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dailyindkhi@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

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Let people make decisions of Pakistan: Bilawal pledges to move ahead and serve masses & country burying politics of hatred, division & ego

Chairman PPP says he can change destiny of country together with people; urges people not to let decide those destiny of country who have made politics of hatred and division; emphasizes upon giving up traditional thinking and approach of politics & rule

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has reiterated his pledge to move ahead and serve masses of the country burying the politics of hatred, division and ego. The Chairman PPP said that let people of Pakistan make decisions about fate of the country, as when they (people) take any decision then no power of the world can stop them from doing so. Bilawal Bhutto said that we are being told that the person who remained

Prime Minister of the country three would resolve the problems and steer out of the hardships after becoming Premier for fourth time. The PPP chief was addressing the Balochistan High Court Bar here on Friday morning. He said that we have full confidence on the people of Pakistan that they would hear us. He said that he can change the destiny of country together with the people. Chairman PPP thanked the people of Balochistan for the wholehearted participation and response in the party's

foundation day gathering in Quetta. He said that the people of Balochistan gave the message that they are with Pakistan Peoples Party. Referring the 8th August 2016 tragedy of civil hospital Quetta, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that he knew Balochistan and well aware of the agony the people have gone through. He said that he has gone through the agony and grief, which the people of Balochistan have passed. He said that my grandfather Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was hanged to death while his mother and uncles were

martyred too." Today, when I see a mother in Balochistan sad because of her son's target killing or disappearance, I understand her pain," said Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and questioned that whether it is written in our destiny that the blood of the people of Pakistan, especially the people of Balochistan, is cheap. Has the system for 70 years brought justice to the citizens living in this country? Chairman PPP said that general elections are going to be held on February 8 next year, and added:

"We are being told that the one who became the prime minister for three times, now he will become the prime minister for the fourth time and after that he will get the country out of trouble. (And) the other person is the one who was the prime minister a few years ago, who had said that the protesting Hazara community in Balochistan were blackmailers, and who, being prime minister, considered the issue of missing persons unimportant, and liked to call himself a youth leader despite being 70 years old."



DUBAI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar is being received by the President of the United Arab Emirates His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and the Secretary General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres on his arrival at Dubai Expo City to attend the High Level Segment of United Nations' 28th Conference of Parties.

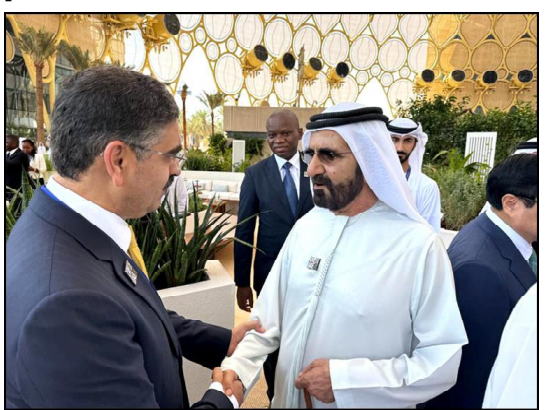


QUETTA: Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing to Baluchistan High Court Bar Association.

Asia Region chief Ombudsman calls on Governor

KARACHI (APP): The Chief Ombudsman of Thailand and the President of the International Ombudsman Institute Asia Region Somsak Suwansujit called on the Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor House here on Friday. In the meeting, his wife and the president of the Red Cross Chapter of Rayong province of Thailand, Mrs. Nipah, were also present.

Provincial Ombudsman Ejaz Ali Khan and Adviser to Provincial Ombudsman Rehana Memon were also present in the meeting. The Sindh Governor said that the institution of the ombudsman was an important forum for public complaints against government departments. He said that delivery of justice was ensured without any compensation from the ombudsman institution.



DUBAI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar meets with Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and the Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum on the sidelines of the high level segment of COP-28.

Bukhari directs PPP ticket aspirants to submit application till Dec 4

ISLAMABAD (INP): Secretary General Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Syed Nayer Hussain Bukhari Friday directed the candidates seeking PPP tickets to contest National and Provincial Assemblies to submit applications for party tickets till December 4. "The candidates who have submitted applications for party tickets earlier are advised to send their applications without bank drafts," he said. Nayer Bukhari said that PPP issued these instructions to the candidates who want to contest upcoming

general elections on PPP tickets to write their constituency no in accordance with the new constituencies announced by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The General Secretary said that the new applicants are directed to attach a bank draft of Rs 40,000 for the National Assembly and Rs 30,000 for the Provincial Assembly seats. Nayer Bukhari said that the applications would be in the name of President PPPP and sent the same to the address of Bilawal House Karachi or House No. 1, Street 85 Embassy Road Islamabad.

PM holds informal interactions with world leaders on COP28 margins

DUBAI (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday held informal interactions with multiple world leaders, on the sidelines of the COP28 summit.

Among those whom the prime minister interacted with informally, included British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen. The prime minister also held an informal interaction with British King Charles III as they participated in the family photo of High Level Segment of 28th Conference of Parties. At the Summit, the prime minister is accompanied by Caretaker Ministers including Foreign Minister Jilil Abbas Jilani, Finance Minister Dr. Shamsad Akhtar, Climate Change Minister Ahmed Irfan Aslam and Energy Minister Muhammad Ali.

Meanwhile Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday visited the Pakistan Pavilion, established here at the venue of United Nations' 28th Conference of Parties (COP 28). The prime minister was briefed on the efforts being made by Pakistan with regard to the negotiations and facilitation in the operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund. He was also briefed on the 'Living Indus Initiative' which is designed to rehabilitate the health of the Indus Basin in Pakistan through climate-resilient approaches and nature-based solutions. The prime minister also met the Pakistani climate experts at the Pavilion and appreciated their efforts with regard to climate change risk mitigation.

Pak calls for permanent ceasefire in Gaza, investigation into attacks by Israel on medical facilities

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistan while calling for permanent ceasefire in Gaza has said investigation into attacks by Israel on medical facilities centers be got conducted.

"Indian forces brutalities are continuing in Occupied Kashmir. India should stop terrorism in Kashmir valley. The terrorists attacks from Afghanistan and terrorists safe havens therein are matter of grave concern, this was said by Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch during weekly press briefing here Friday. She said care taker Prime Minister (PM) Anwar ul Haq Kakar is on his visit to Dubai to represent Pakistan in opening session of World Climate Action summit Cop-28 conference. He has visited UAE and Kuwait as well. He met UAE president and held talks on bilateral relations and regional issues. She said Pakistan has once again asked Afghan authorities to take immediate

and effective steps against terrorist entities operating from their soil. She voiced concerns over the presence of terrorist sanctuaries in Afghanistan. She said these terrorists continue to attack Pakistan and cause loss of life. The spokesperson said Pakistan desires to have peaceful and friendly relations with Afghanistan. We have great sympathies with our brothers and sisters in Afghanistan who have suffered a great deal because of difficult humanitarian and security situation. She said Pakistan has advocated internationally that humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan must continue. Responding to a question, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said Pakistan is strongly committed to protection of workers and projects under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). She said we will defeat designs of any terrorist entity against CPEC or any other investment project in Pakistan.

