in the UN decade on ecosystem restoration 2021-2030, co-led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN and the UN Environment Programme. The decade is an opportunity to draw together political support, scientific research, and financial resources to significantly scale up restoration and prevent further degradation of mountain ecosystems. It is pertinent to mention here that mountains cover around 27 per cent of the Earth's land surface and host about half of the world's biodiversity hotspots. Mountains are home to an extraordinary range of plants and animals and many culturally diverse communities with different languages and traditions.

Bukhari directs PPP ticket aspirants to submit application till December 4

ISLAMABAD (APP): Secretary General Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) Syed Nayyer Hussain Bukhari Friday directed the candidates seeking PPP tickets to contest National and Provincial Assemblies to submit applications for party tickets till December 4.

"The candidates who have submitted applications for the Party tickets earlier are advised to send their applications without bank drafts," he said.

Nayyer Bukhari said that PPPP issued these instructions to the candidates who want to contest up-

coming general elections on PPP tickets to write their constituency no in accordance with the new constituencies announced by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

The General Secretary said that the new applicants are directed to attach a bank draft of Rs 40,000 for the National Assembly and Rs 30,000 for the Provincial Assembly seats.

Nayyer Bukhari said that the applications would be in the name of President PPPP and sent the same to the address of Bilawal House Karachi or House No. 1, Street 85 Embassy Road Islamabad.

ICCPO visits Security division Orders to enhanced security measures

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: According to the details, the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan conducted a visit to the Diplomatic Enclave to assess security arrangements and issue directives for enhancing security measures, a public relation officer said.

He said that, the ICCPO Dr Akbar Nasir Khan interacted with officers and officials of the Islamabad Capital Police entrusted with the security of the diplomatic enclave. He issued directives to senior officers for the enhancement of security measures at the embassies.

Emphasizing the need for effective monitoring on both internal and external routes of the diplomatic enclave, the ICCPO stressed the importance of ensuring effective surveillance through the Safe City centralized camera systems.

The Islamabad Capital Police remains steadfast in its commitment to maintaining a peaceful environment and ensuring the protection of the lives and property of the citizens within the federal capital.

Citizens are urged to cooperate with the police and report any suspicious activities or items by dialing helpline "Pucar 15" or at ICT-15 app.

ISSI to hold its annual flagship event 'Islamabad Conclave' next week

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) is holding its annual flagship event, "Islamabad Conclave," next week with "Pakistan in a Changing World" as the thematic focus for this year.

The Islamabad Conclave embodies a 1.5-track initiative designed to converge the highest tiers of foreign and Pakistani leadership, policymakers and academia onto a singular platform. The event serves as a forum to evaluate the intricate political, security and economic issues as well as traditional and non-traditional threats affecting Pakistan and the region and to suggest responses and innovative solutions, a news release said.

The event's third iteration is scheduled for December 6-7, 2023. Comprising a sequence of high-level interactions in the Plenary and 5 Working Sessions, the Conclave focuses on five distinct sub-themes.

The first working session, titled "Evolving Geopolitical Dynamics, Emerging Technologies, and Shifts in Strategic Thought," is

being organized by the Arms Control and Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at ISSI. It will delve into the transformative changes at the international level, marked by major power rivalries, military modernization, and the surge in emerging technologies, accompanied by a decline in arms control and disarmament norms. The second working session, "Changing Regional Landscape: From Afghanistan to Middle East," is being organized by the Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at ISSI. It will concentrate on the evolving relationships between Pakistan and key neighboring countries, especially Afghanistan and in the Middle East. It aims to analyze shifting non-traditional security dynamics, challenges, and the imperative to fortify economic and regional connectivity for sustainable growth. "Navigating Complex Geopolitics: Accentuating Pivot to Geo-economics" forms the crux of the third working session, fostering insightful deliberations on the transformative shift in international relations.

Under the watchful eye of Deputy Commissioner Irfan Nawaz Memon, the Assistant Commissioner Industrial Area Awaid Irshad Bhatti swooped into the Karachi Company area, apprehending ten professional beggars, ICT spokesman Dr Abdullah Tabasum said that these individuals were promptly taken into custody and transferred to the police station for further processing. Meanwhile, minor children found among the beggars were sent to the Edhi Center for proper care and attention.



ISLAMABAD: Models walks on ramp during fashion show organized by Italy Embassy in Federal Capital.

5th WMS encourages global media to build consensus, work together for high-quality development

ISLAMABAD (APP): The leaders of the 5th World Media Summit (WMS) on Sunday encouraged global media organizations to build consensus, work together for high-quality development, and pool powerful media strength for building a community with a shared future for humanity and a better world.

According to the joint statement for the 5th World Media Summit, the leaders of the media outlets agreed to strengthen cooperation, promote the common development of the world

media industry, and facilitate mutual understanding and communication among countries and peoples with different historical backgrounds, cultural traditions, and development status to deliver greater stability and positive energy to a volatile world.

The joint declaration further stated, "We note that the world today is undergoing accelerated changes unseen in a century. Uncertainties and unforeseen factors are on the rise, posing unprecedented challenges for human society. The international commu-

nity needs to strengthen unity and cooperation more than ever before." "Global media should build a bridge of communication to answer questions posed by the world, by the times, and by history," it added. "We believe that amid the rapid development of new technologies in the information age, global media should adhere to journalistic ethics and meet professional standards while actively carrying out innovation and making rational use of emerging technologies. We should disseminate fac-

tual, objective, comprehensive, and unbiased news to our audience, resist misinformation, and oppose rumors and prejudices to uphold the authority and credibility of the media," the statement said.

Media leaders also hope that global media would pay more attention to the pressing demands of developing countries in areas such as poverty reduction, food security, financing for development, and industrialization and help resolve imbalances and inadequacies in development.



ISLAMABAD: A view of walk title "International Day of Persons with Disabilities" in front of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Federal Capital.

IRSA releases 88,000 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 88,000 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 43,200 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarela Dam was 1494.92 feet and was 94.92 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet.

The water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 22,100 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1173.65 feet, which was 1244.65 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 6,100 cusecs and 28,000 cusecs respectively.

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 65,900, 43,700, 41,700 and 11,700 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 7,300 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 2,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

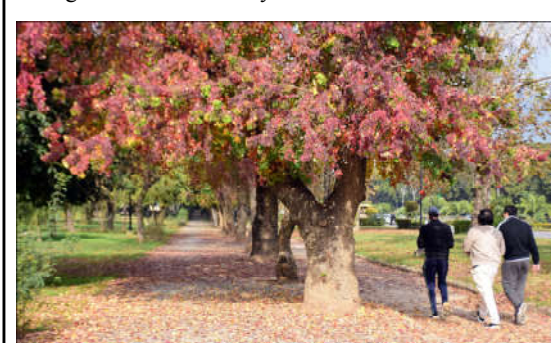
Provincial constituencies modified across 18 Punjab districts

ISLAMABAD (APP): The provincial constituencies across 18 districts in Punjab have undergone modifications due to the creation of new districts and population increase, as indicated in the notification of final constituencies issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) recently.

This adjustment, detailed in the latest notification of final constituencies from the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), reflects the evolving demographic landscape. In response to these changes, the Commission strategically added and reallocated seats, ultimately keeping the total at 297.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has released the constituency delimitation details, indicating decrease in 15 constituencies of eight Punjab districts in accordance with the latest census results.

Punjab has added five provincial assembly seats across five districts to address population growth. Additionally, despite allocating 10 seats to newly established districts, the total seats in the Punjab Assembly remain at 297. Some districts gained seats, like Taunsa, Kot Addu, Murree, Talagang, and Wazirabad, while others, including Gujrat, Khushab, Rajanpur, and Kasur, saw reductions. Some districts experienced seat reductions, while others gained seats. Notable changes include additional seats for Taunsa, Kot Addu, Murree, Talagang, and Wazirabad, as well as one extra seat for Gujrat, Khushab, Rajanpur, and Kasur. According to the ECP, there is a reduction of two seats in each of the districts of Rawalpindi, Chakwal, and Gujranwala. Additionally, Sialkot, Multan, and Lodhran each witness a decrease of one provincial assembly seat. Similarly, Muzaffargarh sees a reduction of four seats, and Dera Ghazi Khan experiences a decrease of two seats. According to the official notification, Taunsa now has two designated seats, Kot Addu has been assigned three, Murree secured one, Talagang acquired two, and Wazirabad received two seats.



ISLAMABAD: A view of dry leaves of tree drops on floor during autumn season in Federal Capital.

India uses torture systematically to disable Kashmiris

ISLAMABAD (APP): As the world observes the "International Day of Persons with Disabilities" here on Sunday, India continues to use torture systematically to disable the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

A report released by Kashmir Media Service on the occasion of 'International Day of Persons with Disabilities', said brutal and inhuman torture techniques, employed by Indian troops, paramilitary forces and police personnel, have left thousands of Kashmiris disabled for life, including over 200 losing eyesight in one or both eyes in the occupied territory.

It said that among the most brutal tactics used in the territory by Indian troops to disable and maim the Kashmiris include the firing of bullets, pellets, tear gas and PAVA (made of peralorganic acid vanillylamide, an organic compound found in natural chili pepper) shells on peaceful protesters as well as resorting to severe beatings, electric shock, crushing the leg muscles with a

wooden roller, burning with heated objects and hanging upside down in interrogation centres.

The report deplored that besides, booby traps, landmines, and mine blasts were also used against the hapless Kashmiris which had caused thousands of deaths and disabled innocent people of Kashmir since 1947. Cases of disabilities have increased manifold since India started using deadly pellets as over three thousand Kashmiris are on the verge of losing vision in one or both eyes, it added. The report urged the international community to take notice of Indian government's inhuman act of disabling the Kashmiris under a systematic torture mechanism in IIOJK. Meanwhile, All Parties Hurriyat Conference leaders, including Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sopori, Syed Bashir Andrabi, Khawaja Firooz, Zamruda Habib, Yasmeen Raja, Farida Beharji, Dr Musaab, Chaudhry Shaheen Iqbal, Ghulam Nabi War, Hakeem Abdur Rasheed and Muhammad Aaqib as well as Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party.

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Promises, promises

The ongoing COP28 summit in the UAE is a crucial event in the global climate discourse, with significant implications for countries like Pakistan. The summit has seen a complex mix of diplomatic manoeuvring, fervent appeals for climate justice, and sharply divergent views on the future role of fossil fuels.

Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar's address yesterday emphasised Pakistan's urgent need for "sufficient, additional, and predictable grant-based climate finance" from developed nations. Urging the immediate execution of the \$100bn goal for climate finance, Mr Kakar said this should not exacerbate the debt burden of developing states. He stressed the need for a robust framework for global adaptation goals, with clear targets, indicators, and progress monitoring. He called for at least half of climate finance to be allocated to adaptation, reflecting the growing urgency for balanced climate action. Mr Kakar also highlighted Pakistan's proactive climate initiatives, and mentioned that at COP26 Pakistan committed to a 60pc reduction in projected emissions by 2030. He introduced the National Adaptation Plan and the Living Indus Initiative, showcasing Pakistan's commitment to integrating climate considerations into national development plans. The conference has been marked by major developments, notably the establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund to aid poorer countries in coping with climate disasters. Despite the fund's initiation with \$700m, it falls short of the \$100bn sought by developing nations, highlighting the challenge in securing adequate financial support for those most affected by climate change.

COP28's discussions on fossil fuels have been particularly contentious. UN Secretary General António Guterres' call for a future without fossil fuels starkly contrasts with COP28 President Sultan Ahmed al-Jaber's advocacy for their continued use. This discord underscores the complexities and political intricacies of the climate crisis, particularly in oil-producing regions like the UAE.

Moreover, geopolitical tensions, notably surrounding the situation in Gaza, played into the summit's climate-focused agenda. Given the scale of the devastation there, several world leaders were compelled to diverge from the norm of avoiding politics at UN climate summits, using their platforms to criticise Israel's actions in Gaza. This aspect adds another layer of complexity to the negotiations. The decisions and discussions at COP28 will undoubtedly shape the global response to climate change and the fate of vulnerable countries like Pakistan. The summit must result in actionable commitments, not just in financial terms but also in technological and capacity-building support, to ensure an equitable path forward in the global climate effort. The climate crisis transcends national borders and political agendas, demanding a unified, decisive response. As nations convene and deliberate, the world watches, hoping for outcomes that will chart a sustainable course for the planet's future. For Pakistan, a nation at the front-line, the stakes could not be higher.



Muhammad Amir Rana

Pakistan's initial support for the Afghan Taliban regime proved short-lived — a surprising turn of events for many observers. After actively lobbying for international recognition for the Taliban administration, Pakistan abruptly lost confidence in the group. While political factors, mainly the Taliban's reluctance to take action against the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), have been cited as explanations for this shift in stance, the underlying political ideology has been largely overlooked in such analyses. This is understandable, given that deep-rooted theological and ideological differences are often ignored in sociopolitical and strategic discussions.

But one cannot ignore the crucial role of Pakistani madressahs in nurturing the political ideology of the Taliban. These religious in-

stitutions held a different vision of the state and its governance from that of the founders of Pakistan, who had emphasised a Muslim identity rather than a theological state or the revival of the Islamic caliphate system. The All India Muslim League, representing the Muslim genit and elite, was an extension of the Aligarh movement, advocating modern and rationalist approaches. In contrast, religious parties like the Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind and Jamaat-i-Islami, with the former particularly representing the Deobandi movement, adhered to a traditionalist and revivalist ideology stemming from Darul Uloom Deoband in Uttar Pradesh, and influenced by the political Islam tendencies prevalent in Arab societies.

These contrasting visions of the state persisted even after independence, as evident in the country's constitutional debates. While religious parties endorsed the 1973 Constitution, madressahs remained staunch proponents of the Deobandi ideology, passing it down to the Taliban and Pakistani militant organisations involved in conflicts in Kashmir and Afghanistan. The madressahs' simplistic argument was that the Pakistani system did not align with

Islamic principles, and its rulers lacked the qualifications to be a caliph or God's true representative.

Rulers and power elites consistently overlooked the significance of the theological differences, instead utilising religious institutions persistently for political, strategic, and national cohesion objectives. However, they failed to recognise that these core differences fostered a completely distinct mindset and worldview within those institutions.

Taliban chief justice Mullah Abdul Hakim Haqqani's book *Al Emarat al Islamiyya wa Nizamha* (The Islamic Emirate and its Systems), offers a unique glimpse into the Taliban's current political perspective, aligning with the views fostered in Pakistani madressahs. Haqqani, a graduate of Darul Uloom Haqqania, a prominent madressah in KP, draws upon his academic background to present arguments deeply rooted in the belief that God is the ultimate authority, challenging the supremacy of human power as seen in democratic systems. He advocates for the continuation of jihad even after the American withdrawal from Afghanistan, emphasising the need for Hanafi interpretations to

govern all aspects of life, including legal, jurisprudential, social, educational, governance, and judicial matters. The book's stance on Hanafi interpretations is exceptionally rigid, advocating for punishing those who deviate from this school of thought.

In the mid-1990s, the Deobandi movement briefly succeeded in establishing a state aligned with its ideals, but the current Taliban regime more closely reflects the state envisioned by Deobandi institutions. Whereas in the 1990s, the Taliban re-gime drew inspiration from diverse sources, including Arab influences, Al Qaeda, and a more idealistic concept of governance, the current regime embodies the culmination of the madressah-nurtured Taliban movement. Mullah Hakim's arguments remind me of Michael Semple's 2014 research paper, *Rhetoric, Ideology and Organisational Structure of the Taliban Movement*. Semple deconstructed the Taliban's ideological framework by examining their training manuals, which were heavily influenced by Pakistani religious scholars, primarily Mufti Rasheed Ahmed. A Karachi-based jihadist ideologue and Taliban mentor during the 1990s, Mufti Rasheed,

through his teachings, inspired generations of jihadists in Pakistan. For these militants, the head of the Pakistani state was not qualified to be declared 'ameer', a notion that various religious parties had promoted.

The core principles of the organisational culture outlined by Mufti Rasheed in the manual can be traced back to the Deobandi madressah movement and its tradition of puritan Sunni reformism. The majority of madressahs in Pakistan adhere to this Deobandi tradition. Semple's research highlighted the Taliban's national-level leadership connections with Pakistani madressahs, emphasising that leadership positions remained exclusive to the madressah-educated clerics. This shared background among the leadership facilitates the Taliban's operation as a closed network. Religious scholars, such as Mufti Rasheed, played a pivotal role in shaping the political mindset of the Taliban and Pakistani militants.

While the Taliban were engaged in their war against Kabul and foreign troops, Pakistani ulema began to reconsider their previously held views. This shift in opinion was prompted by a surge in religiously moti-

ated violence and hatred that threatened the very foundations of society, compelling the establishment to reevaluate its ideologically driven strategic approach. Prominent national religious and political figures launched the Paigham-i-Pakistan declaration at the President House on Jan 15, 2018. Recent videos and messages released by the Taliban leader criticising the establishment can also be understood in the context of the two competing ideologies of statecraft that emerged during British colonialism. These ideologies are now fully apparent in the distinct governance styles of Afghanistan and Pakistan. With their inherent dichotomies and opposing arguments, these ideologies will continue to shape distinct mindsets in the two countries, potentially causing political discord.

Pakistani madressahs currently drawing inspiration from the Taliban's style of governance had flourished under the patronage of the Aligarh generations. However, these generations remained oblivious to the unintended consequences of their actions, which have not only impacted Pakistan internally but have also spilled across the western borders. -- Courtesy Dawn

An invitation to dream



Ghazi Salahuddin

With the proceedings of the four-day 16th International Urdu Conference continuing this weekend at the Arts Council in Karachi, there is this remarkable outburst of literary buzz in the city. Here is a festival that surpasses all other literary festivals in terms of the number of writers and intellectuals that it brings together and the participation of enthusiastic citizens that it attracts.

But what does it say about the influence that literature has on Pakistani society? I often think about this relationship in the context of the social, moral and intellectual values held by people. Even if literature is

meant only for the better educated, the catchment area is bound to be very large in this, the fifth most populous country in the world.

Obviously, I am distracted by the cultural and educational deprivations of our society that are manifest in the collective behaviour. Besides, I have constantly complained about the dearth of reading habits, particularly among the youth. We have no love for books. Consequently, we lag behind almost all other countries in human and social indicators.

Luckily, I had a wonderful opportunity to give vent to my feelings as the keynote speaker in the inaugural session of the Urdu conference on Thursday. I chose to focus almost exclusively on the importance of reading fiction and how this would unleash the creativity of the people and resist the dark forces of extremism, hate and intolerance.

But before I dilate a little on the points I was

able to make in my presentation, let me explain that my quarrel is not with the quality of literature that we have in Urdu and also in other Pakistani languages. Our poets, writers of fiction, and critics are very committed. What we do not have are readers and an educational and cultural environment in which intellectual activities can flourish. What I would call an intellectual infrastructure is just not there.

I had the opportunity to cite examples of how fiction is read in many other countries and invoke observations made by prominent writers who are globally respected. For instance, consider this quotation of Jorge Luis Borges: "I have always imagined that Paradise will be a kind of a library".

One inspiration I had was a lecture delivered some years ago by British writer of fiction Neil Gaiman. Its title is in itself the entire message: "Why our future depends on libraries, reading and day-

dreaming". Evidently, Neil Gaiman, who also writes for children, was talking about his own country. I underlined the urgency of fostering a love for reading fiction and reading for pleasure in Pakistan if we want to move forward as a civilized people.

There had to be a lot of emphasis on learning to use our imagination and extending the frontiers of our dreams. We have this famous quotation of Albert Einstein that I often use in my interactions with college and university students: "Imagination is more important than knowledge".

By way of an interpretation, we have another comment Einstein had made. Some parents once asked him how they could make their children intelligent. His response: "If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairytales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairytales".

Fortuitously, a poem by great modern Urdu poet Munir Niazi has reverbera-

tions of the same idea. "Sapna aagey jata kaisey" soulfully illuminates the thought that when you live in isolation then even your dreams cannot go very far. I was delighted by the audience's admiration of Munir Niazi.

Essentially, I tried to explain how reading for pleasure can change one's life. It helps us think new thoughts and explore places and worlds that we would never know otherwise. Fiction also helps us understand our inner feelings and conflicts, suggesting ways of dealing with deep emotions. However, the most significant contribution of fiction is that it builds empathy — the ability to appreciate how others feel and behave.

One purpose that I had in mind was to present the believe-it-or-not facts about how books are read in other countries and how the printed books have prevailed in the digital age. I also tried to explain that the outside world only recognizes a great writer when he/she is fulsomely read in his/her

own country. That is how writers who have written in languages spoken by a population that, say, is less than half or quarter of Karachi's population have won major international awards.

Now, a few of those facts. Last year, 788 million printed books were sold in the US. In the UK, the number of books sold in 2022 was 348 million. The global book market last year was valued at \$141 billion. More than one million copies of a novel by Haruki Murakami were sold in Japan within seven days of its release in 2014. The novel, of course, was written in the Japanese language.

