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By 5-1 majority SC suspends verdict of nullifying civilians' trial in army courts

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court (SC) on Wednesday conditionally suspended its verdict dated October 23, in which it had nullified the trial of civilian accused in the army courts. The Supreme Court allowed the trial of civilians to continue in military courts, but the final decision regarding the trial would be subject to the judgment of the apex court. The court said that the trial of 103 civilians accused of May 9 riots would continue in army courts but the

final judgments wouldn't be issued till the decision of the top court. A six-member larger bench of the top court, headed by Justice Sardar Tariq Masood and comprising Justice Amin ud Din Khan, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Musarrat Hilali and Justice Sadaat Irfan Khan heard the intra-court appeals against the verdict in army courts case. The decision was suspended by a majority of 5-

1, as Justice Musarrat Hilali dissented from it. During the course of proceedings, Justice Sardar Tariq Masood remarked that those who martyred the military men would not be tried now because the law has been repealed. He questioned that under which law the trial of these civilians who killed 23 soldiers yesterday, be done now. He further said that after the repeal of Section 2 (1) D, where would the trial of terrorists be held.

Salman Akram Raja Advocate said that he would give arguments if he was allowed. Defence Ministry's lawyer Khawaja Haris argued that the judgment dated 23rd October didn't mention that under which Articles of the Constitution, the provisions of Army Act were declared unconstitutional. He said that in the case of Brig (reted) F.B Ali, the Army Act's sections were

Continued on page 2



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



QUETTA: Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar visiting stalls during Job Fairs held at BUTEMS

Wali Kakar inaugurates Job fair at BUTEMS: Governor calls for creating collaboration between academia & industry as per our social requirements

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stressed that we have to create collaboration between the academia and industry according to our social requirements. He said that it is a fact that government can't provide jobs to millions of the people, therefore, we have to strengthen our private sector. The Governor was speaking to the media persons on occasion of the in-

auguration of Job fair at BUTEMS here on Wednesday. The Governor maintained that the job fair provide male and female students of the Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences access to the national and international companies. The stalls were set up by the national and international companies besides the banks at the job fair. The Governor visited all the stalls one by one where he was briefed by the

representatives of the respective organizations. He said that it's not possible for the government to tackle the issue of unemployment alone, rather the government should provide maximum facilities to the people associated with the trade and commerce so that they may play their role in ending unemployment. Earlier, the Governor inaugurated the job fair. Also present on the occasion were the Vice Chancellor of BUTEMS and other concerned high ups.



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

Bilawal calls for national unity to wipe out terrorism from country

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Wednesday, strongly condemning the terrorist attack on police and security forces in D I Khan, called for national unity to wipe out the menace from the country. Addressing the lawyers' convention, he said that the terrorism and extremism in their forms and manifestations could not be eliminated until all the stakeholders and political entities joined hands in the war against them. He said that the recent wave of terrorism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was regrettable as the people of the province, including police, youth, citizens and lawyers, had already made many sacrifices in the war against the menace. He said many terrorists were languishing in jails before the Taliban government took over in Afghanistan, who were later released. Those who facilitated their

settlement and release from the jails should be exposed and punished, he demanded. Meanwhile Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said a vibrant and reinvigorated democratic process was the sole option to put the country's economy on a path of development and progress. Addressing a lawyers' convention, he said that under the democratic system, Pakistan could get rid of current challenging circumstances, adding the lawyer fraternity always played a vital role for the supremacy of law and struggle for democratic process. He said that the leader of the people and the then Prime Minister of Pakistan Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto had to face the consequences of flawed judicial process. He said: "I am grateful for the struggle that the lawyers have started to get justice for the leader of the people Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto."

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

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MOITT) Dr. Umar Saif on Wednesday said that the federal cabinet has approved the country's first-ever "National Space Policy." Speaking at a press conference alongside the Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi and the Caretaker Federal Minister for Health, he explained that the approved policy establishes the framework for utilizing Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Communication Satellites. This authorization al-

lows private companies to offer services to consumers in Pakistan, marking a significant milestone in the country's space program, he added. The minister highlighted that this development signifies a crucial moment for Pakistan's space program, as it enables enhanced communication capabilities through advanced satellite technology. The approval of the National Space Policy is expected to facilitate improved telecommunications services, fostering advancements in connectivity and information dissemination across the country.

Continued on page 2



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

SC's verdict on military courts surely bad news for pleaders of terrorism, disturbance & political riots: Jan

Caretaker Minister Information describes DI Khan terrorism incident as 9/11 of Pakistan; asserts revenge of every drop of blood would be taken

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has termed the Supreme Court's verdict on the trial of civilians in the military courts as historic and said that it is surely a bad news for those indulged in terrorism as well as pleaders of disturbance and political riots in the country. He said that the apex court backed the state by giving the verdict on crucial matter while ignoring the negative propaganda and



pressure groups of a particular political party. He said that the state of Pakistan would be

strengthened with the significant verdict of the Supreme Court, which suspended the previous verdict against the trial of civilians in the military courts. The caretaker Minister Information was addressing a hurriedly called press conference at Quetta Press Club on Wednesday. Giving his reaction over the SC's verdict on the military courts, the Minister Information said that the apex court sided by the state in the important mat-

Continued on page 2

OIC expresses concern over Indian Supreme Court's verdict on IIOJK

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

occupied Jammu and Kashmir on 5 August 2019. According to Kashmir Media Service, the OIC General Secretariat in a statement issued in Jeddah in reference to the decisions and resolutions of the Islamic Summit and the OIC Council of Foreign Minis-

ters related to the Kashmir dispute reiterated its call to reverse all illegal and unilateral measures taken by the Modi regime since 5 August 2019 aimed at changing the internationally-recognized disputed status of the occupied territory.

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

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar said on Wednesday that terrorists had already lost the war, emphasizing the nation's unwavering resilience against this scourge and preparedness to deliver a fitting response to terrorism. "I want to tell the perpetrators that you have already lost the war. Only the declaration is yet to be made and the time is yet to be finalized. They are fighting a lost war and we are fighting a war already won by us, Alhamdulillah," he said talking to the media at the Combined Military Hospital after inquiring about the health of the soldiers injured in a terrorist attack that took place on Tuesday. He said he was amazed to witness the strong conviction of the soldiers who were resolved to fight the terrorists even while being injured. He said those supporting the war against terrorism would stand victorious in the world as well as the life hereafter but contrarily, the terrorists had not only

Continued on page 2

Nawaz Sharif demands accountability of 'conspirators'

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz supreme and three-time prime minister Nawaz Sharif on Wednesday said he did not believe in revenge but those "conspiring" against his government must be held accountable. Addressing the PML-N Parliamentary body meeting, Nawaz Sharif thanked Allah after his acquittal in the Al-Azizia and Avenfield reference. Nawaz Sharif said cases against him were registered after the end of his government and his removal as prime minister. There was

no proof of the allegations leveled against me, Sharif said. The former prime minister regretted, that he was removed as prime minister on 'Iqama' in Panama case in the end. During Panama hearing words like Sicilian Mafia and Godfather were used against me, Nawaz Sharif said and asked do judges use these words? The PML-N supreme stressed that vendetta wasn't his goal; however, the individuals responsible for the nation's sufferings should be held answerable.

Pakistan, Turkey vow to boost collaboration in aviation industry

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



The meeting underscored several key areas of mutual interest with a special focus on bilateral training, progress of current joint ventures and exploration of further avenues of collaboration in the aviation industry, a Pakistan Air Force (PAF) news release said. During the meeting Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, shared the framework of PAF's comprehensive modernization strategy involving integration of emerging technologies, bolstering critical infrastructure and a comprehensive restructuring of its training set-up, in order to address contemporary air warfare challenges.