Sindh Cabinet approves Rs1.38b for purchase of water canons, equipment, vehicles for Rangers

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Cabinet on Friday approved the release of Rs. 1.38 billion funds for the purchase of water canons, quick response vehicles and communication equipment for Pakistan Rangers.

Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister chaired the provincial Cabinet meeting at CM house which was attended by Minister's, Chief Secretary, Advocate General Sindh and other officers concerned. Sindh Home Minister Brig @ Haris Nawaz informed the meeting that Pakistan Rangers submitted request for release of the amount worth Rs 1.38 billion for the purchase of equipments and the vehicles on which cabinet accorded approval. Sindh Irrigation Secretary Niaz Abbasi while presenting the Flood Protection Sector Project before the cabinet informed that 40 flood projects of the province are included in the scheme. The federal government will get 11.970 billion rupees loan from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) for the project and the amount with share of 50 percent each to be paid back by the federal and provincial governments, the Secretary Irrigation said. The caretaker Chief Minister also constituted a cabinet committee consisting of the cabinet members Muhammad Younus Dagher, Eshwar Lal, Chairman P&D and the Secretary Finance for getting the loan. The committee will submit its recommendations to the Chief Minister Sindh in this regard. Sindh Cabinet also decided to conduct the recruitment of ASIs in Sindh Police through the Sindh Public Service Commission. The meeting was informed that Sindh Police needs 1046 Assistant Sub Inspectors and candidates having BA

degrees will be eligible to apply for the post. The Cabinet also decided to set up a surplus pool of Larkana Development Authority (LDA) employees in the Local Government department instead of S&GA. The LG department will be authorized to send surplus employees to the department as per the need. The cabinet also approved Rs. 3.3 billion for repair and renovation of 9901 schools across the province where polling will be held for the upcoming general election. The provincial Cabinet also reconstituted the Board of historical Public School Hyderabad under the chairmanship of the Commissioner while Additional Secretary Schools Education, Chairman BISE, Principal, ex MNA Tariq Shah Jamote, Senator Aajiz Dhamrah, Justice @ Hamayun Khan.



KARACHI: Caretaker Chief Minister Sindh Justice (retd) Maqbool Baqar presides over the Provincial Cabinet meeting.

Chairman PTI moves court against order for his jail trial

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chairman PTI has filed petition in the court against the order of his jail trial.

The petitioner has been filed in Special court established under official secret act led by judge Abual Hasnaat Zulqarnain here Friday. The petitioner has taken the plea this court issued order on November 23, 2023 that the accused be presented in Judicial complex on November 28. It was further said in the petition the court issued order on November 28 in connection with jail trial.

ECP seeks asset details of three interim federal ministers

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan on Friday sought asset details of three interim federal ministers. The Election Commission has written a letter to the Secretary of Cabinet Division. The commission has asked for details of assets of three caretaker federal ministers. In the letter, details of assets of Aviation, Establishment and Minister of State for Finance have been requested. The commission called upon the secretary to furnish its request as soon as possible.

Minister inaugurates 14th Sartyoon Sang Crafts exhibition

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Education & Literacy and Women Development Sindh, Mrs. Rana Hussain inaugurated the three-day 14th SRSO Sartyoon Sang Crafts' exhibition at Ocean Mall Clifton, here on Friday.

On the occasion, the minister appreciated the endeavours of SRSO for poor communities and voiced her expectation of the continuation of such support for rural communities of Sindh. She met and purchased wares from artisan women who came from far-flung areas of Sindh and appreciated their work and craftsmanship. Appreciating the exhibition, the Minister said arranging such activity to promote artisans, handicrafts and Sindh's culture was a great effort of SRSO. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) SRSO, Muhammad Dital Kalhoro, Provincial Secretary, Education Sheerin Mustafa Narejo, Members BoD, Azar Ayaz, Rafiq Buriro, Naseer Memon, CFO Asif Khuhro, Rural Women Artisans and others were also present. SRSO has organized the 14th Sartyoon Sang exhibition with the support

of Sindh Government to showcase the work of rural artisans with 308 Business Development Groups representing 6005 artisans of 12 districts and over 5729 products displaying and marketing their hand-made crafts including Plazo, Shalwar, Garara, Trouser, Shawl, Dupatta, Stoles, Waistcoat, date Leaf, Wheat Straw, Khussa, Moora, Straw and Rillis. bed sheets and cushions. The first day of the exhibition received an overwhelming response from local and international visitors. It's mentioned over here that the Sartyoon Sang Craft Exhibition has been organized by SRSO for the last thirteen years with the motive to support ethical fashion and promote the crafts of some of the most marginalized women in the province. The event also attracted large numbers of women residents of Clifton and nearby areas. The exhibition showcases a wide array of Sindh's handicrafts made by rural women including home textiles, basketry, jewellery, dresses, dupattas and shawls, embellished with traditional embroidery and cutwork.



KARACHI: Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM-P) Convener, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui addresses to media persons during press conference regarding public gathering meeting, at Gulshan-e-Iqbal in Karachi.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Half victories

The entire point of an independent judiciary arises from the need for neutral arbiters who can determine, through objective assessment of facts and a dispassionate interpretation and application of the law, whether any member(s) of society has broken the social contract.

It is our great misfortune that our justice system repeatedly fails on this count. Nowhere are the implications of this failure more evident than on the political stage, where careers are made and ended on court cases that seem to be decided not on facts and laws but on the whims of the powers that be. The latest such example is the exoneration of PML-N supreme leader Nawaz Sharif in the Avenfield case. The charges brought against him had seemed enough five years ago for the judiciary to convict him and end his political career but have now disappeared at the stroke of a pen. Were the judges wrong then, or are they wrong now? It is a pity that it depends on whom one asks. In a just society, innocence — especially in cases involving allegations of moral turpitude — cannot be a matter of perspective alone. Mr Sharif's position has not been helped by the fact that the case against him has been dismissed because NAB, which had once relentlessly hounded him and his family, suddenly has no interest in prosecuting him.

People will ask what prompted this change of heart and wonder if it had something to do with Mr Sharif's perceived status as the 'new selected'; few will bother to consider the weaknesses of the original case.

Therefore, while the PML-N supremo may have technically been deemed innocent, the shadow of his conviction will continue to linger and may even turn against him in case he steps out of line again.

It would have been far wiser for Mr Sharif to have returned to the country much earlier to fight his legal battles and secure a more compelling victory in them.