There is sufficient video evidence to show that the supposedly post-graduate students had behaved worse than a mob would on the street — and the mob on the street is a prominent facet of Pakistan. By the way, today — December 3 — is the second anniversary of the lynching of a Sri Lankan engineer in Sialkot. -- Courtesy TheNews

'We're worth it'



Muna Khan

Lately, I've been wondering what I'm worth. I don't mean this just from a self-esteem perspective or a religious one. I'm thinking, instead, of how much my life is worth in monetary terms. My father, for example, spent a considerable sum raising and educating me and my sisters, and continues to provide a roof over my head because journalism doesn't pay well. (I will write another time about how some journalists are rich.) I'm uncomfortable having someone else define my worth, because, as a woman, I know I will be undervalued; as often happens when salaries are decided, for example, I am also not looking for affirmations to post on Instagram.

Quotes telling you to live your authentic life do no good to the women whose worth is attached to someone else's notions of honour. I'm thinking of the woman reportedly killed by her father and uncle in Kohistan after her (doctored) photo with a man was shared on social media. I won't go into the details of the case because I think we know how these things go — or don't. I can join the chorus of voices glad that police action was quick and the state has shown up as the complainant. Maybe we're inching our way towards recognising 'honour' crimes for what they are: murder. Maybe we'll one day get to a place where we can talk about revoking blood money laws that allow honour-related crimes to go unpunished.

But this doesn't help me ascertain that dead woman's worth. Or the

other women in Kohistan killed in 2011, when their images appeared in a video. The HRCPC recorded at least 384 cases of honour killings in 2022, of which 103 occurred in KP.

How can a woman's worth change from being easily disposable to worth something? I do not want worth ascertained by patriarchal systems that view a woman purely as a baby-making factory to keep their capitalist dreams alive. No matter how many strides women make in various fields, society still sees her primary role as wife and mother.

I think dramas and advertising worldwide are a good indicator of how gender roles are reinforced to portray women as wives and mothers. It's playing out on TikTok too, with American women especially creating 'traditional wife' content, posting their wonderful lives caring for home, husband and children. The trend #TradWife on TikTok had 281m views at the time of writing. Of course, conservatives have women allies to help push their retrogressive agendas. There's the likes of Andrew Tate, who has risen in popularity despite bans on social media platforms; who amplifies views like women are a man's property.

Name a place where a woman says she is free of fear of assault. Misogyny and violence against women is endemic everywhere. Policies and legal systems are failing women everywhere too — the inability of prosecutors to get rape convictions is one small example of that. Violence increased to record levels around the world during lockdown. The UN referred to the situation as a "shadow pandemic" in its 2021 report about domestic violence in 13 countries.

In Pakistan, the FIA cannot seem to act effectively on cybercrime. The less said about law-enforcement agencies' treatment of

women the better. That we have to cheer officials in Kohistan for acting swiftly shows the sorry state of affairs. There must be consequences. From punishment for murder without recourse to a 'get out of jail free' card, to some rebuke of political leaders — especially Imran Khan and Nawaz Sharif — for their deeply problematic misogynist comments. Their supporters double down, instead of apologising.

The largest demographic in this country are the young, nearly half of whom are women. While internet penetration is woefully low at 25 per cent, worldviews are changing due to social media — and creating intergenerational conflict. Women cannot exercise choice or fight back without state support. Why can't, for example, misogyny be treated as a crime that is taken seriously by the police?

I ask the men being awarded the next government to treat women's crimes with the same zeal they do expanding their wealth base and DHA schemes. Perhaps they can take inspiration from a World Bank report in March 2023, on how Bangladesh offers "invaluable" development experience for other countries and how it realised at independence that investing in people was as important as investing in infrastructure. "Bangladesh's poverty reduction strategy centred on women's empowerment." Fertility rates have decreased, almost all children go to school, and women's labour force participation has increased dramatically. It has contributed to Bangladesh's economic growth. This doesn't mean it doesn't have challenges, but both government and society have reaped the benefits of good development choices.

Can Messrs Sharif and Co agree to making similar choices? Women are worth it. -- Courtesy Dawn

Iron brothers



Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

The Chinese like to call Pakistan an "iron brother". This is a glowing tribute to a neighbour that has stood with them through thick and thin. Pakistanis also hold China in high esteem, as a neighbour that has respected their core concerns and interests. Even when Pakistan was closely aligned with the West, China enjoyed a special place in its foreign policy.

No doubt, the two countries' all-weather strategic cooperative partnership has endured the test of time. However, at times, we tend to go overboard in describing this relationship. For instance, referring to the latter as a relationship "made in heaven", or telling the Chinese that we trust them "blindly", is a notch higher than the oft-used "higher than the Himalayas, deeper than the ocean, sweeter than honey, and stronger than steel".

Relationships are sometimes described as the distance from winter fires; if you go too close, you burn; if you go too far, you freeze. Pakistanis can benefit from viewing relations with all its neighbours through the lens of pragmatism and national interest, rather than extreme emotion. There is another downside to emotional streaks. When we indulge in emotion-laden refrain, expectations go high, and when the results are not commensurate, disappointment sets in.

China and Pakistan have always been close, even though their cultures, language, cuisine and political ethos are different.

The reason is that both have scrupulously respected each other's sovereignty and never interfered in the other's internal affairs. Another factor that underpins their close friendship is the economic partnership that has flourished since 2015, when the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was launched. Pakistan was in a difficult situation then. The US-led "war on terror" had taken a heavy toll. At a time when no country was willing to invest in Pakistan, the Chinese put billions of dollars into the country's energy sector, transport infrastructure, and Gwadar Port. Naturally, Pakistanis felt deeply obliged. Of popular interest were the power plants, that generated enough electricity to overcome loadshedding of over 16 hours a day, as well as hundreds of kilometres of quality roads.

CPEC investments were to be complemented by certain actions that Pakistan was to undertake, most notably the Special Economic Zones. Since we did not create these zones in time, Chinese industry moved out to other countries, and not to Pakistan.

In the second phase of CPEC, which coincided with the change of government in Pakistan (2018-22), greater emphasis was to be placed on socioeconomic development, agriculture and IT. However, the political signalling of functionaries of the then government dampened Chinese enthusiasm to invest further in Pakistan. The slowdown in CPEC also coincided with the intensifying US-China competition. The US and other Western countries started criticising CPEC, citing issues of transparency and debt trap.

For the past one year, however, both countries seem to be making efforts to rejuvenate CPEC. Notably, they intend to jointly build a growth corridor, a livelihood corridor,

an innovation corridor, a green corridor, and an open corridor — an ambitious agenda, which can be accomplished only if the next elected government puts its full weight behind these initiatives and ensures ease of doing business.

The next government should also double down on efforts to complete the development of Gwadar Port, which is uniquely placed to advance cross-regional connectivity. The port infrastructure, airport, free zone, and expressway are ready. To make the port optimally functional, we need a steady provision of electricity and freshwater as well as security for Chi-ness nationals working in Gwadar. The government must also ensure that the people of Gwadar are the first beneficiaries of the port.

China is now Pakistan's largest trading partner, but the balance of trade is heavily tilted in China's favour. The two free trade agreements signed by Pakistan and China have not worked well for us. It is encouraging to note that China intends to help Pakistan improve its export capacity through experience-sharing, special studies, expert exchanges and personnel training. The Special Investment Facilitation Council created recently can be another conduit to attract Chinese investments and businesses in Pakistan.

If the 'iron brothers' wish to make this relationship stronger than steel, let us move away from rhetoric and focus our energies on implementation of the projects. We must not allow CPEC to be dragged into the US-China rivalry. A welcome development in this regard is that both countries have agreed to make CPEC projects open and inclusive, enabling third parties to benefit from CPEC investments. -- Courtesy Dawn

UNCHR rep, CM discuss repatriation of foreigners

Independent Report
LAHORE: The representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR) Ms. Philippa Condlor met with Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi at the CM's Office here on Sunday. Matters pertaining to the evacuation of foreigners residing illegally came under discussion while matters with regard to support, coordination and cooperation to

evacuate them were also discussed. CM Mohsin Naqvi underlined, "We have formulated a clear policy against foreigners residing illegally. The Punjab government is implementing the guidelines of the federal government in this regard. So far, more than 15,000 foreigners residing illegally have been sent back. The whole process has been made transparent and it is our utmost strive that no foreigner residing illegally

should remain in the province. We will continue every possible cooperation with the UNHCR," he said. The representative of UNHCR acknowledged that the steps being taken by the government to give a documentary shape with regard to the evacuation of foreigners residing illegally along with regulating the whole process is an appreciable step. Provincial Minister for Information Amir Mir, Additional IG, Special Secretary (Home),

Secretary to CM Implementation, Liaison Officer of UNHCR Islamabad Farman Khilji, Commissioner Afghan Refugees in Punjab Rana Muhammad Arshad, Director Afghan Refugees Muhammad Usman Ghani and officials concerned were also present. Meanwhile, Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi paid a surprise visit to Allama Iqbal Town Police Station here on Sunday.



LAHORE: Punjab Governor Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman in a group photo with children of SOS village. Wife of Governor Punjab Aysha Baligh is also present.



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi offering Dua after inaugurating newly constructed building of Hanjarwal Police Station.

MWM Chairman says: We reject two-state solution, state-only Palestine

KOHAT (Online): In support of the oppressed people of Gaza and Palestine and against the aggression of the usurper Israel, Majlis Wahdat Muslimeen (MWM) organized grand "Azadi e Palestine March" in Kohat. March was led by the head of Majlis Wahdat Muslimeen Pakistan Allama Raja Nasir Abbas Jafari, the March took the form of a rally on Tal Parachinar highway.

MWM leader Syed Nasir Abbas Shirazi, Provincial President MWM KP Allama Jahanzeb Jafari, Majlis Ulema Maktab Ahl Bait Khyber Pakhtunkhwa along with Provincial President Allama Ahmad Rouhani along with Ulemas and Elders of Kohat, Hangu and Orakzai district participated in thousands of people.

Addressing the participants of the Palestine March, Chairman Majlis Wahdat Muslimeen Pakistan Allama Raja Nasir Abbas Jafari said that the founder of Pakistan had called Israel an illegitimate state. We will never recognize this usurping Zionist state. The wretched rulers who do this are agent of America, but the brave people of Pakistan stand with their oppressed Palestinian brothers in any situation.

Raising the voice of protest against the oppressors is the most favorable act. It has become clear that Israel has no future, the future only belongs to the Palestinians. With each passing day Israel is moving faster towards its logical end the narrative of resistance and resistance is winning.



LAHORE: Special persons participate in a walk outside the Press Club on International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Minister advocates for rehabilitation centers for differently-abled persons

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab Health Minister Prof Dr. Javed Akram emphasized the need for the establishment of rehabilitation centers for differently-abled individuals in the province.

Addressing a seminar to mark World Disability Day at a local hotel on Sunday, the minister congratulated and extended best wishes to those responsible for hosting the informative seminar, which was organized by the Handicap Association, drawing participants including the association's President, Amjad Sadiqi. During his address, Dr. Javed Akram highlighted the importance of social work, stating that

it should never be limited, and emphasized that there are no borders when it comes to serving humanity.