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

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief of his own faction of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazlur Rehman said that his party was ready to form a coalition government with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). Talking to media persons on Wednesday, he said that JUI-F has not held talks with the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) regarding seat adjustment and

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



QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Trade, Industry Excise & Taxation and Energy Prince Ahmed Ali Ahmedzai addressing a meeting organized by Balochistan Public Private Partnership

Pak expects raising \$4.5bln this year: Shamsad Akhtar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamsad Akhtar said Pakistan anticipates raising approximately \$4.5 billion from multilateral and bilateral sources...

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

7.7% of GDP during FY2023 as compared to 7.9% last year while current account deficit FY2023 narrowed down by 87.2% to \$ 2.2 billion against a deficit of \$ 17.5 billion in FY 2022.

KPGovernor,CM review law & order situation after DI Khan attack

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



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs meeting of the federal cabinet.

Shaheen Shah Afridi named vice-captain for Australia Test series

Sports Desk SYDNEY: As Pakistan gear up for the Benaud-Qadir Trophy against Australia, pace star Shaheen Shah Afridi has been named the vice-captain for the national squad for the three match Test series...

their Test debut for Pakistan in the first Test. It is pertinent here to mention that Pakistan have not won a Test on Australian soil since 1995.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister for National Education of Turkey Yusuf Tekin stated joint initiatives as Jinnah Young Writers Award are reflective of our commitment to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and friendship and pass it on to our future generations as a sacred trust.

Naval Chief hails PMSA for effective law enforcement at sea

ISLAMABAD (APP): Security Operations, carried out by Pakistan Maritime Security Agency to uphold regulations and rule-based order at sea and safeguard the maritime interests of the country.

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



QUETTA: A MoU is being signed between UNHCR and BUTEMS in presence of Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

DC Duki pays surprise visit to hospital

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Duki Captain (Rtd) Fayaz Ali paid a surprise visit to the District Headquarters Hospital on Wednesday.

Awards ceremony for 6th edition of 'Jinnah Young Writers Award' held in Ankara

ANKARA (INP): Awards ceremony for sixth edition of 'Jinnah Young Writers Award', essay competition was held in Ankara on Wednesday.

DC Duki pays surprise visit to hospital

During the visit, he inspected various departments of the hospital including the emergency ward, OPD, X-ray room, laboratory and reviewed cleanliness, staff attendance, and stock of medicines and also inquired from the patients about the facilities provided to them.



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

Federal cabinet approves...

Continued from page 1 He mentioned that the policy had been prepared in consultation with all stakeholders over three months, ensuring a balanced approach to facilitate private companies.

tion technology) ministers after a meeting of the Federal Cabinet. The cabinet meeting was presided over by Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

SC's verdict...

Continued from page 1 ters related to its security. He regretfully pointed out that a political party run the negative campaign against the Chief Justice and bench hearing the case.



GWADAR: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Sports and Culture Nawabzada Mir Jamal Khan Raisani watching fine arts during Youth Festival

اطلاع برائے انٹرویو فوٹ شدہ ملازمین کے لواحقین

Table with 4 columns: Serial No, Name, Date, and Remarks. Lists names of employees and their family members.

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PAKISTAN RAILWAYS TENDER NOTICE. Sealed tenders are invited by the Divisional Superintendent Pakistan Railways, Quetta from approved contractors/firms/companies duly registered with sales tax department (active in FBR Department) for supply of common user items.

Terrorists already lost war...

Continued from page 1 He said the whole nation stood united against terrorism and was resolved to defeat the evil in all of its forms and manifestations.

SC suspends verdict of ...

Continued from page 1 upheld. A 17-member full court bench had also declared the judgments as correct during hearing a case pertaining to the 21st Amendment.

ڈاکٹر شمس جزل (پیشہ ورانہ) لائسنس یافتہ ایجوکیشنل ایڈیٹر ڈپٹی ڈائریکٹر پبلسٹیٹی ڈیپارٹمنٹ بلوچستان گورنمنٹ



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

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindh on Wednesday said that we need to promote Arabic literature in Pakistan. He said this while addressing the opening session of the two-day international conference on 'Modern Trends in the Arab Novel in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century', at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). The minister said, 'Learning Arabic is considered essential for every Muslim. In Pakistan, there is a need to promote Arabic literature. This conference is on a unique and most important topic.'

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission, British Council, and Prime Minister's Youth Programme have entered a new partnership to collaborate in their flagship programmes aimed to contribute to the economic and social development of the Pakistani youth. The tripartite collaboration will be focused on the outcomes of the Prime Minister Youth Programme's Green Youth Movement, HEC's Green Youth Movement, and the British Council's Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative (PYLI).

SC decides to hear all lifetime disqualification cases together

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court (SC) has decided to hear all identical cases pertaining to lifetime disqualification under Article 62(1)(f) of the Constitution together. These cases, and any others involving the same question, should be fixed for hearing in early January, 2024 before a bench constituted by the committee under the Act, the court said in its written order pertaining to the hearing of an appeal of JUI-F's former MPA Meer Badshah Qaisrani against his lifetime disqualification. The apex court said that the general elections of 2008 required candidates to have a minimum graduation qualification. Some candidates made misdeclarations in their requisite nomination papers, some produced degrees from unrecognized institutions and others fake degrees to show eligibility of their participation in the general elections.

COMSTech, Huawei join forces to fortify OIC's Scientific Landscape

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministerial Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) COMSTech and Huawei Technologies Pakistan have forged a strategic partnership to bolster national cybersecurity and advance capabilities in areas crucial to the OIC member states including cybersecurity, AI, and 5G. In an effort to address the escalating importance of cybersecurity in the digital era, the collaboration between COMSTech and Huawei aims to elevate the cybersecurity proficiency of OIC member states.



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



ISLAMABAD: IESCO workers busy installing new electricity meters in residential flats at G-7 in Federal Capital.

Dense fog to engulf few plain areas of Punjab: PMD

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dense fog is likely to persist in few plain areas of Punjab during the next 24 hours reducing the visibility level, according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD)'s forecast. Fog/smog is also likely to persist in upper Sindh, plain areas of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during morning and night hours.

WaterAid unveils strategy to accelerate progress in WASH initiatives

ISLAMABAD (APP): WaterAid Pakistan on Wednesday unveiled its ambitious Country Programme Strategy for the period 2023-2028, with a focus on accelerating progress in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) initiatives across the country. The strategy aims to prioritize the integration of WASH within the health sector, intending to make substantial contributions to public health outcomes said a news release.

APS attack anniversary: 9 yrs on, Pakistan's anti-terror strife continues to safeguard nation, thwart enemies' designs

ISLAMABAD (APP): As the country observes the ninth anniversary of the terrorist attack at the Army Public School in Peshawar on December 16, the Pakistani nation stood resilient with a commitment to combating terrorism while persistently pursuing the goals of safeguarding its citizens and thwarting the sinister designs of its enemies. In an inhumane terrorist attack on December 16, 2014, the militants attacked the Army Public School (APS) in Peshawar, and over 140 people including students and teachers were martyred. Termed Pakistan's 9/11, the day serves as a reminder of Pakistan's enduring dedication to countering the menace of terrorism and ensuring the safety of its people.