It would have established some distance between his acquittals and the accusation being made by other parties that the state is going all out to skew the playing field in favour of the PML-N. But perhaps Mr Sharif knew better than to have faith in a system that had failed him thrice.

If one considers where his primary rival, PTI's Imran Khan, is today, Mr Sharif cannot be considered irrational for lacking faith in the judicial process. The treatment being meted out to Mr Khan parallels what Mr Sharif was forced to endure some five years ago. In the former's case, too, it seems to matter little what the facts and the laws say. And this, again, is the tragedy of the Pakistani judicial system: that justice is rarely ever seen to be done.



Zubeida Mustafa

Do our children read books? In the absence of reliable statistics, one must turn to anecdotal evidence, which suggests that the book reading culture does not exist in Pakistan — be it among adults or children. I have yet to meet a publisher who is satisfied with his sales. School textbooks are the publishing industry's bread and butter. Hence publishers do not focus much on storybooks for younger readers.

It's no wonder then that Pakistan has traditionally lacked a thriving children's books industry. Popular authors such as Sufi Tabassum and poets like Allama Iqbal notwithstanding, the industry never picked up. Educators noticed this vacuum and individuals stepped in. The Bookgroup, Nigar Nazaf of Gogi fame and the Alif Laila Book Bus Society emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, with exciting, innovative books that attracted children. But they were not enough to turn around the non-reading culture.

To break this resistance to book-reading, a massive multidimensional effort is clearly needed. First, attractive and colourful books based on our own cultures have to be published for children. Second, these publications must be made accessible to all students through a network of school libraries. Third, the concept of the 'book mentor' must be developed.

Librarians can play a role only if they understand clearly what is expected of them. They are not just 'book keepers', who arrange their ware on

To read or not

shelves and issue them to students, ensuring that the books are returned on time. More important, they should stimulate children's interest in the books they issue and be capable of discussing it meaningfully with them. That presupposes that librarians too have read the books in their care.

A beginning has been made in this direction and the much-needed massive push has come from the Idara-i-Taleem-o-Agahi (ITA), organisers of the Pakistan Learning Festival (previously the Children's Literature Festival). It has set the ball rolling, with countless storytelling sessions apart from other enjoyable learning activities. True, the child also learns informally from her experience and exposure. But will she start reading books by attending festivals on and off when they are held? Unlikely.

Still, ITA director Baela Jamil, an incurable optimist, is hopeful, as she is also a doer. Baela is working on a number of fronts. To make children's books easily available, she has gone into publishing and setting up libraries. ITA's activities have been diversified. It has set up a number of low-cost libraries, such as the rickshaw library in Karachi and the Digi Kutub-khana in Mubarak Village, which was initially housed in a trunk. They serve as inexpensive models for others.

Recently, 48 stand-alone libraries and 200 classroom libraries with open shelves and 2,000 books were set up in 68 government schools in Lahore and Bahawalpur districts, thanks to an agreement between ITA and Room to Read (RtR), a California-based non-profit organisation that seeks to promote literacy and gender equality in education in many Afro-Asian countries in the latter's own languages.

ITA has also been taking initiatives to boost children's book publishing in Pakistan. It instituted the Young Authors' Awards a few years ago to encourage children with writing skills to write books. Promising authors were provided mentoring by Rumana Husain, a writer, an illustrator of 75 books and co-founder of the Bookgroup.

The RtR agreement goes much further. In the first phase, Rumana as team leader selected 28 English books from RtR's cloud collection and had them published in our languages. They became instant hits. The next phase promises to be more significant; it will induct local publishers, writers, illustrators and editors into the children's book industry. Training workshops have been conducted by RtR's resource person and 15 titles are in the pipeline; 6,000 copies of each will be printed to be distributed free of cost to public and low-fee schools. The publishers will be allowed to print and sell more than the stipulated number at affordable prices.

The project has made remarkable progress in just three years and should succeed if expanded exponentially, especially to higher levels. Promoting the culture of reading among children calls for the deep engagement of 'book mentors', including principals, teachers and librarians. They have been trained by RtR and a library period has been included in the timetable. But the real challenge is to get teachers genuinely interested in reading, which is not a solitary activity as is widely believed. It has to be followed by an interactive discussion between the participants who are also engaged with the book. The book culture is a collective pursuit to encourage further reading. That is why the success of the project will ultimately depend on the mentors.

— Courtesy Dawn

Rooted in evidence



Arif Azad

In our times, in line with the ascendancy of empirical evidence in global policy frameworks, nations are embarking on a new chapter of governance, driven by data, research, and real-world insights. Their 'evidence-based policymaking' means that better utilisation of evidence and research can help save lives, reduce poverty and optimise limited resources.

One such case is that of Pakistan. Despite a rich history and a concentrated focus on policy research matters, evidence-based policymaking is less practised. Reasons range from the urgent necessity of delivering on political manifestos without waiting for the slow evidence-generation processes, non-availability of relevant evidence and research, and underutilised research departments, to research-policy gaps and lack of sustained political and institutionalised will to erect policymaking on the foundation of concrete data. However, these challenges are being addressed. At the heart of Pakistan's evolving governance paradigm is practising evidence-based policymaking. Policies must be anchored in credible research, ensuring they are not only politically aspirational but also grounded in reality. Two domains where this approach is making its presence felt are social protection and social health protection.

This fresh approach is evident in the policy matrix at the federal and provincial levels. The matrix at both levels retains a vision centred on citizen welfare. The Benazir Income Support Programme, for instance, is not just a policy initiative but, as borne out by its philosophy of focusing on a safety net for the people, is also a reflection of a commitment to the most vulnerable. Similarly, the Sehat Card initiative has been a tangible stride towards broader universal health coverage, with a view to bringing quality healthcare within the reach of every Pakistani. And yet, despite sound intentions and efforts, the spectrum of policy ambition stretching from conceptualisation to on-ground realisation is replete with challenges. At the centre of these challenges is the need for continuous feedback loops, agile policy adaptability to new research and evidence, and most importantly, a culture of ongoing research and insights into policymaking processes.

The Research Hub, that focuses on social protection and social health protection, represents a strategic answer to this challenge. Conceptualised as a nexus, this new initiative brings together Pakistan's eminent research institutions, NGOs, development partners and policy architects from various areas including KP, Punjab and the federal government. A collaborative approach is stressed, where research agendas are co-developed and a balance between academic pursuits and real-world policy exigencies is maintained.

The initiative comes at a time of a global momentum towards increasing evidence in policymaking (as also evidenced in the formation of the multi-nation

Global Evidence Commission). The usefulness of a collaborative research approach can be seen in its first study on the population's willingness to participate as co-contributors towards the health insurance programme in KP. The study offers insights into people's perceptions about the programme, and allows decision-makers to fine-tune modalities to make the programme financially sustainable.