Referring to the vision of Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, Dr. Javed Akram mentioned ongoing efforts to facilitate the people. He challenged the perception of disability, stating that these individuals are not disabled but differently-abled.

Dr. Javed Akram shared his belief in the divine support for those who are patient and recognized the tests faced by differently-abled individuals. Expressing gratitude for being part of the Ummah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), he underscored his dedication to serving humanity.

Faryal Talpur felicitates on 'Sindhi Culture Day'

KARACHI (APP): The Central President of Pakistan Peoples Party Women's Wing Faryal Talpur has congratulated the people of the whole country including Sindh on the 'Sindhi Culture Day'. She said, "The culture of the Indus Valley is a reflection of a five thousand year old civilization and is one of the oldest and greatest civilizations of the world."

She also said, "Sindhi Topi, Ajrak and Sindhi language have a distinct identity, adding that Pakistan is a land of unparalleled cultural heritage." Talpur said, "We all have to play our part to preserve and highlight this great legacy of cultures in Pakistan."

NHA operation to clear MNJ road continues

NARAN (APP): The National Highways Authority (NHA) continued its operation to clear glaciers and snow from the Manshra Naran Jalkhad (MNJ) road on Sunday, successfully reinstating the route up to Phuldari.

According to NHA sources, operations were initiated at various locations where glaciers and snow had caused blockages on the MNJ road.

Deputy Director of NHA, Javed Yousuf, informed the media that heavy machinery has effectively cleared the road up to Khannian Phuldari. It is anticipated that the road will be fully cleared up to Naran by the evening.

DC Mardan visits DHQ Hospital

PESHAWAR (Online): Deputy Commissioner Mardan Wasil Khan visited DHQ Hospital on the occasion of International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The health department organized a walk on the occasion of this international day. Deputy Commissioner Mardan led the walk. Health department representatives and disabled citizens participated in the walk.

Expressing his views on the International Day, the Deputy Commissioner said that the physically challenged citizens,

CM KP condemns tragic bus shooting in Chilas, offers condolences, assures coop.

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Chief Minister KPK Justice @ Syed Arshad Hussain Shah has expressed profound grief over the tragic incident of an unknown armed attack on a passenger bus in the Hudur area of Chilas at Karakoram Highway (KHH), resulting in the loss of precious human lives. In an official statement from his office, the Chief Minister strongly condemned the incident and extended heartfelt sympathies to the grieving families.

CM Arshad Hussain Shah offered sincere condolences and prayers for the forgiveness and patience of the families affected by this devastating event. He also conveyed best wishes for the swift recovery of those injured in the attack.

Taking swift action, the Chief Minister contacted the Additional Chief Secretary Interior, directing him to closely monitor the security situation in the border areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Quetta-Karachi highway. Emphasizing the importance of maintaining law and order, Chief

Minister Shah instructed local police to remain vigilant, ensuring the safety and security of residents. Additionally, he reassured the government of Gilgit-Baltistan of the full cooperation and collaboration of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government in all aspects.

This tragic incident has prompted the Chief Minister to address security concerns and prioritize the well-being of the affected families, showcasing a commitment to swift action and collaboration between regions.



PESHAWAR: Deputy Chairman Senate of Pakistan Mirza Muhammad Afridi, Managing Director PMDC Muhammad Sabur Sethi and Director Colleges Muhammad Sohail in a group photo with position holder students during Academic Excellence Award Ceremony of Peshawar Model Degree Colleges.

253,068 people repatriated through KP borders: Home Dept

PESHAWAR (APP): The repatriation of people to Afghanistan continued as 253,068 people returned until December 2 through three border points in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

According to the KP Home Department, 248,890 people were repatriated through Torkham, 3,479 people

through Angor Adda Waziristan, and 698 people via Kharlachi Kurram district.

A total of 5064 people, including 114 from Islamabad, 873 from Punjab, and 24 from Azad Kashmir, were deported through KP.

Similarly, 6075 were deported through the Torkham border.

Sindh Police marks Sindhi Culture Day

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Police marked 'Sindhi Cultural Day' with enthusiasm at the Central Police Office (CPO), Karachi, hosting a cultural event at the Police Headquarters.

Senior officers adorned traditional Sindhi Ajrak attire, adding vibrancy to the occasion.

Artists paid tribute to martyrs with Sufi songs. Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh, Riffat Mukhtar Raja, highlighted Sindh's significance, its ancient culture, and stressed fostering a crime-free society.

Emphasizing respect for all, he urged

upholding Sindhi culture's essence and promoting safety.

IGP Riffat Mukhtar Raja emphasized Sindh's historical significance, calling it a symbol of peace with a unique identity and global recognition.

The event concluded with a message of unity among diverse communities in Sindh, emphasizing shared humanity. Participants received Sindhi cultural caps and ajraks as tokens of unity and celebration.

The DIGPs and AIGPs also shared their perspectives during the ceremony.

Punjab governor meets children of SOS Village

Independent Report

LAHORE: Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman met with children of SOS Children's Village here at the Governor's House on Sunday. Ayesha Baligh, wife of the governor, was also present.

The governor said that children are our future and the management and entire team of SOS Children Village deserves to be praised for taking good care of the children.

He said that along with educating the children, character building is very important.

He asked the children to inculcate high moral values in themselves and achieve excellence in life. The governor added that a good character enables one to achieve success in life and hereafter. Appreciating the administration of SOS Children's Village, he said that institutions like SOS Children's Village were doing a good job by providing good care, education, and training to children without parents.

He said that SOS

Children's Village is rendering great services to society by fostering these children who become useful members of society after getting better education and training.

He emphasized, "We should collectively contribute to the welfare of the children to make them responsible citizens of society. Our religion also teaches to treat such children who are deprived of parental care with compassion and love."

The governor, while addressing the children, welcomed them to the historical building.

He said that all of them were bright stars, and their presence had brightened up the Governor's House. He urged the children to work hard and always think positive for the betterment of humanity and the country. On this occasion, National Director SOS Children, Saba Faisal, and Chairman SOS Children Village Lubna Lashari were also with the children. The administration of the Governor's House also showed the children round.

Minister for enhanced support for persons with special needs

Independent Report

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Dr. Jamal Nasir highlighted the gradual improvement in societal attitudes towards individuals with special needs.

However, he emphasized the ongoing necessity for enhanced education and skills training to fully harness their potential. Speaking at an event for International Day of Persons with Disabilities on Sunday, Dr. Nasir commended government efforts but stressed the importance of making special persons more active in society, advocating for increased

resource allocation for their rehabilitation. He pledged to convey recommendations from special organizations to Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi, ensuring the caretaker government takes appropriate steps. Dr. Nasir also mentioned the 'Enable' mobile app developed by the Punjab government to address the challenges faced by special individuals and mentioned a review of job quotas and salaries for them.

The event concluded with the distribution of 10 wheelchairs, 200 white canes, 40 hearing aids, and 200 talking watches among special individuals.



LAHORE: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Interfaith Harmony Maulana Tahir Ashrafi, Turkish Consul Journal Durmus Bastung, and Chinese Consul General Director Mr DU YUE cutting cake during the Interfaith Harmony Conference at a local hotel.

Addiction of Naswar increases health hazards

PESHAWAR (APP): Alam Khan, a 46-year-old resident of Nowshera district, was rushed to a private dental hospital in an emergency due to excruciating tooth pain.

Crying with immense pain while laying his hand on his right face, Alam was immediately shifted to the Oral and Maxillofacial Department of the Sardar Begium Dental College, Peshawar, for surgery on one of his right molars.

Upon thorough examination, the doctor diagnosed decayed molars, which had also caused a critical gum infection due to the extensive use of naswar by the patient since his adolescence. Dr. Tahir Khan, senior surgeon of the hospital, said that the molar of the patient was extracted as root canal treatment was not feasible

due to decay and gum infection.

"I started Naswar in a hostel with a group of friends in a bid to avoid the stress of the MA exam back in 2000, and since then I have not been able to leave the practice due to its addiction," said Alam, adding that due to excessive use of Naswar, his teeth turned pale and also caused the extraction of his two teeth. "I time and again tried my level best to get rid of this habit, but to no use. Throwing saliva in the office and house makes a very bad impression on my personality."

Dr. Tahir Khan said the severity of naswar addiction could result in severe gum infections, jaw complications, and the loss of multiple teeth. Naswar's harmful effects extend

beyond oral health, potentially causing bone loss, stomach disorders, and facial disfigurement. It may also contribute to an increase in heart rate with cardiac vascular complications, and in some cases, it can lead to more severe conditions like mouth and oral cancer.

Referring to a report from the Global Cancer Observatory, Dr. Tahir pointed out that Pakistan faces a significant burden of lip and oral cavity cancers, with about 11,000 new cases in males every year, making it the most common cancer among men. "Poor dental hygiene, tobacco use, and viral infections, besides fake quack doctors, contribute to these alarming statistics," he informed.

Approximately 10,000 people die of cancer

of the lips and oral cavity annually in the country, the doctor said, adding that the main reasons for such cancers were chewable and non-chewable tobacco, poor dental hygiene practices, oncogenic viral infections, and genetic predispositions.

Despite the grave health risks, naswar remains prevalent in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where approximately 70 percent of the population uses it without knowing its serious consequences for health. Besides Charsadda, Swabi, and Mohmand, the super-quality naswar of Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu, and Mardan was mostly exported to Punjab and Sindh provinces, while its demand in Karachi was high due to the presence of a large number of migrants from Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa. History revealed that naswar was introduced to the world in the 15th century in Europe when a French ambassador used it to treat her son's migraines. Initially, it was used for medicinal purposes, but gradually it was consumed as an alternative to tobacco and later came to Indo-Pakistan.

Fawad Khan, who has been associated with naswar business for the last 10 years in Nowshera district, said that people aged between 18 and 50 prefer to consume Mardani, Charsadda, and Bannu's naswar. "The price of smoke-free tobacco varies in the open market, as Rs 25 per snuff packet was being charged per 100 grams," he said.

Regarding its preparation,



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulber Khan visit the hospital to inquire the injured person health of Hudur incident by terrorist attack on passenger bus.

Masood praises Pakistani, American entrepreneurs' contribution to Pak economy

WASHINGTON (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, Saturday met top Pakistani-American entrepreneurs and professionals from Washington metropolitan area, saying he was proud of their successes in running their enterprises in the U.S. "You have been making direct and indirect contributions to Pak-US relations in different roles and you have been contributing directly to Pakistan's economic development," the Ambassador told them, according to a press release from the Pakistani embassy. The diverse group was composed of Pakistani-American businessmen who have excelled in various fields including tech, finance, banking, and services and sectors.