WaterAid unveils strategy to accelerate progress in WASH initiatives

ISLAMABAD (APP): WaterAid Pakistan on Wednesday unveiled its ambitious Country Programme Strategy for the period 2023-2028, with a focus on accelerating progress in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) initiatives across the country. The strategy aims to prioritize the integration of WASH within the health sector, intending to make substantial contributions to public health outcomes said a news release.



ISLAMABAD: Deserving children waiting to receive free food from charitable people in a ground at sector G-11 in Federal Capital.



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

IHC instructs police to recover missing ex-MPA

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday instructed the police to recover missing former MPA Chaudhry Arshad till December 19. An IHC's bench heard the case filed by Rasheed Begum, the sister of missing MPA, seeking early recovery of the victim. The petition said that Chaudhry Arshad was abducted by some policemen from Sector F-8/3 of the Federal Capital. The Senior Superintendent of Police (Operations) Islamabad appeared before the court and expressed anonymity about the missing person. He said that Chaudhry Arshad was not in the custody of Islamabad Police. The court instructed the police to take measures for the recovery of the victim and adjourned hearing till next date.

PSW begins Phased Implementation of DRAP e-services

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Single Window (PSW) in collaboration with the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) has successfully integrated all existing entities, licenses and product registration of drugs with the PSW platform and has begun the gradual roll-out of various services. The initiative was aimed to enhance transparency, efficiency and ease of doing business for pharmaceutical companies, commercial importers, healthcare institutions and humanitarian organizations involved in imports of finished drugs, according to a press release received here on Wednesday. In the current phase, PSW will offer digital services related to the electronic submission and issuance of Drug Import Licenses of all types, along with the release order for donated unregistered drugs imported by hospitals, NGOs and other organizations. The services shall be available on the PSW platform from the beginning of January 2024 and are envisaged to reduce the time and cost of pharmaceutical imports to ensure faster delivery to the sick and needy. In this regard, a webinar was organized by PSW for Drug Import License holders, Drug Manufacturing License holders, Custom Agents and members of various trade and pharmaceutical associations and chambers to give them a walkthrough of the new processes and facilitate a seamless transition to the digital environment.

IHC reserves decision on Saghi's re-inclusion in NA-53

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday reserved its decision on the plea for the re-inclusion of Saghi in NA-53, the constituency of former interior minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan. IHC Chief Justice Amir Farooq on Wednesday heard the plea of Shiekh Sajid-ur-Rehman. The defence counsel argued that the demarcation of NA-53 was not conducted in accordance with the law. In response, the lawyer for Election Commission of Pakistan stated that the demarcation was carried out in alignment with the directions of the Supreme Court. After listening to the arguments of both sides, the court reserved its decision.

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

ISLAMABAD: Following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police has launched an awareness campaign in federal capital to eradicate drug abuse and secure the young generation from the curse of narcotics. As part of this initiative, the Capital Police Officer Security Division conducted an enlightening lecture at Quaid-e-Azam University, focusing on the damages of substance abuse and measures for prevention. The lecture witnessed participation from professors, students, and university staff. The Capital Police Officer highlighted the detrimental effects of drug usage, especially among the youth, emphasizing its threat to both health and future prospects.



Police Officer addressing students on drugs awareness at Quaid-e-Azam University.

Islamabad police nab 18 outlaws; recover cache of narcotics, alcohol

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Police on Wednesday claimed to arrest 18 outlaws and recover drugs and alcohol from their possession. According to a police spokesman, the Karachi company police team arrested an accused namedly Waseem Masih and recovered one dagger from his possession. Golra police team arrested an accused namedly Ali involved in the illegal sale of petroleum products. The Sumbal police team arrested an accused namedly Hasnain Haider and recovered 1260 grams of hashish from his possession.

Orderly room held with focus on addressing police officials' concerns

ISLAMABAD: Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad, Muhammad Sarfraz Virk conducted an orderly room session at the traffic police headquarters, with the aim of promptly and effectively resolving institutional and personal matters affecting police personnel. The orderly room serves as a dedicated platform to prioritize and address the concerns raised by police officers and officials, emphasizing the importance of their welfare and timely issue resolution. During the session, officials from the Islamabad Capital Police actively participated, bringing forth a range of personal and official concerns for discussion with the Chief Traffic Officer. Immediate directions were issued to resolve pressing matters, with senior officers tasked to address remaining issues promptly. Sarfraz Virk highlighted various measures taken to enhance the welfare of police personnel. These initiatives include improvements in residence facilities, enhanced healthcare provisions, and an elevation of educational standards.

Minister emphasizes pivotal role of research in societal impact

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

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

Dr. Akram highlighted the urgency for Pakistan to focus on biotechnology, expressing concern over the absence of a single biotechnology plant in the country compared to China's 3,000 facilities. Propelled by the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi, Dr. Akram revealed plans to establish biotechnology parks in Pakistan.

Anticipating Pakistan



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

Minister for NMDs chairs steering committee meeting

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

During the meeting, the committee reviewed progress on various tasks assigned to relevant departments by the Special Task Force and Steering Committee in previous decisions. Additional Chief Secretary Planning and Development Department Syed Imtiaz Hussain Shah, officers of the Pakistan Army, secretaries of the Department of Health, Industry, Irrigation, Communications and Works, Higher Education, Relief and Rehabilitation, including Special Secretaries of Home, Health and Agriculture Departments, police officers and other relevant officials attended the meeting.

In the meeting,



LAHORE: Press Club President, Azam Chaudhry is inaugurating the Digital studio at the Lahore Press Club.

Officers participating in 34th Senior Management Course visit RUDA

LAHORE (APP): Ravi Urban Development Authority (RUDA) is working towards the revival of River Ravi along with other initiatives, which will be beneficial for the general public. CEO RUDA Imran Amin said this while speaking to the delegation of government officials currently participating in 34th Senior Management Course (SMC) at National Institute of Management (NIM) during their visit to RUDA. The delegation was briefed about the functioning and initiatives of RUDA. Imran Amin said that policy formulation and

implementation at strategic and operational level is prerequisite for organizational growth, which is being followed in true letter and spirit. The delegation, while expressing gratitude, appreciated the efforts of CEO RUDA Imran Amin and his team for ensuring essential components of organizational practices with an aim at focusing on housing challenges of service delivery. Furthermore, the delegation was also taken for field visit to Industrial Area and at the site of Chaharbagh to brief on ground development projects.



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

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

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

He was addressing the convocation of Rehman Medical College as a Chief Guest. The ceremony was also attended by Caretaker Health Minister, Qasim Jan, Health Advisor, Dr. Riaz Anwar, Vice Chancellor Khyber Medical University, Dr. Zia-ul-Haq, Chairman RMI, Dr. Muhammad Rehman, faculty members, and students.

Five SHOs reshuffled in DI Khan

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

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

Malik Sajid was posted as SHO Saddar police station, Attaullah posted as SHO Dera Town police station, Khubab Baloch posted as SHO Yarik police station, Ghaffar Khan posted as SHO Daraban police station, while Zeshan Iqbal posted as SHO Khoi Bahara police station.

Two bodies found in Ghazi Brotha water channel

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

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

He said that a maximum portion of the budget was being spent on health as the government must ensure the provision of health facilities to people.

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

He advised doctors to be more polite and cooperative and listen to the ordeal of their patients

with patience. He also urged doctors to venture into the field of research and innovation for the benefit of patients. He also distributed degrees and commendation certificates among students and congratulated parents for the success of their children.