Such research projects, based on evidence-based policy research in health, can help health managers shape their respective programmes to absorb the financial squeeze while keeping their nets wide and inclusive.

An earlier multi-country initiative, Strengthening Evidence Use for Development Impact, has focused on increasing the use of evidence in policymaking in Uganda, Ghana and Pakistan. Its flagship report on policymaking in the areas of child labour, education and economic development in Pakistan spotlighted the centrality of using evidence. But there was no further follow-up.

The Global Evidence Commission, in its 2022 report and the follow-up 2023 update, further reinforced the importance of improving the use of evidence by formalising domestic evidence-support systems, leveraging global evidence architecture and placing evidence at the heart of policymaking at all levels. In addition to promoting a culture of evidence-based policy making in line with the recommendations of the Global Evidence Commission, there is an urgent need for more studies in other policy sectors such as education, housing and the environment to broaden the practice of on-demand evidence generation in Pakistan.

— Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

PM invites Dutch firms to invest in Pakistan's agriculture, energy sectors

DUBAI (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday met Prime Minister of the Netherlands Mark Rutte wherein he invited the Dutch firms to invest in agriculture, horticulture, water management and renewable energy sectors of Pakistan.

In the meeting held on the sidelines of COP 28, they appreciated the celebrations held in Islamabad and The Hague to mark 75 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations this year.

This was the second meeting of both leaders after the one held in New York, United States on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly session.

The two leaders discussed bilateral relations, and exchanged views on international and regional issues of mutual interest, including situation in Afghanistan.

They also discussed the evolving human rights and humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Prime Minister Kakar

underscored that Pakistan and the Netherlands should work together bilaterally as well as through the European Union on matters of mutual interest.

Both the leaders expressed satisfaction on the upward trajectory in bilateral relations between Pakistan and the Netherlands.

The prime minister highlighted the importance of concrete outcome on climate action and referred to Pakistan's climate vulnerabilities despite being one of the lowest carbons emitters.



DUBAI: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar meets the Prime Minister of Netherlands Mr. Mark Rutte on the sidelines of the high level segment of the UN's 28th Conference of Parties.

Pakistani engineers from CPEC transmission project receive training in China

BEIJING (INP): Muhammad Talha is one of 11 Pakistani engineers who have recently attended a technical training program in China's State Grid technical college of Tai'an city in east China's Shandong province. Talha is serving as a supervisor of a converter station at ±660kV Matiari-Lahore high-voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The training program focused on skill development as well as exploring Chinese culture

and society. "I am really happy in China with my team for our training. It has been a great experience for me to embrace Chinese culture and of course, learn technical knowledge from the best professionals at the college," he told Xinhua recently while expressing excitement about his first trip to China.

The training program, which started in October, comprised around 47 professional courses, including converter station equipment inspection, direct current power

adjustment, and operation and maintenance of converter station, in order to help them enhance techniques of HVDC operation at Matiari-Lahore project. This was Pakistan's first HVDC transmission project funded, constructed and operated by the State Grid Corporation of China (SGCC) under the CPEC framework. The project was officially put into commercial operation in September 2021. It has the maximum capacity to transmit electricity of 35 billion kilowatt-hours annually.

Mega KPEC project under construction in district Khyber: Aamir

PESHAWAR (APP): KP Minister for Industries, Commerce, Technical Education and Newly Merged Districts (NMDs) Affairs, Dr Aamir Abdullah has said that a mega communication sector project of Khyber Pass Economic Corridor comprising a wide expressway from Torkham to Peshawar is under construction, which will also be connected to the motorway.

He expressed these views while addressing a

girja of the tribal elders and elites from various tehsils of district Khyber at District Girja Hall, Landi Kotal on Friday.

The caretaker minister for NMDs Affairs paid a one-day visit to district Khyber, where he also attended a Tribal Girja as chief guest and met local youth.

He also took briefings from both district administration and district police regarding administrative affairs, uplift process, and law and order.



MULTAN: Director General Federal Seed Certification & Registration Department, Muhammad Azam Khan and the Registrar Dr. Hayatullah Tareen along with their staff visit the Maize Research Station of Kissan Seed Corporation at Qasba Marral.

Trade deficit shrinks by 33.59 percent, export grow by 1.93% in 5 months

ISLAMABAD (INP): The country's merchandise trade deficit contracted by 33.59 per cent during the first five months of the current fiscal year compared to the corresponding period of last year, according to the latest PBS data.

On the other hand, the imports narrowed by 17.32 per cent and were recorded at \$21.550 billion compared to \$26.064 billion last year. Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the exports from the country increased by 7.66 per cent in November compared to the exports of the same month of last year.

increased by 1.93 per cent to \$12.172 billion compared to the exports of \$11.942 billion during the corresponding period of last year, according to the latest PBS data.

The Trade deficit from July-November (2023-24) was recorded at \$9.378 billion as against the deficit of \$14.122 billion in July-November (2022-23), showing negative growth of 33.59 per cent. During the period under review, the exports

Pak heading towards self sufficiency in maize seed production

MULTAN (Online): Pakistan's share in producing maize seed will rise from 50 to 70 percent within next five years in the world market leading to self sufficiency in the commodity, hoped CEO Kisan Saeed, Shafiq Ur Rehman.

Taking to APP here Friday, he informed that thirty years back, Pakistan used to import 100 percent seed while it had its 50 percent production share in world market now and will

increase up to 70 percent within next five years. He stated that maize had two crops named "Masoomi and Bharaiya" which were grown in summer and winter respectively. He informed that a group of govt officials including Federal Seed Certification department DG, Director Registration and Plant Readers Breeders Rights Registry Registrar, Director and Deputy Director and others visited two farms in Multan.

MoST to establish Pak Advanced Research Project Agency

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministry of Science and Technology has entered into final stages of establishing the Pakistan Advanced Research Project Agency to create a linkage between defence, academia and industry.

In a tweet, the Minister of Science and Technology, Dr. Umar Saif said, "At the final stages of establishing Pakistan Advanced Research Project Agency.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Privatisation, Fawad Hasan Fawad chairing a meeting of Privatisation Commission Board, in Islamabad.

CDNS collect Rs 730bln targets in fresh bond

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has achieved a target of Rs 730 billion in fresh bonds in the current fiscal year, from July 1 to November, 30. The CDNS surpassed the annual target and achieved the target of Rs 1.6 trillion in fresh bonds in the current fiscal year, the senior official of CDNS told APP here on Friday.

He said this was Rs 200 billion additional annual targets than the target of Rs 1300 billion for the previous financial year 2021-22. "The CDNS has set a reviewed saving target of Rs 1.4 trillion for the current financial year (2021-22) which will promote savings culture in the country," he said. In view of the current market trend in the country.

Rupee gains 20 paise against Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Friday gained 20 paise against US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 284.96 against the previous day's closing at Rs 285.16. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs 285.35 and Rs 287.9 respectively.

