

Independent

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PESHAWAR: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar interacts with KP Police officials after the Police Darbar Ceremony.

Whosoever does not accept law of Pakistan should go out: PM

Says we will have to fight with wisdom and proper strategy; Vowes to take the fight against terrorism in the country to the logical end; If terrorists carry out 10 attacks on us we will carry out attacks on them for 10000 times. We have won war against terrorism. Only announcement for our win has to be made; Nation highly indebted to security forces for fearlessly fighting against terrorism

PESHAWAR (Online): Caretaker Prime Minister (PM) Anwaar ul Haq Kakar has said the terrorists browbeat people in the name of Islam but we don't fear from the terrorists. "If terrorists carry out 10 attacks on us we will carry out attacks on them for 10000 times. We have won war against terrorism. Only announcement for our win has to be made.

We will not bow before them, Whosoever does not accept Pakistan law he should go out from here, he said this while addressing Police Darbar here Thurs-

day. The heirs of Police martyrs are not ordinary people. They are the greatest people, he added. Who sides with evil are very degraded people. Innocent children were martyred in APS. Mentioning the Army Public School Peshawar tragedy in which innocent students and faculty members along with police personnel were targeted by the terrorists, the Prime Minister said the state will not spare the coward terrorists. He said correct approach is the main factor,

required in fighting terrorism and we firmly believe that we are on right path. He said terrorists cannot shatter our resolve by carrying out terrorists attacks in the country. He said we have won war on terrorism morally. The Prime Minister reiterated government's resolve to continue war against terrorism till complete elimination of terrorists from the country. He assured that all the requirements of the police force would be fulfilled in consultation with the provincial government.

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali and Chief Minister Arshad Hussain Shah were also present on this occasion. APP adds: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday said the entire nation was highly indebted to the KP police which was fighting against the terrorists with bravery and valour. "You are God's chosen group who are fighting for the State's security, the martyrs deserve paradise while the opponent group is destined to be the hell forever," he said.

SJC gives ex-judge Naqvi another chance to present his case All institutions including SC accountable to people: CJP

Would've asked for Naqvi's dismissal if claims were proven: SJC Chairman Justice Isa

Monitoring Desk ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) on Thursday gave Justice (ret'd) Sayeed Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi — who faces complaints of misconduct — another chance to present his viewpoint before the body. The development came a day after Naqvi stepped down from his post due to "circumstances which are a matter of public knowledge and to some extent public record".

The SJC served an intimation notice on Naqvi, whose resignation was accepted by President Arif Alvi earlier today, asking him to appear before the body tomorrow if he wants to give his viewpoint against the complaints lodged against him. During the course of proceedings, SJC Chairman Justice Qazi Faez Isa remarked there could be two reasons behind the judge's resignation: the complaint against the judge was false and he stepped down under pressure or the allegations were true and he did not want to face them. "The question of judge's dismissal is now irrelevant," he stated, adding that the council had just sent a report to the president.

"If allegations had been proven, then the council would have requested the president for the judge's dismissal." All institutions, including SC, were accountable to the people, remarked Justice Isa, adding: "If everyone learns this thing, all the problems will be solved." Meanwhile, the SJC, noting that Naqvi's lawyers would be heard if they requested, adjourned the proceedings till 11am today (Friday). The former judge submitted his resignation hours after a three-member bench of the apex court rejected Justice (ret'd) Naqvi's plea seeking halting of the SJC's proceedings.

A day after Justice Naqvi Justice Ijazul Ahsan also steps down as SC judge

ISLAMABAD (INP): Supreme Court senior judge Justice Ijazul Ahsan tendered his resignation on Thursday over unknown reasons.

The third senior most judge of the apex court, Justice Ijazul Ahsan who was set to become chief justice in October this year sent his resignation to President Arif Alvi. The development comes a day after Justice (ret'd) Naqvi stepped down from his post as SC judge. Supreme Court Justice Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi tendered his resignation on January 10, as the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) was hearing a reference against him over the misconduct alle-

President accepts resignation of SC judge Mazhar Naqvi

ISLAMABAD (Online): President Arif Alvi has accepted the resignation of Supreme Court Justice Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi.