Later, the Governor met with a delegation of the All Pakistan Marble Industries Association that was led by Asghar Khan Utmarkhel. The delegation informed the governor about their problems relating to mining material, under-construction roads in Mohmand district, and granite and marble mining.

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

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

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

Justice Ali Baqar Najafi heard the petition filed by a citizen, Zeeshan, against young doctors' strike. The petitioner's

counsel argued before the court that the patients were facing problems due to continuous strike of the young doctors in the government hospitals. He submitted that the health sector fell in compulsory service category and there was no provision of strike. He submitted that the doctors' strike was in violation of various laws and the court orders.

He pleaded with the court to issue directions for action against the doctors involved in the strike, besides direction to end it.



LAHORE: Special Assistant to Prime Minister Allama Tahir Ashraf and Chairman Pakistan Ulema-e-Islam Council addressing a press conference at Directorate of Hajj.

Symposium held to promote the Tourism and Cultural heritage of Chitral

PESHAWAR (Online): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and tourism authority (KPCTA), Tourism Department and Frontier Corps North jointly organized the "Chitral Tourism Symposium" to emphasize the importance of promoting cultural heritage and the tourism potential of Chitral.

Minister for tourism and information Barrister Syed Feroze Jamal Shah Kakahel, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry and Inspector General Frontier Corps North Noor Wali Khan were the Chief guest.

Secretary Tourism Mutahir Zaib, DG Tourism Barkatullah Marwat, GM planning and Marketing Ali Syed, GM Culture and Tourism Sajjad Hameed and Manager Events Haseena Shaikat also graced the event. Tourism and information Minister Feroz Jamal Shah

Kakahel, addressing the ceremony, emphasized the need to promote tourism. He stated that the event was arranged to showcase the rich culture of Chitral, a region full of diverse culture that should be promoted. He urged tourists to visit Chitral and experience its beauty and heritage.

The Chief Secretary highlighted the government's initiatives to promote tourism in Chitral, stating that the symposium provided stakeholders with an opportunity to inform authorities about their problems and way forward. He mentioned that the initiative of living with natives would provide tourists with opportunities for enjoyment and understanding local culture and traditions, contributing to tourism in KP and enhancing its peaceful environment and positive image in the world.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (R) Maqbool Baqar presides over a meeting for beautification of Shahrah-e-Faisal and development of Chaukundi Graveyard at CM House.

KPCM annoyed over staff absence

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister on Wednesday expressed annoyance over the cleanliness condition and absence of staff and unsatisfactory sanitation service at Hayatabad Medical Complex (HMC) and sought a report within seven days.

A letter to the Advisor for health said that the CM visited HMC here on December 9 and found several doctors, and staff on duty absent, besides non-satisfactory sanitation services while kitchen staff and food handlers were working without necessary medical certificates.

DC launches 5-day anti polio campaign

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

He started the campaign by administering anti-polio drops to a child here at DC office. The anti-polio drive will continue till December 18, which aims to vaccinate all children under the age of five. Deputy Commissioner Rehmat Ali appealed to the parents to ensure the administration of anti-polio drops to their children to safeguard them from the lifelong disabilities associated with the disease.

China always played key role in development, stability of Pakistan: Mayor Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab Wednesday said the People's Republic of China always played a key role in the development and stability of Pakistan.

He said this while addressing the opening ceremony of the open-air gym established with the cooperation of China at the Pakistan-China Friendship Park on Kashmir Road.

He said that the people of Karachi express their gratitude to the Chinese government for the establishment and provision of modern facilities for the citizens at the Pak-China Friendship Park.

On this occasion, China's Consul General Yang Yundong, People's Party District Central General Secretary Dil Muhammad, Director

General Parks and Horticulture Junaidullah Khan, Deputy Commissioner East Altaf Sheikh and heads of various departments of KMC were also present.

Mayor Karachi along with Consul General of China officially inaugurated the open air gym in Pak China Friendship Park while on this occasion cake was also cut regarding Pak China friendship.

The MoU for cooperation between Chinese Consulate and KMC was signed by Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab and the Consul General Yang Yundong. He appreciated KMC on the establishment of Pakistan China Friendship Park. Such initiatives are bringing the two countries closer.



FAISALABAD: Visitors keenly viewing flowers during Chrysanthemum, Marigold & Autumn Flowers Show-2023 arranged by the Institute of Horticulture Sciences, University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF).

Year-end tally of complaints against departments to exceed 190,000: Federal ombudsman

LAHORE (APP): Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi has said that the year-end tally for complaints against the government departments in 2023 is likely to exceed 190,000.

Addressing a press conference at the Ombudsman regional office here on Wednesday, he said that so far 183,000 complaints had been received, whereas 178,000 decided. He said the complaints rose from 110,405 in 2021 and 164,174 in 2022 to the

highest number of 183,000 and disposal also reached an all-time high of 178,000, while comparing the number of complaints in 2023. He mentioned that complaints worth Rs 4.2 billion were addressed in 2023 so far, against Rs 3 billion of last year.

He said that the phenomenal increase in the number of complaints represent the trust of people in the Ombudsman institution for redressing their problems, while appreciating the performance of the officers

of the Ombudsman institution in this regard. The federal ombudsman said that the role of the media was crucial in raising awareness among people about the Ombudsman institution.

He stressed the media to cooperate in disseminating the message of ombudsman to masses so that more and more poor people could approach the institution for speedy and free relief. He said that the federal ombudsman was often referred to as the court of the poor.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali, Advisor to Health Dr. Riaz Anwar, Vice Chancellor KMU Dr. Zia ul Haq addressing the annual convocation of Rehman Medical College.

Gohar, Wu Qingwen explores avenues for enhances trade ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Commerce Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz and the esteemed Mayor of Suzhou Municipal Government, Wu Qingwen explored avenues for enhanced economic and trade ties, underlining their commitment to building stronger bilateral relations. In a significant stride towards fostering international cooperation, the Commerce Minister engaged in a highly productive meeting with the esteemed Mayor of Suzhou Municipal Government, said a press release issued here.

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



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

PIIB announces financial close of mega Thar coal power project

ISLAMABAD (Online): Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PIIB) today announced Financial Closing of country's largest Thar coal-fired Power Project by M/s Shanghai Electric Corporation, China. The signing ceremony was held in the office of PIIB which was graced by Mr. Shah Jahan Mirza, Managing Director, PIIB, Mr. Meng Donghai, Chief Executive of the Project Company i.e. Thar Coal Block-1 Power Generation Company and Mr. Zhou Bo, Chief Executive Officer of Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), Karachi Branch. Other high-level officials of PIIB and Project Company Sponsors were also present.

Having the generation capacity of 1320 MW, Shanghai project has been implemented under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It is commendable that in order to meet stringent timelines agreed by the Government of Pakistan and Government of China, the Project Company commenced construction work in a crunch situation of COVID-19 by leveraging its equity and bridge financing and completed the project on 5th February 2023.

Shanghai Electric Group Corporation are the sponsors of this two billion US dollars project, while Sino Sindh Resources Limited (SSRL) is the coal supplier from Thar Block-1 whereas Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC).

Technology development imperative to overcome financial deficit: Najeeb

FAISALABAD (APP): Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) Chairman Engineer Muhammad Najeeb Haroon said that development of technology at local level was imperative to overcome financial deficit, being faced by the country and the universities should produce a workforce which could materialise this dream.

Addressing the opening ceremony of the Final Year Design Project Financing at University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF), he said that Pakistan Engineering Council funded 593 projects for 2023-24 among the students of more than 100 universities across the country. He said that the PEC sponsored the Final Year Design Project Financing for engineering students so that they could develop and promote industry / market compatible products.