CM Punjab lays foundation stone of Dadocha Dam

Independent Report
RAWALPINDI: Caretaker Chief Minister (CM) Punjab, Mohsin Naqvi here on Friday laid the foundation stone of the Dadocha Dam, and also inspected the site of the project.

He said that the construction work of the dam, which was stalled for 13 years, had finally started.

The CM said that Rawalpindi city was facing a severe water shortage. The water supply situation deteriorates in summer as the shortfall reaches up to 60 MGD, he added.

Emergency work had been started on Dadocha Dam to meet the water shortage, said Mohsin Naqvi. The Dadocha dam project which would be

completed at a cost of 14 billion, would help meet the water shortage issue, he added.

After its completion, this dam would provide 35 million gallons of clean drinking water per day to Rawalpindi city, the CM informed.

The construction of Dadocha Dam would address the long-standing water problem being faced by the citizens, he said and appreciated the efforts and hard work done by the Chief Secretary Punjab and Commissioner Rawalpindi Division.

Mohsin Naqvi said that Dadocha Dam would be completed in two years period.

Frontier Works Organization (FWO) which is working on the Ring Road Rawalpindi

project would also complete the dam swiftly, the CM informed.

The dam project was pending for a long time, the CM said and informed that the preparations were being made in Murree for the winter season. Solid steps would be taken to increase tourism, said Mohsin Naqvi.

Special operation against illegal housing societies had been launched, he informed.

The CM said, "Upgradation work of the hospitals would continue and we will not allow anyone to obstruct this project."

During a briefing, the CM was informed that work on the dam site was progressing rapidly, with 26% financial progress and 12% physical progress.



RAWALPINDI: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi offering Dua after inaugurating Dadocha Dam.

Pakistan attaches great importance to bilateral ties with the Netherlands

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman attended a ceremony held at Lahore Fort to celebrate the completion of 75 years of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and the Netherlands as a special guest. Ambassador of Netherlands to Pakistan, Henny de Vries, Honorary Consul of Netherlands Asma Hamid, former Federal Minister Khurshid Kasuri, Tahir Khalil Sindhu, former Governor

Shahid Hamid and other distinguished guests were present in the ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rahman said that Pakistan attaches great importance to bilateral relations with the Netherlands.

He said that Pakistan appreciates the cooperation of the Netherlands in political, economic, climate change, education, culture, and multilateral fora. Governor Punjab said that both

ANF seizes 142 kg drugs in 13 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in a crackdown against drug smugglers managed to recover 142 kg of drugs and arrested 16 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday.

He informed that in an operation, 474 grams of Ice drug was recovered from the possession of a passenger netted at Islamabad International Airport. The accused, a resident of Peshawar, was leaving for Jeddah by flight number PA-270.

AJK PM denies social media reports about abolishment of NTS system

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Azad Jammu Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq, while refuting the social media reports about the abolishment of the NTS system, has said that the NTS system was still in force and will continue in future as well.

He stated this while addressing the AJK legislative assembly session in the State

metropolis on Friday.

Speaking on the occasion, the AJK prime minister regrettably noted that on the basis of social media information, it was propagated that the government was scrapping the Recruitment Amendment Act.

He said that nobody even bothered to fact check the source of information to ascertain whether it was real or fake.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman in a group photo with Ambassador of Netherlands to Pakistan, Henny de Vries, Honorary Consul of Netherlands Asma Hamid and others on the eve of ceremony held to celebrate completion of 75 years of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Netherlands.

Govt land worth millions embezzled Major corruption scandal unveiled in Abbottabad

ABBOTTABAD (APP): The Anti-Corruption Department Abbottabad on Friday has exposed a major corruption scandal involving the misappropriation of government land amounting to millions of rupees. The illicit activities include fraudulent transactions and clear forgery, leading to the

arrest of two suspects.

Under the guidance of the Director of Anti-Corruption Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, legal proceedings have been initiated against six persons including a former Tehsildar, land revenue officer, patwari, and a member of the cantonment board.

Homosexuals festival challenged in LHC

LAHORE (Online): Festival of homosexuals has been challenged in Lahore High Court (LHC). Petition in this regard has been filed by a citizen Ammar Hanif through his counsel advocate Nadim Sarwar.

Through the petition DC Lahore, IG Punjab and others have been made respondents.

Free glucometer distributed among diabetic patients

PESHAWAR (APP): The Mercy Teaching Hospital (MTH) in Peshawar has organized the ceremony for the free distribution of glucometers among diabetic patients. The event witnessed the active participation of doctors, healthcare workers, and patients, marking a significant initiative during the diabetes awareness month as scheduled by the hospital's Diabetes Unit.

Development projects in merged areas will bring change in lives of tribal

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Minister for merged districts affairs, industries, commerce and technical education, Dr. Aamir Abdullah on Friday paid a one-day visit to District Khyber and participated in a large Jirga and Kuli Kacheri of the tribal elders and interacted with the tribal youth at district headquarters Landi Kotal.

During the visit, the district administration and

police department also gave separate briefings to the minister regarding the performance and activities of the district administration and police in the district. Deputy Commissioner Sanaulah Khan briefed the caretaker minister about the overall security situation in the district, administrative matters, education, health, communication, construction and other sectors of life.

21.6m children vaccinated during anti polio campaign

LAHORE (APP): At least 21.6 million children were administered polio drops during the last four days across the province.

Friday was the last day of anti-polio campaign in the Punjab province.

According to a spokesman, more than 1.6 million children were given polio vaccine in Lahore, seven lakh children in Rawalpindi, 1.2 million in Faisalabad, more than 990,000 children were administered polio vaccine in Multan.

Punjab launches prison health initiative screening AIDS

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab's Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare, Dr. Jamal Nasir, announced that, on Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi's directive, 52,000 prisoners across 43 Punjab prisons underwent screening for AIDS, hepatitis B & C, TB, and non-communicable diseases.

Addressing a program on World AIDS Day on Friday, the minister disclosed the commencement of AIDS treatment for affected prisoners following PCR

tests. Additionally, regular biannual screenings for prisoners in Punjab have been mandated. Free diagnosis and treatment facilities for HIV patients are available in 45 clinics across 36 districts under the Punjab AIDS Control Program. Presently, over 21,000 registered AIDS patients receive free medicines and counseling.

Dr. Jamal Nasir highlighted the role of syringe use among drug addicts in AIDS transmission and emphasized cautious blood transfusions.

International News

Ukraine's military says Russia launched its largest drone attack since the start of the invasion

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Russia on Saturday morning launched its most intense drone attack on Ukraine since the beginning of its full-scale invasion in 2022, targeting the Ukrainian capital, military officials said.

In total, Russia launched 75 Iranian-made Shahed drones against Ukraine, of which 74 were destroyed by air defenses, Ukraine's air force said.