Presidents, CEOs and senior executives of noted companies, including KabaFusion, Deloitte, Organization of Pakistani Entrepreneurs of North America (OPEN), The Citizen Foundation (TCF), Sirhandi Companies, TRG Group, Novacloud,

Facebook and others were present on the occasion. "Your success," said the Ambassador, is a common denominator that makes us proud here in the United States and Pakistan."

Dr. Sohail Masood, CEO KabaFusion and holder of the Entrepreneur of "The Year 2023 National Award", and Ms. Ambreen Mirza, President & CEO of OPEN Global, were recognized on the occasion, the press release said.

Dr. Masood narrated how KabaFusion became one of the leading healthcare providers of the United States, and said that his firm was in the process of acquiring another company, taking its worth to \$4 billion.

He told the gathering that he had provided jobs to 70 people in Pakistan in the past few months and that this number will grow.

Ms. Mirza, CEO of OPEN Global, said that her firm, established 25 years ago by a small group of technology entrepreneurs in Boston, has grown to a network of over 100,000 people across 5 continents with chapters.



Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif addressing Pakistan-Qatar IT conference in Doha, Qatar.

Governor assures all necessary facilities being provided to the business community

PESHAWAR (Online): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali on Sunday embarked on a sudden visit to Kohat's renowned King Bazar, eliciting expressions of joy from the local business community and residents.

The Governor strolled through King Gate in the central bazar, engaging in informal interactions with shopkeepers and traders.

He took the opportunity to gain insights into the issues and challenges faced by the business community.

The impromptu visit took the form of a procession as Governor's presence in King Gate Bazar triggered spontaneous celebrations.

Local residents, children, and traders took pictures, showered petals and adorned him with garlands.

Witnessing the Governor casually mingling with the public in the

market brought genuine happiness to the people. This spontaneous interaction showcased strong public relations between the Governor and the local community and business fraternity.

Later, the Governor participated in the event organized by the Kohat Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

President of Kohat Chamber, Arshad Hayat, founder member Rashid Paracha and other members warmly welcomed the Governor.

During the ceremony, the Chamber's representatives presented suggestions related to the advancement of the national industry and highlighted challenges faced by the business community.

The Governor addressed the gathering, emphasizing the integral connection between the country's economic progress and industrial growth.



FAISALABAD: Labourers are busy in packing of snacks (Paparr) in a local factory in the city.

CM, meat exporters discuss ways to enhance livestock production

LAHORE: A 21-member delegation of the Meat Exporters Association met with Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi at CM Office here on Sunday.

The delegation of Meat Exporters Association put forth their proposals to enhance livestock production.

CM Mohsin Naqvi sought an implementable plan so as to enhance the export of wheat 5 times. He directed to undertake immediate measures to increase livestock production. He ordered launching a crackdown against elements receiving undue taxes in the cattle market. "We will provide all possible facilities to enhance meat production" he added. The federal

government would also be contacted to enhance meat export. The farmers would become prosperous with the enhancement of meat production and its export.

The CM assured them that prompt measures would be taken on the implementable proposals of the Meat Exporters Association. He was informed in the briefing that 500 million dollars meat was being exported from Pakistan while 300 million dollars meat is being exported from Lahore. There is a great potential in meat export and its export can be enhanced up to 5 billion dollars, he added.

Provincial Minister for Livestock Ibrahim Hassan Murad, Chief Secretary, Secretary Livestock,



ISTANBUL: Caretaker Minister of Commerce and Industries, Dr. Gohar Ejaz meeting with Atilla Demir President of Anadolu Group on side lines of the 39th Ministerial Session of COMCEC.

UK offering assistance to improve health, education sectors in Pakistan: Mahesh

MULTAN (APP): Head of Economy and Trade (British High Commission) Mahesh Mishra stated that the United Kingdom was offering assistance to improve various sectors including health and education, in Pakistan.

He said this while addressing a ceremony at Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI).

Mahesh Mishra hailed Pakistan's commitment to economic stability.

Mishra highlighted ongoing programs across provinces, emphasizing efforts to boost employment in the SME

sector and facilitate access to British markets for Pakistani businessmen.

Mishra commended the unique aroma and taste of Multani mangoes and explored the renowned Blue Pottery Institute, acknowledging its global significance.

He maintained that UK was assisting Pakistan to expand the tax net, aiming to alleviate pressure on existing taxpayers and attract new contributors.

Furthermore, Mishra outlined collaborative measures to address challenges in health and education, stressing the importance of skill development in the SME

sector. He stated, "The Infra Zamin" (Guarantee) Program, a non-profit credit extension facility designed to accelerate economic growth and enhance the regulatory environment.

He expressed dedication to boosting economic activity in South Punjab and fostering a conducive business environment. Plans include improving the regulatory framework, promoting barter trade, and supporting Pakistani businesses in accessing the UK market. Mishra also unveiled a "green financing".

China's public offering fund value tops 27 trln yuan

BEIJING (Xinhua/APP): Assets under the management of China's public offering funds totaled 27.38 trillion yuan (about 3.85 trillion U.S. dollars) by the end of October, data from the Asset Management Association of China showed.

By the end of October, a total of 11,268 public offering funds were being operated by 144 fund management companies, the association said.

China based company acquires renewable energy firm in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): China-based M/s. CNRP Rich Energy Co. Ltd. strategically invests in Pakistan's renewable energy sector through its wholly-owned subsidiary, M/s. CRE International Co., Limited. The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has approved the acquisition of M/s. Super Success Investments Limited (SSIL) by M/s. CRE International Co., Ltd. CRE is the wholly

owned subsidiary of CNRP Rich Energy Co. Limited, located in Hong Kong. M/s. Super Success Investments Limited (SSIL) is based in Mauritius, according to a press release issued here on Sunday. SSIL owns a 100 percent shareholding in M/s. UEP Wind Power (Private) Limited is a private company operating and maintaining a 99 MW wind-powered electric generation facility.



LAHORE: People buy vegetables at Small Vegetable Weekly Market located on Tajpura area in Lahore.

Cleaner energy must be our top priority

ISLAMABAD (APP): In view of mounting smog pressure and climatic changes, the country is facing enormous challenges, especially in the energy sector, as its long-term sustainability could only be achieved by exploring cost-effective and alternate energy resources.

The experts firmly believe that Pakistan will have to review its energy policy by exploring all available options to ensure cost-effective and environment-friendly alternate sources like solar, wind, and the optimal usage of hydel.

Such a costly fuel being provided to domestic and commercial consumers in a country bestowed by nature with abundant resources can only be described as the failure or

negligence of successive regimes.

Cost-effective energy is also essential for the economic survival of the country by promoting industries and exports to bridge the current account and trade deficits.

Cleaner energy would also be supportive of mitigating the effects of climate change if we addressed these issues as a priority and decarbonized our country by overcoming our dependency on fossil fuels.

Addressing these issues also needs massive diplomacy, as Pakistan is one of the least pollution-generating countries, yet it stands among the most vulnerable nations in the world. Sandwiched between the two emerging economies of China and India, Pakistan is paying

for the wrongs it has never committed.

"The future of renewable energy in Pakistan holds great promise as we are struggling to enhance energy production and control climate impacts at the same time," remarked Caretaker Energy Minister Muhammad Ali.

"Therefore, we need to look beyond the existing phenomena to put in place modern mechanisms of energy generation while at the same time securing our environment, labor, social security, and industry," he said.

As both are hot topics of this age, the caretaker government recently gathered experts to discuss this challenge at a seminar organized by the Information Service Academy (ISA) and the

Dr. Umar Saif unveils Pakistan's IT potential

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a groundbreaking initiative, the Pakistan-Qatar IT Conference commenced at the JW Marriott Marquis City Center in Doha, Qatar, drawing active participation from prominent Pakistani IT firms and local Qatari businesses.

The inauguration ceremony was led by the Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication, Dr Umar Saif. During his address at the conference, Dr Umar Saif introduced the technological prowess of Pakistan to a diverse audience, comprising both business leaders and

government executives in Qatar, according to a news release received here on Sunday.

This event marks the maiden voyage of an IT delegation from Pakistan to Qatar, aiming to tap into the considerable unexplored opportunities in the region and bolster Pakistan's IT exports.

The historic visit of the Pakistani delegation, spearheaded by Dr Umar Saif, began with a noteworthy event at the Pakistan embassy. Attended by the Pakistani diaspora in Qatar and representatives from 30 leading IT companies in Pakistan, the gathering set

the tone for fostering stronger bilateral relations.

Jointly organized by the Pakistani Embassy, the Pakistan Software Houses Association (PSHA), and the Pakistan Business Council of Qatar, the event underscored the collaborative efforts to explore and harness the vast untapped potential in Qatar for the mutual benefit of both nations.

As the conference unfolds, expectations are high for fruitful discussions and partnerships that will not only elevate Pakistan's IT industry but also contribute to the growth and development of the Qatari technology sector.



ISLAMABAD: Diplomat women are busy buying clothes in a stall during Annual Christmas Market organized by German Embassy at a local hotel in the Federal Capital.

PFC to participate in gulf expo

LAHORE (Online): Chief Executive Officer Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Mian Kashif Ashfaq announced that PFC delegation is set to participate in 5-days Gulf Expo Dubai starting from 19 February for expl new market and promotion of bilateral trade.

Chairing board of directors meeting here today he said the primary purpose of this visit is to explore and enhance the possibilities of expanding trade relations, fostering joint collaboration, and identifying potential investment avenues between our two countries. He said during the visit, the delegation aims to engage in meaningful discussions with key stakeholders, government officials, and business leaders in United Arab Emirates.

He said we are enthusiastic about the prospect of building lasting partnerships that will not only boost the furniture industry but also contribute to the overall economic development of both countries.

He said the PFC is fully committed to promoting economic ties and strengthening partnerships. He said he believed by fostering collaboration, we can create

Achieve bumper crop production China to support Pakistan in developing high-quality hybrid seeds

ISLAMABAD (INP): Liu Jianming, Deputy Party Secretary and Deputy Political Commissar of Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, said that China will provide support to Pakistan in best-quality disease-resistant, high-yield hybrid seeds for cotton, canola, and wheat crops.

This aims to achieve bumper crop production while also meeting the ever-increasing needs of the textile industry to earn desperately needed foreign exchange.

During his visit to the head office of Guard Agricultural Research and Services, he said, "We have better crop production through modern mechanized agriculture farming," according to a news release.

He said, "China will cooperate with Pakistan for cotton hybrid seed, including sunflower, maize, sesame, and others."

He said, "China will also share its successful

experience with "Water Saving Technology."

He highly appreciated the research activities of Guard Agriculture Research, and all nine members of the delegation evinced keen interest and were invited to visit China for one-on-one interaction with stakeholders.

He said, "Together, we can harness the power of innovation to address the challenges facing the agricultural sector in Pakistan," adding that China is ready to provide technical expertise, research collaboration, and necessary resources to facilitate the development of cutting-edge hybrid seeds."