He said that Pakistan Engineering Council was promoting linkages with the industry and ample employment opportunities would be provided to all engineering students after completion of the internship.

He said that agricultural engineering students would have to play their role in the development and delivery of technology to resolve the problems of food security, water and soil fertility. UAF Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Iqbal Ahmad Khan said that Pakistan Engineering Council financing would prove a milestone in imparting technology and business skills to the students. He said that to overcome the economic deficit, knowledge-based economy should be promoted so that a new chapter of development can be ensured by finding local solutions to the problems.

China, Pakistan to tap new cooperation in textile industry

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

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

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

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



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

OICCI takes lead in shaping private sector climate action at COP28

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

Nestled within the exclusive Blue Zone of the Pakistan pavilion in Expo City Dubai, the dialogue, themed 'Decarbonization and the Role of the Private Sector', tackled pressing issues such as mobilizing private capital for achieving Net Zero carbon emissions, evaluating carbon market efficacy, and fortifying public-private partnerships.

The distinguished panel comprised experts from various sectors, such as Dr. Karen Olsen, Carbon Market Advisor, United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), Dr. Charles Ehrhart, Global Head Climate Risk, Resilience; Adaptation, Partner, KPMG International, Dr. Anis Nassar, Lead Decarbonization; Circularity, World Economic Forum (WEF), Fiona Duggan, Global Sustainability Senior Manager for Climate Advocacy, Unilever, Lina Osman, Regional Head of Sustainable Finance – West, Standard Chartered Bank, and Angelo Sartori, Director Regional Engagement, Verra, said a news release received here on Wednesday.

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

Commissioner for providing fertilizers to farmers at fixed rates

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

Consul General of Turkiye visits PCJCCI Secretariat

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

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

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



PESHAWAR: A delegation of All Pakistan Marble Association meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity reported at the Port where five ships namely, MSC Mundra-VIII, MSC Jemima, New Asoura, Gaschem Warnow and Al-Deebal scheduled to load/offload Container, Cement, Chemicals and LNGberthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Engro Terminal and Elengy Terminal respectively on Tuesday. Meanwhile three more ships, Nadeen, Dolphin 02 and TCLC Luzhou also arrived at outer anchorage of the Port Qasim on same day to load/offload Rice, Chemicals and Coal Respectively.

A total of ten ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, Container vessel MSC Mundra VIII and bulk cargo carrier DSI Drammen left the port on today morning and three more ships, Gaschem Warnow, Basrah and Marlin Hera are expected to sail on today afternoon.

A moderate cargo handling was recorded at the port where a cargo volume of 169,071 tonnes, comprising 121,921 tonnes imports cargo and 47,150 tonnes export cargo carried in 3,885 Containers (2,435 TEUs Imports and 1,450 TEUs export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

Zong 4G partners with SnappRetail to integrate mobile Top-ups via easy load

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zong 4G Pakistan's leading telecommunication network, has partnered with SnappRetail Pakistan to introduce Zong's Swiftload solutions for retail merchants.

Merchants can recharge accounts themselves digitally through the use of SnappRetail's E-POS (Electronic Point-of-Sale) with the specially curated screen for recharge said a news release.

Zong Business Solutions' partnership with SnappRetail is an effort to contribute to the promotion of traditional trade in Pakistan.

Zong 4G believes that this partnership will bring new horizons in the retail market by allowing retailers to explore multiple avenues with their devices through the availability of value-added services.

Zong Business has made its mark in the telecommunication industry by providing top-notch data-related solutions to consumers. It further aims to enhance the digital ecosystem of Pakistan by constantly growing and empowering its domain throughout the country.

LESCO recovers Rs 1.59b from 52,155 defaulters in 3 months

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO), in collaboration with Tehsildars (Recovery), recovered more than Rs 1.59 billion from 52,155 chronic defaulters in all five districts - Lahore, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara - during three months of its recovery campaign.

ALESCO spokesman told the media here on Wednesday that during the 90 days, Chief Engineer O&M (T&G) Zafar Iqbal, with the support of Tehsildar City Mujahid Ziaand Tehsildar Shalimar Norraiz Humayun, recovered outstanding dues of Rs 201.79 million from 6,713 defaulters in Northern Circle.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Muhammad Abdul Qadir, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Petroleum presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

Pakistan needs significant transformation in insurance industry: Dr. Shamshad

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

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

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

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

She advised concentrating on lifting the low penetration ratio of the insurance industry. She said that SECP's 5-year strategic plan will set the tone for future policy, legal, and regulatory landscapes. Incorporating the recommendation of the insurance industry reform committee would be a step in the right direction.

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

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



SOZHOU: Commerce Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz visiting the Hengli Group headquarters during his visit to China.

PSX loses 1,146 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bearish trend on Wednesday, losing 1,146.62 points, a negative change of 1.73 percent, closing at 65,280.16 points against 66,426.78 points the previous trading day.

A total of 1,358,411,606 shares valuing Rs.37,657 billion were traded during the day as compared to 969,630,378 shares valuing Rs.26,931 billion the last day.

Some 412 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 93 of them recorded gains and 304 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 15 remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 153,676,751 shares at Rs.1.65 per share, Bank of Punjab with 106,283,289 shares at Rs.6.29 per share and K-Electric Ltd with 90,068,235 shares at Rs.4.52 per share. Sapphire Fibres Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.29.50 per share price, closing at Rs1,699.50, whereas the runner-up was Mehmood Textile Mills with a Rs.23.82 rise in its per share price to Rs.470.32.

FCCI says to help revive GPO services

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) President Dr. Khurram Tariq said on Wednesday that the business community would make concerted efforts to revive historic and architectural splendor of General Post Office (GPO), addition to switching over from private courier companies to the Pakistan Post (PP) to make it a profitable national entity.

During his visit to the GPO, he discussed various issues with Madam Iffat Ishaq, Chief Post Master Faisalabad, and termed the PP a historic asset to Pakistan which had lost its glory due to neglect of the authorities concerned.

He said that the services offered by PP should be upgraded to compete with the private sector and it should also provide similar facilities at affordable rates.

Developing Asia's 2023 growth outlook upgraded to 4.9%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has raised its economic forecast for developing economies in Asia and the Pacific to 4.9 percent.

The regional economy is expected to grow 4.9% this year, compared with a previous forecast of 4.7% in September, according to the Asian Development Outlook (ADO) December 2023, released by the bank Wednesday. The outlook for next year is maintained at 4.8%.

"Developing Asia continues to grow at a robust pace, despite a challenging global environment," said ADB Chief Economist Albert Park.

"Inflation in the region is also gradually coming under control. Still, risks remain, from elevated global interest rates to climate events such as El Niño. Governments in Asia and the Pacific need to remain vigilant to ensure that their economies are resilient, and that growth is sustainable," Park added.

The region's inflation outlook for this year has been lowered to 3.5% from an earlier projection of 3.6%, according to ADO December 2023. For next year, inflation is expected to edge up to 3.6%, compared with a previous forecast of 3.5%.

The growth outlook for Southeast Asia this year has been lowered to 4.3% from 4.6%, amid weak demand for manufacturing exports. The outlook for economies in the Caucasus and Central Asia has been raised slightly, while projections for Pacific economies are unchanged.

Risks to the outlook include persistently elevated interest rates in the United States and other advanced economies.



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

Senate body on Petroleum recommends formalization of policy for LNG import

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate Standing Committee on Petroleum on Wednesday recommended the government to formalize a policy for LNG import and permit private entities to import LNG to meet local demands.