"Kyiv was the main target," Ukrainian Air Force Commander Mykola Oleschuk wrote on his Telegram channel.

The attack was "the most massive air attack by drones on Kyiv," said Serhii Popko, head of the

Kyiv city administration. Ukrainian air force spokesman Yuriy Ilnat confirmed later that the air defenses shot down 66 air targets over the capital and surrounding region throughout the morning.

At least five civilians were wounded in the hours-long assault, which saw several buildings damaged by falling debris from downed drones, including a kindergarten. The wounded included an 11-year-old child, according to Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko.

In the city's Solomiansky district, debris left a crater in the courtyard of a residential area, and the windows of a nearby building were blown

out. Residents, most of them elderly, received medical attention at the scene. Others took shelter in a nearby subway station. As people were clearing up debris and broken glass in the neighborhood, the hum of a fresh wave of drones could be heard nearby.

The assault on Kyiv began at 4 a.m., local time, continuing in waves for more than six hours, and caused power outages in 77 residential buildings and 120 institutions, according to Popko. Ukraine's Energy Ministry said 17,000 people were without power in the Kyiv region as a result of the attack, noting that four power lines were damaged.



Palestinians check the damage in a street in the aftermath of an Israeli raid in Jenin.

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

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

A fragile truce agreement between Israel and Hamas last week has allowed WHO and aid organizations to increase their deliveries of essential supplies but these have been far from enough to meet the

needs of Gaza's 2.3 million people. Speaking at a press conference in Geneva, World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said only 15 of Gaza's 36 hospitals were still functioning and were completely overwhelmed.

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

"The remaining health system capacity

must be protected, supported and expanded."

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

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

Israeli forces kill seven Palestinians in West Bank, Palestinian officials say

Monitoring Desk
JENIN: Israeli forces killed seven Palestinians, including two minors and at least one gunman, in the occupied West Bank late on Saturday and early Sunday, medics and local sources said. The West Bank, among territories where Palestinians seek statehood, has experienced a surge in violence parallel to the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip, now in its eighth week. Five of the overnight deaths occurred in the city of Jenin, which the Israeli military said it raided to

detain a Palestinian wanted for alleged involvement in a lethal West Bank ambush in August as well as 20 other suspects. During the raid, Israeli forces "engaged with armed terrorists and killed five of them", the military said in a statement. The Jenin Brigades, a local armed group, said its fighters battled the Israeli troops. It did not immediately provide details on any casualties, but local witnesses said at least one of the Palestinians killed in Jenin was a known Brigades member.



Pro-Palestinian environmental activists participate in a sit-in demonstration at the Expo City in Dubai in support of a ceasefire in Gaza.

Erdogan to visit Budapest next month as Turkey and Hungary hold up Sweden's membership in NATO

Monitoring Desk
BUDAPEST: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will visit Hungary's capital in December, his second trip to Budapest this year at a time when both countries remain the only NATO members not to have ratified Sweden's accession into the trans-Atlantic military alliance.

During his visit on Dec. 18, Erdogan will take part in a meeting of the Hungarian-Turkish Strategic Cooperation Council, and celebrate the 100th anniversary of the opening of diplomatic ties between the two countries, Bertalan Havasi, the press chief for Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, told local news outlet ATV in a re-

port broadcast on Monday. Havasi didn't immediately respond to further questions from The Associated Press on Tuesday about the trip.

It wasn't clear whether Erdogan and Orban would discuss Sweden's NATO membership, which has been delayed for more than a year by Hungary and Turkey. All 31 NATO allies must endorse the accession of a new member.

Erdogan's government has delayed Sweden's ratification over accusations that Stockholm is too soft on Kurdish militants and other groups Turkey considers to be security threats. But Hungary has expressed no such concrete concerns.



Pro-Palestinian demonstrators march across the Mandela Bridge downtown Johannesburg, South Africa.

Brazil's Lula appoints his justice minister to Supreme Court

Monitoring Desk
BRASILIA: Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said on Monday he will appoint his Justice Minister, Flavio Dino, to a Supreme Court seat that has been vacant since the retirement of Justice Rosa Weber in late September.

Lula also said he would nominate Paulo Gonet as the country's new prosecutor general.

Dino, 55, is Lula's second appointment for Brazil's top court since he took office in January for

his third non-consecutive term as president. Earlier in June, he tapped his former defense lawyer Cristiano Zanin for another Supreme Court seat. Previously, former President Michel Temer appointed his own justice minister, Alexandre de Moraes to the court while Lula's predecessor, Jair Bolsonaro, picked Andre Mendonca for a seat.

Dino, whose nomination will now be voted on by the Senate, has been serving in Lula's cabinet since January.

UK gov't steps in to stop Telegraph deal

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Britain's media minister said on Thursday she would intervene in the acquisition of the Telegraph Media Group by Abu Dhabi-backed RedBird IMI, on public interest grounds as it might impact the accurate presentation of news or free expression of opinion. The right-leaning Daily Telegraph broadsheet and Spectator magazine, favourites of politicians in the leading Conservative Party, are being sold after Lloyds Banking Group in June seized control following a long-running dispute with former owners, the Barclay family. But the government told RedBird in the letter that the minister was concerned about the potential for it to influence the Telegraph's operations.

"My Department has today written to the Barclay family and RedBird IMI, the current and proposed owners of Telegraph Media Group (TMG), to inform them that I will be issuing a Public Interest Intervention Notice (PIIN)" media minister Lucy Frazer said in a statement.

South Africa march demands a permanent Gaza cease-fire on day of solidarity with Palestinians

Monitoring Desk
JOHANNESBURG: Members of South African political parties, civil society organisations and other supporters marched through the streets of Johannesburg on Wednesday demanding a permanent cease-fire in Gaza as they marked the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

Rival political parties including the ruling African National Congress and the leftist opposition Economic Freedom Fighters were among the scores of demonstrators who

marched across the Nelson Mandela Bridge to protest against Israel's military offensive in Gaza against Hamas.

Several other protests were planned around South Africa, where many including President Cyril Ramaphosa have compared Israel's policies in Gaza and the West Bank with South Africa's past apartheid regime of racial segregation.

Veteran anti-apartheid activist Ronnie Kasrils called for the boycott and isolation of Israel over the current war.

Italy pledges 100mn euros to COP28 climate damage fund, PM Meloni says

Monitoring Desk
ROME: Italy will provide 100 million euros (\$108.91 million) to a new fund to help poor countries cope with "loss and damage" due to climate change, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said on Friday, adding she would invest 70 percent of her 4.2-billion euro Climate Fund in Africa. "We are contributing to the loss and damage fund with 100 million euros to help achieve the goals of this COP28," she told an event at the COP28 climate conference in Dubai.