He said, "Recognizing the significance of the agriculture sector, China is eager to support Pakistan in hybrid seeds, and our shared goal is to enhance crop productivity and contribute to sustainable agricultural practices."

Cao Ke, Deputy



RAWALPINDI: Vendors displayed warm jackets attraction for customers outside their shops at Raja Bazaar in the city.

ICCI urges Pakistani diaspora to play role in reviving economy

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of Pakistan-US Alumni Network (PUAN) led by Salman Wahab, Alumni Engagement Coordinator of US Embassy on Sunday visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and discussed possibilities for further improving bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan and the USA.

The delegation represented various sectors including academia, engineering, entrepreneurs, and IT professionals, according to a press release issued here.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, welcomed the PUAN delegation and urged that the Pakistani diaspora in the US should bring modern technology and invest in Pakistan to contribute to the economic revival of the country.

He said that many members of the Pakistani diaspora have achieved good expertise, best business practices, and modern technology by doing business in the US and this is the time that they should explore Pakistan for joint ventures and investment to help the country achieve better growth.

He said that the Pakistani diaspora should play a role in connecting the Pakistani youth, who are qualified in engineering, IT, and other fields, with US entrepreneurs to share knowledge and expertise and explore business partnerships. He said that there is a good potential to promote connectivity between the women entrepreneurs of both countries to create business collaborations.

Speaking on the occasion, Salman Wahab, Alumni Engagement Coordinator of the US Embassy said that in 2008,



KOHAT: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali addressing the Chamber of Commerce Leaders and business Community during a ceremony organized by Kohat Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

700 Palestinians killed in Gaza in last 24 hours: govt

Monitoring Desk
GAZA: The director general of the Government Media Office in Gaza has told the foreign media that more than 700 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza during the last 24 hours.

He added that over 1.5 million people have also been displaced in the Gaza Strip. Israel intensifies strikes on Gaza amid international calls for ceasefire. Israel launched hundreds of strikes on Saturday evening and Sunday on what it referred to as " Hamas infrastructure targets", reports FRANCE 24's Luke Shrago from Tel Aviv.

Israeli forces said they have hit tunnels, command posts and warehouses holding ammunition as they widen their offensive into southern Gaza. Hamas authorities, as a result, have started to update their death tolls.

These latest strikes

come as worldwide pressure continues to mount, with international negotiators trying to reintroduce a pause in the fighting. A renewed pause is looking unlikely, reports Shrago, as Hamas and Israel are blaming each other for the collapse of their seven-day ceasefire, with both saying the other didn't fulfill the terms of the truce. Pope deplores end of Israeli-Hamas truce, calls for new ceasefire.

Pope Francis on Sunday said it was "painful" to see that the truce between Israel and Hamas had been broken and called on all parties involved to reach a new ceasefire agreement as soon as possible.

He also said he was thinking about the people still being held hostage in Gaza and the lack of basic necessities in the Palestinian territory.

Francis, who is suffer-

ing from a lung inflammation, had his words read by an aide during his Sunday Angelus message, which he delivered indoors from his Vatican residence rather than by a window overlooking St. Peter's Square.

Meanwhile Israeli settlers attacked two Palestinian villages in the occupied West Bank late on Saturday, killing one man and torching a car, Palestinian authorities said.

The Palestinian ambulance service said a 38-year-old man in the town of Qarawat Bani Hassan, in the northern West Bank, was shot in the chest and died as residents confronted settlers and Israeli soldiers.

The Israeli military said soldiers arrived at the scene and used riot dispersal means and live fire to break up the confrontation between residents and settlers.



Mourners carry the body of 38-year-old Palestinian, Ahmad Assi, who was killed in an Israeli settler raid, during his funeral near Salfit in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

WHO says Gaza's health system must be protected as disease spreads

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: The World Health Organization (WHO) on Wednesday called for Gaza's vulnerable health infrastructure to be safeguarded as the war-torn enclave faces an increased risk of epidemics and challenges in detecting infectious diseases.

A fragile truce agreement between Israel and Hamas last week has allowed WHO and aid organizations to increase their deliveries of essential supplies but these have been far from enough to meet the needs of Gaza's 2.3 million people.

Speaking at a press

conference in Geneva, World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said only 15 of Gaza's 36 hospitals were still functioning and were completely overwhelmed.

"Of the 25 hospitals north of the Wadi Gaza (river) before the conflict began, only three are functioning at the most basic level, but they lack fuel, water and food," Tedros said.

"The remaining health system capacity must be protected, supported and expanded."

WHO has sounded the alarm about the spread

of infectious disease in Gaza, where the internal displacement of the population has caused overcrowding in shelters and other temporary living facilities.

The agency has noted a staggering increase in cases of diarrhoea, especially among infants and children, and detected "very serious signals around acute jaundice syndrome" in the enclave.

"With severe overcrowding, the risks are increasing for epidemics of respiratory tract infections, acute watery diarrhoea, hepatitis, scabies, lice and other diseases."



Lanao Del Sur Governor Mamintang Adiong Jr. visits the injured at a hospital following an explosion during a Catholic Mass in a gymnasium at Mindanao State University, in Marawi, Philippines.

Think of what happened to Hong Kong when you vote, Taiwan president says

Monitoring Desk
TAIPEI: Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen appealed to voters on Sunday to think of what had happened to Chinese-controlled Hong Kong when they cast their ballots next month, saying peace must be backed up with a commitment to boost defences.

Taiwan prepares for presidential and parliamentary elections on Jan 13 as China, which claims the democratically governed island as its own territory, ramps up military pressure to assert its claims, including two major war games around the island in the past year and a half.

China and Taiwan's main opposition party, the Kuomintang (KMT), have cast the election as a choice between war and peace. China detests Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive

Party (DPP) and its presidential candidate, Vice President Lai Ching-te, calling them dangerous separatists.

Addressing supporters at a campaign rally for Lai in the capital Taipei, Tsai said the opposition was using "alarmist talk" of war and peace.

"I want to ask you all here, does anyone want war? Nobody does," she said. "Look at Hong Kong and think of Taiwan. We don't want Hong Kong-style peace. We want dignified peace."

Hong Kong, a former British colony, was returned to Chinese rule in 1997 with the promise of wide autonomy under a "one country, two systems" framework, which China has also offered to Taiwan - with little support on the island.

Russia says it hit air defence HQ in Ukraine's Dnipro

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian forces hit a fortified commander post of Ukraine's "East" air defence and alerting centre in the central city of Dnipro, the Russian defence ministry said on Sunday.

It said that it inflicted combined strikes by operational-tactical and army aviation, unmanned aerial vehicles, missile forces and artillery.

Reuters was not immediately able to corroborate the battlefield reports from either side.

Earlier on Sunday, Ukraine's air force said Russia launched 12 drones and a cruise missile at Ukraine overnight, with air defence systems destroying 10 drones before they reached their targets.

Russia's defence ministry also said it its daily dispatch that it hit fuel depots in the areas of Myrhorod, Poltava region and the city of Khmelnytskyi, an ammunition arsenal in the Mykolaiv region as well as manpower and equipment in 107 various districts.

One dead and two injured in Paris attack near the Eiffel Tower

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: One German tourist died and two others were injured after a man attacked tourists in central Paris near the Eiffel Tower on Saturday evening in what President Emmanuel Macron described as "a terrorist attack".

Police quickly arrested the 26-year-old man, a French national, using a Taser stun gun. Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin told reporters on Saturday.

The suspect had been sentenced to four years in prison in 2016 for planning another attack, was on the French security services' watch list and was also known for having psychiatric disorders, the interior minister added.

The attack took place around 1900 GMT when the man attacked a tourist couple with a knife on the Quai de Grenelle, a few feet away from the Eiffel Tower, mortally wounding a Ger-

man national. He was then chased by police and attacked two other people with a hammer before being arrested. The suspect had shouted out "Allahu akbar" (God is Greatest) and told police he was upset because "so many Muslims are dying in Afghanistan and in Palestine" and was also upset about the Gaza situation, Darmanin said.

"I send all my condolences to the family and loved ones of the German national who died this evening during the terrorist attack in Paris and think with emotion of the people currently injured and in care," President Macron said on social network platform X. Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne expressed defiance in the face of such attacks. "We will not give in to terrorism," she wrote on X. French anti-terrorism prosecutors are leading the investigation into Saturday night's incident.



Pedestrians walk on a footpath buried under inches of snow in Munich.

Pope deplores end of Israel-Hamas truce, voices hope for new ceasefire

Monitoring Desk
VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis on Sunday said it was "painful" to see that the truce between Israel and Hamas had been broken, and voiced hope that all parties involved can reach a new ceasefire "as soon as possible".

A seven-day pause in the fighting between Israeli forces and Hamas militants, which had allowed the exchange of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners, collapsed on Friday. On Sunday, Israel stepped up its bombing campaign.

More than 15,400 Palestinians have been killed as of Sunday, accord-

ing to Palestinian officials, in the conflict that broke out after a Hamas attack on southern Israel on Oct. 7 in which 1,200 Israelis were killed and more than 200 taken hostage.

"It is painful that the truce has been broken. This means death, destruction and misery," Francis said - his words read out by an aide because of the pope's frail health - during his Sunday Angelus message and prayers. "Many hostages have been freed but many are still in Gaza. We think of them, of their families, who had seen a light, a hope of embracing their loved ones again."

India agrees to withdraw soldiers from Maldives - President Muizzu

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India's government has agreed to withdraw its soldiers from the Maldives, the Indian Ocean archipelago's President Mohamed Muizzu said on Sunday. Muizzu won the presidential election in September, having campaigned to alter the Maldives' "India first" policy and promising removal of a small Indian military presence of some 75 personnel. "In the discussions we had, the Indian government has agreed to remove Indian soldiers," Muizzu told reporters.

"We also agreed to set up a high level committee to solve issues related to development projects."



Members of the International Federation of Medical Students Associations hold placards during a protest demanding an end to fossil fuels at COP28 World Climate Summit, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Heavy snow paralyses parts of southern Germany

Monitoring Desk
MUNICH: Heavy snowfall brought chaos to parts of southern Germany on Saturday, with air and rail traffic blocked in the Bavarian state capital of Munich.

The heavy snowfall prompted an all-day cancellation of flights and long-distance trains out of Munich, with Christmas markets closed, some ski lifts unable to run and a football match called off as the city battled with the icy conditions.

Flights were not scheduled to depart or arrive at Munich airport un-

til at least 6am on Sunday according to a statement on its website.

"Everything is closed. Online doesn't work. Well, you have to be patient... there's nothing you can do," Magda Shokosa, a stranded passenger at Munich Airport, said.

"We had to dig our way into the car park with shovels and then take a taxi because the buses weren't running," said another passenger, Brigitte Schloessel.

Trains could not arrive at Munich's central train station, Deutsche Bahn said on its website.