Chaired by Senator Mohammad Abdul Qadir, the meeting addressed the country's energy crisis, emphasizing the need for the ministry to work on newly discovered sites to alleviate the gas shortage and reduce the \$32 billion import bill.

The committee discussed the imposition of flat rates for gas consumers in Balochistan. DG Gas clarified that similar tariff rates are applied to all consumers nationwide.

However, he acknowledged that consumers in colder regions experience increased gas charges during winter due to higher gas usage. Senator Qadir recommended relaxing gas rates for consumers in cold areas during winter to meet their basic needs.

and Engro, utilizing almost 750 mm cfd. Marri Petroleum supplied approximately 85% of gas to fertilizer companies, with the remaining 15% provided by other companies. Senator Mohammad Abdul Qadir expressed concern that fertilizer companies, despite receiving subsidized gas rates, have not addressed the Urea and DAP shortfall. He directed the ministry to provide details of fertilizer production against the gas supplied. The committee also discussed levying flat rates for gas consumers in Balochistan. DG Gas clarified that similar tariff rates are applied to all consumers nationwide.

However, he acknowledged that consumers in colder regions experience increased gas charges during winter due to higher gas usage. Senator Qadir recommended relaxing gas rates for consumers in cold areas during winter to meet their basic needs.

Nations reach deal at COP28 to transition away from fossil fuels

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Representatives from nearly 200 countries agreed at the COP28 climate summit on Wednesday to begin reducing global consumption of fossil fuels to avert the worst of climate change, a first-of-its-kind deal signaling the eventual end of the oil age. The deal struck in Dubai after two weeks of hard-fought negotiations was meant to send a powerful signal to investors and policy-makers that the world is united in its desire to break with fossil fuels, something scientists say is the last best hope to stave off climate catastrophe. COP28 President Sultan Al Jaber called the deal "historic" but added that its

true success would be in its implementation. "We are what we do, not what we say," he told the crowded plenary at the summit. "We must take the steps necessary to turn this agreement into tangible actions." Several countries cheered the deal for accomplishing something elusive in decades of climate talks. "It is the first time that the world unites around such a clear text on the need to transition away from fossil fuels," said Norway Minister of Foreign Affairs Espen Barth Eide. More than 100 countries had lobbied hard for strong language in the COP28 agreement to "phase out" oil, gas and coal use, but came up against powerful opposition from the Saudi Arabia-led oil

producer group OPEC, which argued that the world can slash emissions without shunning specific fuels. That battle pushed the summit a full day into overtime on Wednesday, and had some observers worried the negotiations would end at an impasse. Members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries control nearly 80% of the world's proven oil reserves along with about a third of global oil output, and their governments rely heavily on those revenues. Small climate-vulnerable island states, meanwhile, were among the most vocal supporters of language to phase out fossil fuels and had the backing of huge oil and gas producers.



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

Washington Post exposes Indian covert operations targeting Modi critics

WASHINGTON (INP): The Washington Post has exposed covert operations by the Narendra Modi-led Indian government to stifle critical voices, both within and outside India. The Washington Post report says that the Indian government has employed a disinformation lab based in the US to promote Prime Minister Narendra Modi while discrediting dissenting voices. As per the report, the disinfo lab, established in mid-

2020 by Lt Col Dibya Satpathy of India's notorious intelligence agency RAW, has been linking individuals and organizations critical of Modi to various Islamic or conspiracy groups. The lab has reportedly published several reports, all of which are said to be anti-Pakistan and pro-Modi in nature. The report says Satpathy has "worked to shape international perceptions of India" and met with Western journalists and under aliases to seek "favourable coverage of India."

Candidates for Indonesia's presidential election

Monitoring Desk
JAKARTA: Indonesia holds a presidential election in February next year, with three men campaigning to succeed President Joko Widodo as leader of the world's third-largest democracy and its most populous Muslim-majority nation. Here are details of the candidates and their running mates. The former special forces commander is making a third run at the presidency having twice lost to outgoing President Widodo, better known as Jokowi, in

2014 and 2019. Recent opinion polls have shown Prabowo surging ahead of rivals. Prabowo, 72, comes from an elite family and commands a huge following, despite allegations of human rights violations over the kidnapping of democracy activists during turmoil in the late 1990s and alleged abuses in East Timor. He has denied wrongdoing. He is also a former son-in-law of late strongman president Suharto.

COP28 plan to triple renewables is doable, but not easy

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: More than 100 countries at the COP28 climate summit in Dubai have agreed to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030 - one of the least controversial commitments floated at the conference. But they have given little detail on how they can make an industry running flat out go that much faster. "It is realistic, but there are elements that need to be solved; permitting, leases, grid connections," Anders Opedal, chief executive of Norway's Equinor (EQNR.OL), a

major renewable energy developer, told Reuters. Renewable energy is key to meeting the 2015 Paris climate agreement to limit global warming. And while renewables are already expanding fast, this latest goal would require solar and wind power deployments to speed up a lot. The tripling target would bring global renewable energy capacity to at least 11,000 gigawatts (GW) in just six years - more than 20% higher than current projections from BloombergNEF of around 9,000 GW by that time.



A man jumps into the lawmakers' area in the lower house of the Indian Parliament, in New Delhi, India



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

Biden backs Ukraine, warns against allowing Putin to win

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden told President Volodymyr Zelensky on Tuesday that the United States will not abandon Ukraine in its desperate fight against Russia, even as Republicans signaled opposition to extending US war funding. Standing alongside the Ukrainian leader at a White House press conference, Biden vowed: "I will not walk away from Ukraine and neither will the American people." And he said that allowing a Ukrainian defeat would mean Russian President Vladimir Putin "and would-be aggressors every-

where will be emboldened." Zelensky, who spent the morning talking to Republicans and Democrats in Congress, signaled cautious optimism that the stalled US aid flow will restart. "I got the signals. They were more than positive. But we know that we have to separate words and particular results. Therefore we will count on particular results," Zelensky said. But the united front at the White House contrasted with growing division up in Capitol Hill, where leading Republicans are insisting that renewing Ukraine aid will depend on Democrats.

Dozens injured in missile strikes on Kyiv

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Russian missile strikes damaged a hospital and residential building in the Ukrainian capital on Wednesday, injuring at least 45 people, the city's mayor said. Several explosions were heard in the city, with air raid sirens sounded soon after that. "In total, 45 people were injured in Dniprovsyky district as a result of the enemy attack. 18 of them were hospitalized, including 2 children. 27 received medical help on the spot, including three children," Mayor Vitali Klitschko posted on social media. Eighteen of the in-

jured, including two children, were hospitalized. He said "a missile fell on the territory of one of the capital's hospitals" during the night attack, resulting in windows being "blown out in several buildings of the facility." One person was injured at the hospital, according to the mayor. Police at the scene were "inspecting the crater on the territory of the medical facility," he added. Klitschko also said that "as a result of the enemy's night missile attack (on) the capital's Dniprovsyky district.



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

Myanmar overtakes Afghanistan as world's biggest opium producer: UN

Monitoring Desk
BANGKOK: Myanmar became the world's biggest producer of opium in 2023, overtaking Afghanistan after the Taliban government's crackdown on the trade, according to a United Nations report released on Tuesday. Myanmar produced an estimated 1,080 metric tonnes of opium - essential for producing heroin - this year, according to the latest report by the United Nations Office for Drugs

and Crime (UNODC). The figures come after opium production in Afghanistan slumped an estimated 95 percent to around 330 tonnes following the Taliban's ban on poppy cultivation in April last year, according to UNODC. The "Golden Triangle" border region between Myanmar, Laos and Thailand has long been a hotbed of illegal drug production and trafficking, particularly of methamphetamine and opium.