President directs MCB to investigate corrupt officials involved in scam

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday directed the Muslim Commercial Bank (MCB) to investigate and initiate criminal proceedings, including the registration of FIRs, against corrupt bank officials of Gojra Road Branch, Jhang.

The bank officials were involved in bank fraud. He also directed MCB to return Rs 3.093 million to a customer who had been swindled out of his money through the connivance of a tea boy and bank officials posted at the branch.

The president gave these directions while deciding upon a representation filed by MCB against the decision of the Banking Mohtasib directing the bank to pay the complainant a sum of Rs 3.093 million. As per details, Muhammad Munir Ahmed etc (complainants) were maintaining a joint account at the MCB's Gojra Road Branch, Jhang Sadder.

They complained that upon reconciliation of the account in March 2021, they found a huge shortfall in their account balance and that 292 deposit slips totalling Rs 3,941,660/- were not credited to their account. They also held valid deposit slips duly signed and stamped by the bank officials for the deposits.

They approached the bank for the redressal of their complaint but the Bank rejected their claim on the basis that a tea boy, posted at the branch, used to visit their laboratory for cash collection and the deposit slips were affixed with a "Utility Bills Received" stamp nor was validated with "cash received" stamp. They further contended that the tea boy was employed by a third-party organization that had already lodged an FIR against him.

The bank stated that it was not responsible for the personal dealings of the customer with the tea boy which took place outside the Branch premises.

Feeling aggrieved, they approached the Banking Mohtasib for redressal of their grievance.

The Banking Mohtasib accepted the complaint and directed the Bank to credit the complainant's account with a sum of PKR 3,093 million and report compliance within 40 days. Subsequently, the Bank filed a representation against the Mohtasib's decision with the President.

The president conducted a personal hearing of the case at Aiwan-e-Sadr and rejected the Bank's representation. In his decision, the president stated that the Bank's denial of the claims of the complainants on the ground that the deposit slip neither had the required "Cash Received" stamp nor was validated with any system entry was not tenable as the receipt was a bona fide document and admittedly issued under the signature of the bank's authorized Teller Services Officers (TSO) who had been penalized in terms of dismissal from Bank's service.

He further observed that the bank branch had violated the procedures by not complying with the bank's own SOPs, introducing on its own a new system of signing deposit slips, affixing the "Utility Bills Received" stamp (on customer copy only) without receiving cash as well as collecting cash from customers from their business places.



ISLAMABAD: Amidst the prevailing maritime situation in the Middle East, Pakistan Navy has deployed PNS TUGHRIL to ensure safety and security of merchant ships carrying shipments to and from Pakistani ports passing through one of the world's busiest choke points.

Pakistan Navy deploys ship for regional maritime security patrol in GoA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Amidst the prevailing maritime situation in the Middle East, Pakistan Navy has deployed PNS TUGHRIL to ensure safety and security of merchant ships carrying shipments to and from Pakistani ports passing through one of the world's busiest choke points.

Pakistan Navy is committed to ensure freedom of navigation on high seas and safety of international sea lanes of communication besides safeguarding national maritime interests and trade through sea, a Pakistan Navy news release on Friday said.

Pakistan Navy is well cognizant of its national obligation with regards to maintenance of rule based order in the region.

In the same spirit, Pakistan Navy regularly deploys its ships on Regional Maritime Security Patrols and also contributes to collaborative maritime security efforts under the ambit of Combined Maritime Forces.

To solve electricity crisis Bilawal announces to introduce Green Energy Parks after victory in upcoming general elections

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that his party's government will introduce the Green Energy Parks at the district level to solve the long-standing electricity crisis in the country after victory in the upcoming general elections, and the poor families will be provided free electricity up to 300 units monthly.

He also lambasted the traditional non-public approach of bureaucracy, saying that the "Baboos" (bureaucrats) sitting in Islamabad neither do the work themselves nor let anyone else do it, adding that like Balochistan, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the people of Punjab also feel deprived. He once again categorically said that PPP believes in making local bodies administratively and financially independent.

According to the press release issued by Media Cell Bilawal House, the PPP Chairman, while addressing the chairmen and mayors of local bodies across the province participating in the annual general meeting of the Local Council Association Balochistan chapter, urged that there is a need to focus more on local solutions to alleviate the problems faced by the people.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that it is said that during his third term, Mian Sahib (Nawaz Sharif) had eliminated the problem of electricity load shedding in the country, and continued: "(on such claim) I wonder which Pakistan is this, where 18 hours of loadshedding is happening." He said that after winning the polls due on February 8, his government will implement the Green Energy Parks project under Public Private Partnership mode to solve the power crisis. "We will generate the electricity locally and supply it to the local population at subsidized rates," he added. Chairman PPP termed the local government representatives as truly grassroots representatives, and urged that both the federal and provincial governments must consult with the local government representatives in preparing the annual budget.



KARACHI: Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi Chief, Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman addresses to media persons during press conference, at Idara-e-Noor-ul-Haq in Karachi.

Cipher case: Law ministry files notification in court regarding trial of PTI chairman in jail

ISLAMABAD (Online): Notification on jail trial of chairman PTI Imran Khan in cipher case has been issued by law ministry. The hearing of cipher case has been fixed today (Saturday). It has been written about Shah Mehmood Qureshi in the letter too.

The court staff read out notification of ministry of law to the lawyers.

Counsel Ali Bokhari took the plea it is difficult to come to jail on Saturday because there are our cases in trial courts.

Special prosecutor said I am in favor of fixing the hearing today in Adiala jail. PTI lawyers requested the court to fix hearing on December 05. The court remarked we will fix the hearing on December 5 but hearing has to be fixed with reference to attendance.

The court adjourned the hearing of the case till today (Saturday).

ECP moves closer to elections, releases the final list of constituencies

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has released the final list of constituencies derived from the 7th Population and Housing Census 2023 for the upcoming general elections. According to the notification issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan, the number of general seats has been reduced from 272 to 266. The 12 seats originally designated for elsewhere FATA have been abolished, with six seats reallocated to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa based on population.

The Election Commission reports that the National Assembly will have 266 constituencies for general seats, and there will be 593 constituencies for general seats in the provincial assemblies nationwide. According to the finalized constituencies, Islamabad is allocated 3 general seats in the National Assembly, Punjab will have 141 general seats, and the Provincial Assembly is set to have 297 general seats. Sindh is designated 61 general seats in the National Assembly and 130 in the Provincial Assembly.

CTD releases list of 51 female terrorists

PESHAWAR (APP): The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Friday released a list of female terrorists who were involved in different nature of terrorist activities in the province since 2014.

According to the list issued here 30 females were involved in incidents of terrorism, 13 in kidnapping, two in extortion and three each in target killing, terror financing.

DIG CTD Imran Shahid said that the intelligence agency and the law enforcing agencies were facing difficulties in arrest of these female terrorists due to cultural and traditional values and also because there was almost no source linked with the female criminals or terrorists.