Venezuelans to vote in referendum on disputed territory with Guyana

Monitoring Desk
CARACAS: Venezuelans will vote on Sunday in a referendum backed by President Nicolas Maduro's government over a potentially oil-rich territory that is the subject of a long-running border dispute with Guyana.

The five-question referendum includes a question rejecting International Court of Justice (ICJ) jurisdiction to decide to which country the territory around the Essequibo river belongs. Some political and security analysts have called the referendum a show of strength by Maduro and a test of support for his government.

Britain's maritime agency reports possible Red Sea blast

Monitoring Desk
RIYADH: Britain's Maritime Trade Operations agency (UKMTO) on Sunday said that it has received reports of drone activity and a possible explosion in the Red Sea's Bab al-Mandab strait.

UKMTO said the drone activity originated from Yemen, and called on vessels in the vicinity to exercise caution.

Reuters wasn't immediately able to confirm the reports. The incident is the latest in a series of attacks in Middle Eastern waters since war broke out between Israel and the Pales-

tinian militant group Hamas on Oct. 7.

An Israeli-linked cargo ship was seized last month by the Houthis group, an ally of Iran which controls Yemen's Red Sea coast. The group had previously fired ballistic missiles and armed drones at Israel, and vowed to target more Israeli vessels. There was no immediate comment from the Houthis on Sunday's incident. Last week, a U.S. Navy warship responded to a distress call from an Israeli-managed commercial tanker in the Gulf of Aden that had been seized by armed individuals.

Snow grounds dozens of flights at Amsterdam airport

Monitoring Desk
AMSTERDAM: Dozens of flights to and from Amsterdam Schiphol airport were cancelled on Sunday due to snowfall expected to reach the Netherlands in the afternoon.

Schiphol's website around midday indicated almost 150 incoming and outgoing flights had been cancelled.

Dutch airline KLM, the airport's main user, told Dutch news agency ANP it had scrapped 65 European flights in the afternoon and evening.

Ukraine says blackout at N-plant risked 'accident'

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine said on Saturday that two power lines connecting its electricity grid to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant were cut overnight, putting the plant at risk of an "accident".

The plant has been at the centre of fighting since it was captured by Russian forces last year, and both sides have accused each other of compromising its safety.

"Due to the complete blackout, the nuclear power plant switched to powering its own needs from 20 diesel generators," Ukraine's nuclear energy operator said in a statement.

It said the plant was on "the verge of a nuclear and radiation accident" before Ukrainian special-

ists were able to promptly restore off-site power. The plant's Russian-installed operator confirmed it resorted to diesel generators overnight, but said that it had operated within safe limits and that no safety violations were reported.

The incident marks the eighth time the plant has been cut off from external power since the conflict began last year, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) warned.

"The most recent external power outage is yet another reminder about the precarious nuclear safety and security situation at the plant, which can be affected by events far away from the site itself," IAEA chief Rafael Grossi said.

Lula in Berlin for first Brazil-Germany talks in eight years

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva is set to land in Berlin on Sunday for the first Brazilian-German government consultations in eight years as Latin America and Europe's largest economies seek to revive ties.

Lula has jetted across the globe since returning to office in January, trying to restore Brazil's standing on the global stage after years of diplomatic isolation under his far-right predecessor Jair Bolsonaro, to mixed results.

He is expected to have dinner on Sunday with fellow leftist, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, before the consultations on Monday. Scholz was the first foreign leader to visit Lula in Brazil, just weeks after his inauguration.

The German Chancellor has been on a quest since taking office in late 2021 to improve ties with the Global South. Germany also considers Brazil a key partner in its bid to diversify

its trade, in part to reduce its reliance on China, and plug a gap in skilled labour.

Both countries are pushing for a quick trade deal between the European Union and Mercosur, South America's major trading bloc over which Brazil currently presides. "It is known that we support and strive for this agreement and also want it to be concluded really swiftly," a spokesperson for the German economy ministry said on Friday.

A trade treaty was agreed in principle in 2019 after two decades of talks, but additional environmental commitments demanded by the EU led Brazil and Argentina to seek new concessions that prolonged negotiations.

"Free trade agreements open access to new markets that in particular the export-oriented German economy can benefit from," said Lukas Koehler, a senior lawmaker with the Free Democrats (FDP), junior partner in Scholz's three-way coalition.

Philippines deploys vessels to monitor 'illegal' presence of Chinese boats in South China Sea

Monitoring Desk
MANILA: The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) has deployed two of its vessels in the South China Sea after monitoring an "alarming" increase in the number of Chinese maritime militia vessels at a reef within the country's exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

The number of Chinese boats believed to be manned by militia personnel has increased to more than 135 from 111 in November, scattered within the Whitsun Reef, which Manila calls the Julian Felipe Reef, the PCG said in a statement. "The PCG maintains its unwavering commitment to safeguarding maritime security, safety and the marine environment in the course of protecting the territorial integrity, sovereignty, sovereign rights, and jurisdiction of the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea," it said.

The West Philippine Sea is Manila's term for waters in the South China Sea that fall within its 200-nautical mile EEZ.

There was no immediate comment from the Chinese Embassy in Manila.

An international tribunal invalidated China's claim to 90% of the South China Sea in 2016, but Beijing does not recognise the ruling. China has built islands in the disputed waters in recent years, laying air strips on some of them.

Taiwan, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Brunei all claim parts of the sea.

The PCG's report comes several days after the Philippines carried out joint air and sea patrols with the United States, which was followed by a similar undertaking with Australia in the South China Sea, fanning tension with Beijing.

The Philippines is ramping up efforts to counter what it describes as China's "aggressive activities" in the South China Sea, which has also become a naval flashpoint for Chinese and U.S. tension.

China has accused the Philippines of enlisting "foreign forces" to patrol the South China Sea and stirring up trouble.

Residents begin to return home after Philippine quake kills one

Monitoring Desk
MANILA: Philippine residents were allowed to return to their homes on Sunday after a magnitude 7.4 earthquake struck the country's south, killing at least one person, with disaster officials reporting minor damage to some infrastructure.

The Saturday night quake shook parts of Surigao Del Sur and Davao Oriental provinces, triggering coastal evacuations and tsunami alerts in the country and in Japan.

A woman was killed when a wall collapsed as she and her family were fleeing their home in search of safety in Tagum city in Davao del Norte province, said disaster official Mon Cabonilas.

"The tsunami threat associated with this earthquake has now largely passed the Philippines," the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said in a

statement but advised people in threatened communities to heed the instructions from local authorities.

In the coastal town of Carrascal in Surigao del Sur, all evacuees have returned to their homes, disaster official Antonio told DWPM radio station. "We are ready in case there is a need to evacuate again."

More than 600 aftershocks were recorded, and Phivolcs urged caution as people resumed normal activities.

The Philippine Coast Guard put all its vessels and aircraft on alert for potential dispatch.

"We started going back to our homes early on Sunday, although we are still shaking because of aftershocks," Julita Bicap, 51, a front desk staffer at GLC Suites hotel in the seaside town of Bislig, said on Sunday morning after power was restored around 5am (2100 GMT).

Ashrafi emphasises collective efforts to promote interfaith harmony

LAHORE (APP): Special Representative to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony and the Pakistani Diaspora in Middle East and Islamic Countries Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi has stressed the need for collective efforts from all stakeholders to promote interfaith harmony in the country, as it is the key pillar of development.

He was addressing the Interfaith Harmony Council conference, hosted by International Interfaith Harmony Council here at a local hotel on Sunday. The conference was arranged with an aimed to bringing together a diverse array of religious scholars and leaders from various faiths, all

united under the common goal of promoting harmony and thwarting divisive agendas. Ashrafi, who is also the chairman of Pakistan Ulama Council, said the most important thing for interfaith harmony was mutual respect between religious denominations and the acceptance of others, adding that nobody should abandon their religion and beliefs, nor should they attack the religion and beliefs of others.

The Pakistan's Constitution guaranteed the rights of every citizen living in the country, he remarked and mentioned that minority communities should come together for development of the country. He said that every reli-

gion teaches peace and love and discourages hatred, adding that the government and security forces had always stood shoulder to shoulder with the minority communities. Ashrafi said that Pakistan always desires peaceful and productive relations with all neighboring countries, adding that peace is the only message of Pakistan as it is curtail for any country's development. He said that state-of-the-art facilities were being provided to religious tourists as per direction of Caretaker Prime Minister and Army Chief. He said Pakistan always wholeheartedly welcomed all religious tourists coming from across the world.

Kartarpur Corridor was made operational as a gesture of peace and the Sikh pilgrims were invited to visit their holy places in Pakistan. He mentioned that Muslim religious leaders were also playing their effective role for promotion of interfaith harmony in the country, adding that Islam always advocates peace as forced marriages and forced conversions of religion was prohibited in Islam.

He said that Gaza was not an issue of Palestine or Arab nations, but of entire humanity. He asked the world what was fault of innocent children of Gaza as more than 3,500 children had been martyred in Israeli aggression since October 7.



LAHORE: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Interfaith Harmony Maulana Tahir Ashrafi addressing during Interfaith Harmony Conference at local hotel.



DUBAI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar meets the Pakistani students who won the award in one of the categories of Zayed Sustainability Awards 2023.

Levies rendered great sacrifices in war against terror: Jan Achakzai & Zubair Jamali pay homage to martyr Levies personnel

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai and Minister for Home, Mir Zubair Jamali have expressed condolence and deep grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of two Levies force cops in Duki.

In their separate condolence and condemnation statements issued here on Sunday, they paid homage to the Levies force personnel martyred in exchange of fire with armed criminals. Jan Achakzai said that we are proud of sacrifices of the martyrs. He said

that our brave Levies jawans embraced martyrdom during the operation against criminals.

He expressed condolence with the bereaved families of the martyrs and prayed for them.

He also prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed souls into its eternal peace and give enough strength and patience to the bereaved families to bear the tragic loss.

Similarly, Mir Zubair Jamali said that Levies force has rendered great sacrifices in the war against terrorism.

He said that the whole nation is proud of the services of the security forces and is standing by them.

The caretaker Chief Minister said that we are proud of the bravery of our brave jawans of Levies force who embraced martyrdom in the line of duty.

He said that we would not let the bereaved families of martyrs alone.

He also directed to the concerned authorities to complete the process of payment of the compensation and other incentives to the bereaved families under Shuhada package imm.

Peace, love, hospitality woven into tapestry of Sindhi culture: Zardari

KARACHI (INP): Former president Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday felicitated all Sindhis on the occasion of Sindhi Culture Day.

In his felicitation message, the PPP leader said that nations are identified by their cultures, and the culture of Sindhi has a history of peace, love, bravery and hospitality.

Zardari recalled that the PPP founding leader, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, had established a ministry to preserve the cultures of all communities residing in Pakistan.