France to host meeting on tackling Hamas financing, online activities

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: Officials from more than 20 countries including Israel but no Arab states will convene in Paris on Wednesday to define a strategy on how to curb financing of Hamas and its activities online, three diplomats said. France has been pushing with Germany and Italy for the European Union to create a specific sanctions regime against the Palestinian Islamist group after its deadly attack on southern Israel on Oct. 7. French diplomats have said they want a broader strategy encompassing as many countries as possible, to damage the group's ability to finance

itself and disseminate propaganda on social media networks. The one-day conference of foreign ministry political directors will begin with a presentation by Israel on the "state of Hamas' threat" before turning to sessions on curbing financing, according to an agenda seen by Reuters. Presentations will be made by Israel, France, the United States - which will outline current sanctions on Hamas - and an independent organisation that focuses on terrorism financing. Hamas uses a global financing network to funnel support from charities and friendly nations.

Japan PM to axe ministers over fundraising scandal

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Wednesday announced he would make changes to his cabinet as he seeks to stem the fallout from a fundraising scandal that has further dented public support for his embattled administration. The premier told a press conference he would make the changes on Thursday, just three months after a previous cabinet overhaul. "I will take the lead in fighting to rebuild the ways of the Liberal Democratic Party to restore trust in politics."

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

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

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

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Human Rights Watch and other civil society groups have called on the UK government to stop transfers of arms to Israel, amid concerns that they might be used to commit "war crimes" against Palestinians. It comes as Israel continues its two-month-long campaign of airstrikes and ground assaults in Gaza, during which more than 17,000 Palestinians, many of them women and children, have been killed, according to Palestinian officials. The letter also highlights previous occasions on which UK-supplied components were used by Israel during conflicts in the territory, most notably during the 2008-09 Gaza War.

including components for combat aircraft, missiles and tanks, other technology, and small arms and ammunition. "The UK provides approximately 15 percent of the components in the F-35 stealth bomber aircraft currently being used in Gaza, including the rear fuselage and active intercept system, ejector seats, aircraft tires, refueling probe, laser-targeting system, and the fan propulsion system," it said. The letter also highlights previous occasions on which UK-supplied components were used by Israel during conflicts in the territory, most notably during the 2008-09 Gaza War.

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

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: A man jumped into the lawmakers' area of the lower house of India's parliament on Wednesday, in a major security breach on the 22nd anniversary of a deadly attack on the complex. TV channels showed a man jumping over two rows of lawmakers and trying to enter the aisles by evading security personnel. The man was later shown being taken away by police outside the building. The lower house stopped proceedings soon after the incident but resumed business about an hour later. Speaker Om Birla told members that investigations had found that the smoke released by the man was "ordinary smoke, just to cause sensation".

smoke. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was not in parliament at the time. India Today said the intruder had smoke cans hidden in his shoes and lawmakers fled the chambers as the cans released smoke. TV channels showed the man jumping over two rows of lawmakers and trying to enter the aisles by evading security personnel. The man was later shown being taken away by police outside the building. The lower house stopped proceedings soon after the incident but resumed business about an hour later. Speaker Om Birla told members that investigations had found that the smoke released by the man was "ordinary smoke, just to cause sensation".

Argentina's surging prices add urgency to new president's plan

Monitoring Desk
BUENOS AIRES: The relentless pace of creeping prices in Argentina provides the new president's plan for immediate shock therapy little margin for error, with many citizens already wondering how they will survive annual inflation nearing 150%. President Javier Milei's economy chief laid out the new government's initial policy push on Tuesday, targeting deep cuts to public spending and a sharp currency devaluation that

will stoke short-term inflation as it hopes to staunch the bleeding in the country's worst economic crisis in decades. Economy Minister Luis Caputo, like Milei in his first few days on the job, announced the value of the peso currency will be halved, public work tenders halted and energy and transport subsidies reduced. The government will also, however, double social spending for the poorest.

UK agrees to repatriate woman, 5 children from Syrian detention camps

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Authorities in the UK have authorized the repatriation of a woman and five children from detention camps in Syria, The Guardian newspaper reported. It is only the second time since the ground war against Daesh ended four years ago that Britain has allowed an adult believed to have connections with the group to return. A Syrian news agency said the woman and children, British nationals from several families, were deliv-

ered to UK officials on Saturday. Robel Baho, a representative of the foreign relations department of the Kurdish administration in northeastern Syria, urged the international community to take steps to repatriate more of the foreign citizens who have been held in camps for up to five years. More than 160 children and 50 women have been returned to France, while Germany has accepted the return of almost 100 women and children.

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

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Hunger was worsening among Palestinians in the besieged Gaza strip, aid agencies said, as the United Nations General Assembly prepared to vote on Tuesday on an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in the two-month-old conflict between Israel and Hamas. Hundreds more civilians have died in Gaza since the U.S. on Friday vetoed a Security Council resolution calling for a ceasefire. Most of Gaza's 2.3 million people have been driven from their homes and residents say it is impossible to find refuge or food in the densely populated coastal enclave. The U.N. World Food Programme has said half of the population is starving. "Hunger stalks everyone," UNRWA, the U.N. body responsible for Palestinian refugees, said on X. Gazans said people forced to flee repeatedly were dying of hunger and cold as well as the bombard-

ments, describing looting of aid trucks and sky high prices. Israel says its instructions to people to move are among measures it is taking to protect civilians as it tries to root out Hamas militants who killed 1,200 people and took 240 hostages in an Oct. 7 cross-border attack on Israel, according to Israeli tallies. About 100 hostages have since been freed. Israel's retaliatory assault has killed 18,205 people and wounded nearly 50,000, according to the Gaza health ministry. The 193-member General Assembly is likely on Tuesday to pass a draft resolution that mirrors the language of one that was blocked by the United States in the 15-member Security Council last week. The vote was due a day after 12 Security Council envoys visited the Egyptian side of the Rafah border crossing with Gaza, the only place where limited humanitarian aid and fuel have entered.



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Madad increases quota for women from 33% to 40% in PMYSDP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindi has increased the quota for women from 33% to 40% in the Prime Minister's Youth Skills Development Programme (PMYSDP).

He made these directions while chairing the 1st Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Prime Minister's Youth Skills Development Programme (PMYSDP) by NAVTTC on Wednesday.

He said that women's empowerment is a crucial milestone that needs to be prioritised if we want Pakistan to overcome the existing social challenges.

Similarly, he ordered that all differently abled students to be given seats irrespective of any quotas set.

He also ordered the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC) to arrange accommodation for them in major cities to facilitate them.

Madad Ali Sindi said that technical training can become the backbone of the economy of Pakistan. He said that it is imperative that we harness the full potential of the youth of Pakistan.

He appreciated the sheer scale of the Prime Minister's Youth Skills Development Programme (PMYSDP) and said that effective and practical implementation of this programme can yield extremely positive results.



GWADAR: Participants of 6th Maritime Security workshop during their visit to Gwadar port.

Public support must for making Pak polio-free, emphasizes Governor

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has emphasized that the general public must extend wholehearted cooperation to the anti-polio teams so as to make Pakistan polio-free.

The Governor was speaking to the Zonal Coordinator, Saleem Raza, who called on him here at the Governor House on Wednesday.

Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar regretfully pointed out that we couldn't rid of the polio virus even today despite this has been eradicated in majority countries of the world.

The Governor, however, expressed satisfaction over the anti-polio teams are actively taking part in the polio eradication campaign.

However, there is a need to provide protection to the workers of polio teams in view of some unpleasant incidents in the past.

He also stressed that all segments of the society including religious leaders, media workers and representative personalities and others should play their positive role for eradication of polio in the province.

ECP enforces countrywide ban on DCs, ADCs' transfer, posting

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has enforced a countrywide ban on the transfer and posting of Deputy Commissioners and Additional Deputy Commissioners and others assigned to supervise the upcoming elections.

The ECP in a letter addressed to the Secretary Establishment and the four Chief Secretaries, emphasized the strict enforcement of the ban, citing the pivotal roles assigned to DCs and ADCs in the upcoming general elections. "I am directed to state that the Commission has appointed DROs, ROs and AROs on 11th December 2023."

Foreigners repatriation case sent to SC judges committee

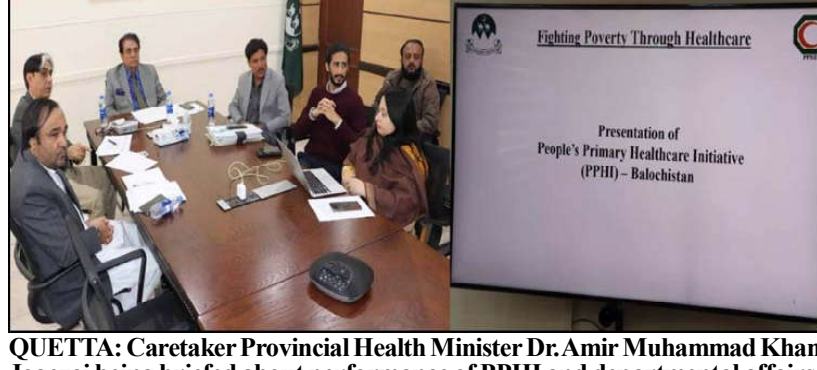
ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court (SC) on Wednesday sent the case pertaining to the repatriation of foreigners to the judges committee for the formation of a larger bench.

The three-member SC bench headed by Justice Sardar Tariq Masood, while hearing the case, observed that the petitioners had objected on the powers of caretaker government under Article 224 of the Constitution.

It said that in the matter of repatriation of foreigners, the interpretation of articles 9, 10 and 24 was required, and it was sending it to the judges committee under the SC (Practice & Procedure) Act for the formation a larger bench.

During hearing, the Federal Government and the Foreign Office submitted their comments.

The case was then adjourned till after the winter vacations.



QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Health Minister Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan Jozgaji being briefed about performance of PPHI and departmental affairs.

Sector plan for Balochistan local govt finalized

QUETTA (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Local Government Sheikh Mahmood Al Hasan Mandukhel on Wednesday said the sector plan for Balochistan local government has been finalized in collaboration with the Department of Local Government Rural Development Balochistan, European Union BRACE Technical Assistance and DAI.

The local government sector plan is being formed for the first time in the history of the country which will play a key role in the implementation of the Community-led Local Government Policy.

In this regard, a one-day consultative workshop under the aegis of EC Brace Technical Assistance DAI was organised in Quetta, wherein bodies of the Government of Balochistan, the local government department, various departments and civil society members were present.

Speaking to the workshop participants, Sheikh Mahmood Al Hasan Mandukhel said that this is an important event which is held to consult key stakeholders and it will lead to the ratification of the Local Government Sector Plan.

In an increasingly interconnected world, the role of local governance cannot be overstated.

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

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

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

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

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



QUETTA: Director Election Quetta Waseem Ahmd and Regional Election Commissioner Quetta Naem Ahmed addressing training session of DROs and ROs in connection with general elections.

PTA unveils Cyber Security strategy

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

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

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

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

Vice Admiral Ovais Ahmed Bilgrami appointed Vice Chief of Naval Staff

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Defence on Wednesday appointed Vice Admiral Ovais Ahmed Bilgrami as Vice Chief of the Naval Staff with immediate effect.

The Vice Admiral was commissioned in Operations Branch of Pakistan Navy in 1989. He carried out his initial training from Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth (UK) and won the coveted Sword of Honour.



QUETTA: Provincial Ombudsman Balochistan Advocate Nazir Baloch presenting annual report of his department to Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar.

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

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

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

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

The decision said level playing field be given to all political parties including PTI. EC should summon report from DOs on daily basis. No discriminatory treatment should be given to any party. The political party should report the matter of discriminatory treatment to chief secretary and chief secretary should take action against those found involved in discriminatory treatment.

The court said in its decision that PTI is resorting to this court repeatedly that FIRs are being registered against its workers and level playing field is not being given to them.

LHC acquits 3 convicts in Kasur Video scandal

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has acquitted three major convicts in Kasur video scandal.

A two members bench of LHC presided over by Justice Shehram Sarwar Chaudhry took up appeal pleas of the three convicts against life imprisonment for hearing Wednesday.

The convicts are Aleem Asif, Haseeb Amir and Wasim Sindi.

Abid Hussain Khichi and Sohail Asghar advocate appeared on behalf of the convicts.

The court while accepting the appeal pleas of the three convicts against life imprisonment acquitted them.

Balochistan Secretary health visits Mufti Mehmood Memorial Hospital Kuchlak

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Secretary Health Abdullah Khan on Wednesday visited Mufti Mehmood Memorial Hospital (MMMMH) Kuchlak.

Project Director of Balochistan Human Capital Investment Project (BHICIP), Saqib Kakar, MS Mufti Mehmood Hospital Kuchlak Dr. Abdullah Dotani, Section Officer Tahir Khan, and other assistants were present on this occasion. MS Mufti Mehmood Hospital Kuchlak Dr. Abdullah Dotani gave a briefing to the Secretary of Health about the provision of health facilities in the hospital. Secretary Health also inspected other medical equipment provided by BHICIP to Mufti Mehmood Memorial Hospital (MMMMH) Kuchlak. The official reviewed various wards, the labor room, the Operation Theater, and the laboratory of the hospital. The Health Secretary expressed his satisfaction with the improvement in maternal and child health facilities.

Abbasi declares not to participate in elections

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

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

Pashtoon nationalist politicians support Chaman protest

QUETTA: The Pashtoon nationalist politicians have supported the protest being staged by the Laghari Ittehad. All parties and Anjuman Tajran adjacent to the Durand Line in Chaman. They condemned the registration of cases against the political workers and raids conducted at their residences by the government. They said that hundreds of people deprived of their livelihood are observing protest in Chaman, but no attention is being given to their demands by the government, rather cold and lukewarm attitude is being demonstrated towards them.

These and similar other views were expressed by the Pashtoon nationalist leaders including the provincial president of Awami National Party, Asghar Khan Achakzai, provincial coordinator of Pashtoon Tahafuz Movement, Noor Bacha, provincial deputy secretary of Pashtoonkhw National Awami Party, Hayat Khan, leader of National Democratic Movement, Javed Khan Achakzai, Salahuddin Watanyar, Amanullah Khan Achakzai, Abdul Khaliq Haqmal, and others while addressing the grand public protest gathering in front of the Bacha Khan Markaz, Chaman on Wednesday.

They said that the caretaker government has no mandate to take up such sensitive issues. They also lamented the Election Commission for merging two provincial constituencies into one describing it a cruelty.