Petition was filed against Justice Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi in Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) which was to be heard on January 13. Proceedings on Reference over the misconduct allegations, mainly revolving around amassing wealth beyond his resources against Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi was underway. In his resignation sent to Alvi on Wednesday, he said it wasn't possible for him to continue working, as he mentioned his tenure both at the Supreme Court and the Lahore High Court (LHC). "In the circumstances which are a matter of public knowledge and to some extent public record, it is no longer possible for me to continue to serve as a judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Considerations of due process also compel so," the resignation letter reads. Earlier on the day, President Alvi accepted the resignation of Justice Mazhar Naqvi.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Switzerland to Pakistan Georg Steiner called on President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Governor calls for promoting brotherhood, respect to difference of opinion

Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has underlined the need to promote brotherhood, respect to the difference of opinion and religious harmony in order to make the country and province hub of peace. The Governor stressed that we desperately need to ensure equal rights for all citizens instead of representing the majority and minority by us. He said that it is a fact that our topmost identity is of human being and those speak about division on the basis of geography, race, ethnicity or religion is not fair. These and similar other views were expressed by the Governor while speaking to a delegation comprising the religious leaders

from different religions who called on him under leadership of Sardar Iqbal Khilji here on Thursday at the Governor House. The Governor maintained that we are the inhabitants of one country and province but the nation suffers internal weaknesses because of the differences and divisions among the people. Therefore, it is very important for us to end difference in our acts and deeds and build our character on true moral grounds. The Governor also said that it is our national tradition to share grief and sorrows of each other. The Governor said that the constitution of Pakistan guarantees equal rights, freedom of religion and expression to all citizens of the country including all religious minorities.



QUETTA: A delegation comprising of religious leaders from different religions under leadership of Sardar Iqbal Khilji meeting with Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Pashtoon nation and land rich in natural resources: PkMAP chairman urges Pashtoons to wage democratic & political struggle forging unity among their ranks

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chairman Pashtoonkhaw Milli Awami Party (PkMAP), Mehmood Khan Achakzai has urged the Pashtoon nation to continue democratic and political struggle for their rights forging unity among their ranks. He said that the Pashtoons nation and its land is rich in natural resources, but despite this, the people are forced to live miserable life. It has become difficult for the

Pashtoons to make their both ends meet despite their land is rich in the natural resources. He said that it is an unfair to occupy land of others, but it is also not appropriate to leave their land for others. He said that we have to demonstrate unity to rid our land of the occupant elements. The Chairman PkMAP was addressing a public meeting at the residence of Nasrullah Achakzai in Killi

Shero Manari on Thursday. A large number of people led by Syed Sharafuddin Agha announced to join the PkMAP. The gathering was also addressed by the secretary Finance of the party and candidate for PB-49, Syed Liaquat Ali Agha, Secretary of Pishin district, Umar Khan Tareen, Abdul Manaf Khan Badaizai and Habibullah Khan Achakzai.

6.0 magnitude quake jolts Islamabad, Lahore, other cities

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 6.0 magnitude earthquake on Thursday afternoon caused panic among residents of the twin cities and other part of the country.

According to Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), the seismic activity was felt in the Federal Capital Islamabad, Rawalpindi and neighboring regions, Lahore, Muzaffarabad, Peshawar, Chilas, Quetta, Zhob, Charat and other cities at 2.20 pm. The quake was recorded 6.0 magnitudes and its epicenter Hindu Kush Region of Pak-Afghan border at a depth of 213km. Its longitude and latitude were 70.63 East and 36.16 North, respectively.

Solangi reiterates govt's commitment to combat terrorism on Pakistan's soil

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Thursday that the government was resolute in its commitment to combat terrorism on the soil of this country. He was delivering his speech as chief guest at the launching ceremony of the Annual Security Assessment Report by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS). "On behalf of the federal government, let me assure you that we are constantly working to address the issue of terrorism through various hard and soft measures", he said. He said that Pakistan had repeatedly asked interim Afghan government to address Pakistan's counter-terrorism concerns, especially the space available to militant groups like TTP to operate in and from Afghanistan. "Pakistan expects a positive response from the Afghan government. Pakistan has also raised the issue of access to modern weapons in Afghanistan to these militant groups besides involvement of Afghan nationals in anti-state violence in Pakistan", he said adding without addressing the issue of terrorism, both countries could not embark on the journey of economic growth and development. Murtaza Solangi said on Thursday that there would be no negotiations with armed terrorist groups. "There will be no talks with terrorists as long as they are armed and do not accept the constitution of Pakistan", Murtaza Solangi said categorically.

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FAISALABAD: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addresses to his supporters during public gathering meeting held at Hockey Stadium Tandlianwala in Faisalabad.

Only PPP can steer country out of crises, claims Bilawal

FAISALABAD (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari claimed on Thursday that only his party could steer the country out of current crises, as it had a very clear manifesto for people's welfare. Addressing a public gathering a Tandlianwala here, he said the PPP enjoyed masses' support because of its public welfare agenda and unprecedented sacrifices, offered by its leadership for democracy in

Pakistan. He said the PPP would re-emerge as a leading force in the general election 2024. He said the PPP had a 10-point agenda for ensuring public welfare and betterment after coming to power. He said PPP founder chairman Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had created awareness among masses about protection of their legitimate rights whereas his mother Benazir Bhutto embraced martyrdom but never compromised on democratic norms.