He said that the Lok Virsa Museum in Islamabad narrates the history of the cultures of the communities residing in the country.

Extending congratulations to the people of Sindhi and the entire country on Sindhi Culture Day, PPP Women Wing Central President Faryal Talpur said that the culture of the Indus Valley is a mirror of a 5,000-year-old and great civilisation. She said that Sindhi topi, Ajrak, art and the Sindhi language are distinct identities. Talpur stated that Pakistan is immensely rich in unparalleled cultural heritage, and "it is the responsibility of all of us to play our role in preserving and promoting this great heritage."

The media should also play a leadership role in promoting all cultures of Pakistan, she added.

ANP ready for general election: Aimal Wali

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial President of Awami National Party (ANP), Aimal Wali Khan here Sunday said that free, fair and transparent election would help strengthen democracy on the country and his party was ready for February 8, 2024 election.

Addressing a big public gathering here, the ANP leader said that his party after winning the election would remove the 10 years long sense of deprivation of people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as according to him PTI had failed to address masses issues.

He claimed that PTI had disappointed the people in its nearly 10 years unpopular rule and his party would start development projects for socioeconomic emancipation of electorates on uniformed basis. Aimal Wali said ANP would field candidates in all constituencies and would achieve landslide victory. Aimal Wali said that his party would continue struggle for rights of people and supremacy of democracy. He urged party workers to start mobilization of masses for election and informed them about the party manifesto.

Greets Sindhi people on Sindhi Culture Day: CM stresses need to celebrate important days of all nationalities at national level

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardaan Khan Domki has stressed the need to celebrate important days of all nationalities at national level in order to promote peaceful environment. In a message issued on the Sindhi Culture Day observed on Sunday, the Chief Minister congratulated the Sindhi brethren and sisters living all over the world on their Culture Day.

He said we need to celebrate the important days of all nationalities so that they could play their role in development and prosperity of the country.

The Chief Minister

said culture spreads the colour of happiness in life of the people. He said that the culture of Pakistan is a combination and bouquet of different cultures and the Sindhi culture is prominent among them. He also said that the Sindhi culture is the culture of peace, love, beautiful tradition and solidarity. He said that it is our top responsibility to keep alive all cultures of Pakistan and motivate the younger generation to get education and consciousness.

He said that culture, civilization, love and human respect is the name of connecting with the motherland.

PM commends UAE's \$30bln climate fund as historic

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar while lauding the United Arab Emirates announcement of a \$30 billion fund to channel investments to mitigate climate change, has said that the climate fund initiative by the UAE is promising and will be translated into tangible projects, especially in the Global South.

However, at the same time, the prime minister noted that the challenge was global, and the contribution has to be global as well. "It is not just the UAE who should cater to climate mitigation," he opined during an interview with Aletihad, a UAE newspaper.

The caretaker prime minister also highlighted the

importance of modern knowledge-based economies and the transformation towards low carbon, adding that Pakistan considered the climate change a "national security challenge" and a shared global issue.

He said the climate change was a common challenge to all of them, whether it was a small nation or a large nation.

Elaborating his viewpoint, the caretaker prime minister further said that one could not rely on the assumption that drought would only affect a particular country, or a hurricane would target a specific nation, or the melting of a glacier would only occur in certain regions.

"Yes, there will be more vulnerable countries,

but that vulnerability does not protect others. Climate change is changing its face, shape, and form, affecting more or less the entire globe," the media outlet quoted the prime minister as saying.

Emphasising the need for solutions, he said that scientific and empirical evidence should guide governments. Vulnerable nations as well as emitters determined the terms of reference for dialogue. These terms outlined the role of all contributors, he observed.

"Rather than being judgemental, the focus should be on resolving the challenge, and the key question is who would play that role?" the caretaker prime minister said.

Pakistan defeats India, bags vice-chairmanship of UNESCO executive board

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan has been elected as Vice Chair of the UNESCO executive board defeating its historical opponent India by 20 votes for the term 2023 to 2025. Pakistan was elected as Vice Chair of the UNESCO Executive Board for the term 2023-2025 from the Asia Pacific Group. The elections were held at the 218th Session of the UNESCO Executive Board held in Paris.

In the elections, Pakistan secured 38 votes whereas India got 18.

The re-election of Pakistan for the UNESCO Executive Board will very beneficial for the country.

PM greets people on observance of Sindhi Cultural Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Sunday congratulated the people of Sindhi province on observance of Sindhi Cultural Day and said that the Sindhi culture was one of the fascinating colours of different civilizations and cultures of Pakistan.



QUETTA: President of Local Councils Officers Association, Hafiz Munir Ahmad Kurd along with others addresses to media persons during press conference held at Quetta press club.

Speakers for holistic, inclusive strategy to address PWDs challenges

QUETTA (APP): The speakers at a seminar in connection with the Person With Disabilities (PWDs) global day called for a holistic and inclusive strategy to address the challenges faced by the marginalized communities of the society that demand urgent attention to become an active member of the society.

On the occasion, Secretary Social Welfare Syed Sikandar Shah, Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafiqat, Senior Area Program Manager of Islamic Relief Afzal Haider Khan, President Quetta Online Zia Khan, DG Social Welfare Tariq Mengal, Dr. Humayun Amiri, Dr. Saeed Ullah representative of Mercy Corps, Dr. Sarmad, Dr. Ayub Akbari, Nasir Iqbal, Dr. Tahir Rashid from BRSP, Ahmed Jalal, Riyaz Baloch,

Zarghuna Wado were present. Balochistan Caretaker Chief Minister Ali Mardaan Khan Domki and Adviser to CM for Social Welfare Shania Khan were also participated in the ceremony. Secretary Social Welfare Syed Sikandar Shah called to play a joint role to utilize the talent of persons with disabilities and make them useful citizens in order to put the country on the path of development and prosperity. He said "we have to provide them with education and training, rehabilitation services and access to information and communication technology to meet the demands of the present age." The Secretary while addressing a ceremony organized in the collaboration of Islamic Relief, Quetta Online, Social Welfare Department, UNICEF, Mercy Corps and other organizations.



KARACHI: Folk singer performing Sindhi song during celebration of Sindhi Ajrak Topi Culture Day at Karachi Press Club.

Sirajul Haq deems PM 'selection' between blue-eyed, super blue-eyed persons unacceptable

LAHORE (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami chief Sirajul Haq on Sunday said that the 'selection' of the prime minister based on being either a blue-eyed person or a super blue-eyed person in the next general elections is not acceptable—an obvious reference to the PML-N supremo and the former PTI chairman.

The JI leader, during a press conference at Mansoor, stressed the need for a systemic change

in the country, saying that it went beyond merely changing faces.

He expressed his concern over the escalating injustice and despair in the country, highlighting the distress of the common man as the entire nation remains entangled in a quagmire.

"The country's youth will continue their efforts from December 10 to February 8 for the elections. We are hopeful that the elections will be held in the

country. The country will have to face severe hardships if the democracy is derailed," he said.

The JI chief berated former rulers for prioritising stashing of their bank balances over public welfare.

According to Siraj, the past decade has been a nightmare for the people, witnessing a sequence of governments, including the PTI, a coalition government for 16 months, and now a caretaker setup.



QUETTA: Members of Supreme Welfare Society and disable persons participate in awareness walk, in connection of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, held at Quetta press club.

Missing facilities exposing citizens to health hazards

QUETTA (APP): Insufficient facilities of standard Intensive Care Units (ICUs) and Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) laboratories as well as ineffective scientific approach to deal with epidemics exposed thousands of Balochistan residents to hazardous spread of epidemics. Application of scientific approaches like Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) and Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) was also yet to be fully in place as witnessed in recent emergence of Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever virus (CCHF).

Healthcare staff including doctors, nurses and paramedics was also seen falling short of meeting international standards of treatment for CCHF as its recent spread claimed four lives and many had to be shifted to Karachi hospitals.

Although timely efforts of the caretaker government yielded some positive results, minimizing the risk of the epidemic spread to a great extent, yet one doctor, a paramedic and two other citizens lost their lives in recent sudden outbreak of the epidemic. However, the year-wide figure of deceased and infected people had been.....and..... respectively. This situation raises multiple questions on existing flaws within the health system urging the need for better adherence to global guidelines designed for best healthcare and curbing the spread of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and pathogens. "Soon after the CCHF outbreak in Quetta, the health department shifted the infected patients including doctors, nurses and health workers to Karachi to control the situation.

NAB Balochistan inspires student talent with divisional competitions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Balochistan in collaboration with the Education Department, on Sunday conducted divisional-level competitions, featuring declamation, essay writing in Urdu and English, calligraphy and poster making for college students in Quetta, Pishin and Chaman districts.

The NAB arranges annual competitions for students in universities,

colleges, and schools, aiming to cultivate awareness and vigilance against corruption.

Dr. Saeed Ahmed Khan from Mercy Corps Balochistan served as the chief guest, alongside the

guests of honor Director NAB Balochistan Haroon Rasheed and Director of Higher and Technical Education Colleges Professor Dr. Kaleemullah. Apart from them, a large number of teachers and students

from other educational institutions were present.

The students conveyed their perspectives on the detrimental effects of corruption in their own and unique ways. Throughout the program, the chief

guest, Director NAB Haroon Rasheed and other guests shared their sentiments opposing corruption. In their speeches, they underscored the vital role of educational institutions in combating corruption.

Three siblings among five dead in road accidents

NAWABSHAH (INP): As many as five people were killed in two accidents in parts of the country on Sunday. According to the details, three siblings were crushed by an over-speeding truck in Nawabshah, Sindh. The tragic accident took place at Sarhari link road in Nawabshah. The details showed that all four brothers were going to their work when they were crushed by an over-speeding truck. Three brothers were killed on the spot while one sustained injuries. The deceased and the injured were shifted to the Sakrand hospital. The deceased were later identified as 18-year old Saman Khaskheli, 40-year old Gul Sher Khaskheli and 24-year old Munawar Khaskheli.



QUETTA: Balochistan Archery Association leader, Asif Lango addresses to participants during seminar organized by Balochistan Archery Association, held at Quetta press club.

PTI's intra-party election against principles of democracy: Khattak

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarians (PTIP) Chairman, Pervez Khattak here Sunday said that the intra-party election of PTI was against the principles of democracy and the right to vote. Expressing his concerns over the intra-party election of Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf, Pervez Khattak termed the PTI's intra-party election as a political gimmick and merely paperwork.

Talking to media persons here, Pervez Khattak said the PTI election has

revealed a lack of democracy in the party.

He claimed that the former chairman of PTI did not tolerate anyone and his irrational decisions caused the dissolution of Punjab and KP assemblies.

Following the end of the PTI Government in the centre, Pervez Khattak claimed that the former PTI chairman thought he would not let the country run and wanted to spread political chaos in the country, and KP and Punjab assemblies were prematurely dissolved.