ISLAMABAD: A Thai girl presenting flowers to Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif during National Day of Thailand ceremony at a local hotel in Federal Capital.

Mushaal Mullick briefs UK Parliamentarians on human right violations in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick Friday attended a meeting of cross-party British Parliamentarians, convened by Member Parliament, Chairperson APPG on Jammu & Kashmir, Debbie Abrahams at a virtual platform from London.

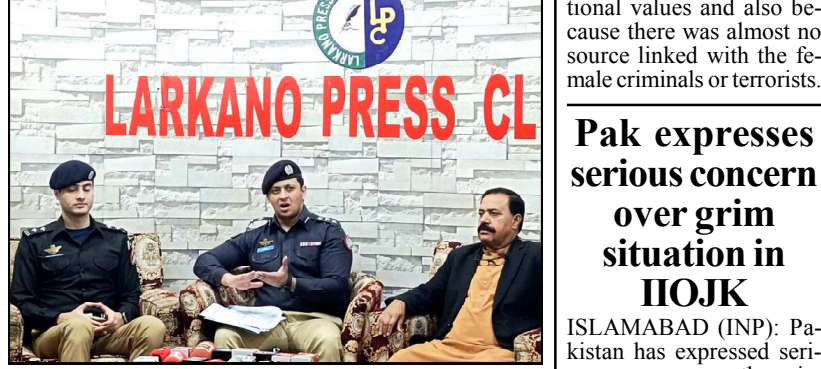
Besides British Parliamentarians, members of the civil society and human rights organisations also participated in the virtual debate, which circled around the state of human rights affairs in Illegally Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Mushaal Mullick briefed the parliamentarians about human rights abuses by the Indian government in the occupied valley.

She particularly raised the issue of gross violations of human rights against women and children in IIOJK.

The special assistant urged the international community to take notice of the treatment of minorities, particularly the forced conversions of the Christian and other minorities under the RSS ideology, inside India. Mushaal said that Kashmiris were deeply concerned over attempts to alter the demographics of IIOJK.

She urged the world for making suitable efforts to resolve longstanding issues of Kashmir according to UN resolutions and aspiration of people of the held valley.



LARKANA: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Larkana, Syed Abdul Rahim Shirazi addresses to media persons during press conference, at Larkana press club.

Al-Qadir Trust case NAB files reference against Imran, Bushra and 6 others

ISLAMABAD (APP): Like other parts of the globe, the World AIDS Day was also commemorated in Pakistan on Friday with determination and hope for a HIV Aids free country.

In this regard, the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, in collaboration with the Common Management Unit (CMU) for AIDS, TB, and Malaria, the UN family, the Association of People Living with HIV (APLHIV) and other community partners, marked World AIDS Day 2023 with a resolute commitment to the global theme, "Let Communities Lead."

Caretaker Federal Minister for Health, Dr Nadeem Jan said that the government of Pakistan was firmly committed to eradicating the AIDS epidemic by 2030, aligning with the global HIV milestones.

The Islamabad High Court but was later released after the Supreme Court declared the arrest unlawful.

On Nov 14, the PTI chief, who is already imprisoned in Adiala Jail in the cipher case, was again arrested by the accountability watchdog in the case. He was then handed over to the watchdog on physical remand, before being sent on judicial remand.

The others named in the reference include Farhat Shahzadi, a close friend of Imran's spouse, former special assistants to the prime minister (SAPM) Mirza Shahzad Akbar and Zulfi Bukhari.

Pakistan elected as chair of CWC's Conference of States Parties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Ambassador Suljuk Mustansar Tarar has been elected as chairperson of the 28th session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction. The position will be for a period of one year.

The position of chair is rotated among the five regional groups in the CSP and candidature of Ambassador Suljuk Mustansar Tarar had been proposed to the 193-member conference by the Asia Group. The Convention on the Prohibition of Development, Production and Stockpiling of Chemical Weapons and their Destruction (CWC) - with 193 States Parties - is a comprehensive disarmament treaty, eliminating an entire class of weapons of mass destruction. The Conference of States Parties comprises all states parties to the CWC and is the principal organ overseeing the implementation of the Convention. It is a matter of great honour for Pakistan to have been elected to this prestigious position and reflects the confidence of states parties in Pakistan's diplomacy and commitment to the CWC. This is



KARACHI: Members of Sindh Hindu Council are holding protest demonstration against attack on Gangumal, Senior Journalist in Matiari, at Karachi press club.

Customs inspector among two arrested from Torkham

PESHAWAR (APP): The raiding team of FIA here on Friday arrested an organized gang involved in illegal clearance of US dollars during an intelligence-based operation at Torkham Border.

The FIA spokesman said the action was taken on the directive of Deputy Director Anti-Corruption, Saad Ullah Khan during which two members of the gang including a Customs Inspector were arrested from Foreign Currency Declaration Point at Torkham.

The accused were identified as Customs Inspector Wajid and agent Asfandyar. Customs Inspector Wajid was deputed at Torkham Border while the other accused Wajid was involved in illegal clearance of the foreign currency at the border.

During the search, the FIA recovered 123000 US dollars from Asfandyar. The accused confessed to his involvement in smuggling of hundreds of thousands of dollars on a daily basis to Afghanistan.

He said he was in contact with several agents and received his share at Customs Office, Torkham. He revealed that his share for illegally clearing US 100000 dollars was Rs 50000 per deal.

The spokesman said both the accused were in custody and investigation was underway adding that raids were being conducted to arrest other members of the gang.



LARKANA: Participants are holding awareness walk on the occasion of World AIDS Day led by Deputy Commissioner Larkana, Javed Ahmed Kumbhar at Shaikh Zayed Women Hospital in Larkana.



HYDERABAD: Members of All Thar Labors Workers Ittehad Sindh are holding rally in connection of Sindhi Cultural Day, at Hyderabad press club.

Missing cipher case hearing adjourned for today

ISLAMABAD (APP): The special court on Friday ordered hearing of missing cipher case in Adiala Jail on Saturday (today) after the Ministry of Law issued a notification in the court.

Special Court judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain heard the case registered against the PTI chief and former foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi in Judicial Complex.

Today, FIA Special Prosecutor Zulfiqar Abbas Naqvi, PTI lawyers Barrister Taimur, Shiraz Ranjha, Khalid Yusuf and others appeared before the court, Shah Mehmood Qureshi's daughter Meher Bano and sisters of Chairman PTI were also present in the courtroom.

Barrister Taimur told the court that there was confusion about the venue; whether it would be heard in Judicial Complex or the Adiala Jail. The judge asked him to read his order; there's no confusion in his order. He asked the lawyer has the Ministry of Law issued any notification. If not, let's wait for it or the accused would be produced before the court as ordered.

The lawyer argued that you reviewed your order which is illegal.