85 pc target of polio immunization campaign achieved in Balochistan

Independent Report QUETTA: At least 85 percent target of the polio immunization campaign has been achieved while it is still continued in the Balochistan province. According to the sources of Emergency Operation Center (EOC) for Polio Eradication, the anti-polio campaign entered fourth day on Thursday all over the province. The EOC sources said that the campaign is running successfully in all 36 districts of the province. It may be mentioned here that it was targeted to immunize approximately 2.6 million children below five years of age during the campaign. For the purpose, around 11,000 teams have been constituted all over the province, the sources informed. Needless to mention here is that no fresh case of polio has been reported in the province since January 2021. The last case of polio had been reported from Killa Abdullah district of Balochistan since then.

According to Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC)'s spokesman told APP that a technical team of Sui Southern was dispatched to repair the affected pipeline in order to maintain supply of gas soon to Quetta in winter season. The spokesperson said that we were trying to complete the repair work of the affected pipeline as soon as possible.

12-inch diameter main pipeline supplying gas to Quetta affected in Dhadar

QUETTA (APP) Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC)'s 12-inch diameter main pipeline supplying gas to Quetta has been severely affected near Dhadar area of Kachhi and gas supply to some areas of Quetta is likely to be affected due pipeline damage. According to Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC)'s spokesman told APP that a technical team of Sui Southern was dispatched to repair the affected pipeline in order to maintain supply of gas soon to Quetta in winter season. The spokesperson said that we were trying to complete the repair work of the affected pipeline as soon as possible.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi addressing during a seminar on "Pakistan Election 2024: The Economic Reforms Agenda of Political Parties" organize by Press Information Department.

One girl child expires, three others injured in Quetta sui gas leakage blast

Independent Report QUETTA: One girl child was dead and three others including a female were injured in an explosion caused apparently due to the gas leakage in Jinnah Town area of Quetta on Thursday. The injured were admitted in the Trauma center and being provided necessary medical assistance, the spokesman of Sandeman Hospital informed. Meanwhile, the area police rushed towards the spot and started investigation into the blast. As per the initial investigations and evidences, the blast was caused due to the leakage of sui gas in the plaza. However, further investigations are in progress.

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QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting of Executive Committee of Public Private Partnership

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Musharraf's sentence

At a time when the constitutional order in Pakistan is — yet again — facing a variety of threats, the Supreme Court has upheld military ruler Pervez Musharraf's death sentence.

The decision can serve as an inflection point where Pakistan's constitutional history and future are concerned, offering lessons for those willing to learn about the perils of veering from the democratic course, and respecting the country's basic law. The general, who ruled over Pakistan for nearly a decade, was given the death sentence by a three-judge special court in 2019. A month later, the LHC had overturned the death sentence. The SC had last year taken up a set of appeals related to the case, and on Wednesday, the apex court set aside the LHC decision ruling that it was "not sustainable".

Though this paper opposes the death penalty as a matter of principle, and it would have been better if the decision had come while the military strongman was still alive — Mr Musharraf passed away last year — the ramifications of the SC judgement are considerable, just as those of the special court's original sentence were.

Though some may say that the decision is an afterthought, and that it will not stop military interventions should the proponents of martial rule decide to go ahead with it, the decision is highly symbolic. Mr Musharraf was sentenced for imposing his second emergency in 2007, yet it is fair to ask why he wasn't punished for the 'original sin': the 1999 coup. Rather than precipitating any clash of institutions, or targeting any individuals, the SC judgement should initiate a journey of soul-searching and self-reckoning within all pillars of the state, to see where we as a nation have gone wrong by abandoning the Constitution, and embracing autocratic tendencies.

Moreover, there should be an honest appraisal of history: Pervez Musharraf was not the first military strongman to rule Pakistan, though it is hoped he will be the last. Much before, in 1958, Iskander Mirza and Ayub Khan had thwarted Pakistan's democratic evolution by imposing this country's first martial law. Next, Yahya Khan's period of military rule led to the separation of East Pakistan.

The forays launched by Ziaul Haq on the constitutional order are also well-documented. But their lordships should also consider the role of their brother judges in propping up dictatorships. Many a learned jurist played a key role in validating military rule, guided by the dubious 'doctrine of necessity'.

Today, as Pakistan struggles with upholding the constitutional order, and protecting fundamental rights, all institutions need to review our chequered history — including the Musharraf period — and realise that national salvation lies only in all pillars of the state staying within their constitutional bounds, and working to stop any further adventurism.

The last Pakistani



F.S. Aijazuddin

Mani Shankar Aiyar is the last Pakistani left in India. It is his 'second favourite country'. It was once an option available to millions of Indian Muslims. Since 1947, Indian Muslims have witnessed with disappointment Pakistan's descent into democratic dementia and irresponsible insolvency. They would prefer (like the Buddhists in medieval times) to quit the subcontinent and migrate to more hospitable shores.

Two periods in Mani's long life (he is 83 years old) have conditioned his personality, his career, and his literary output. The first was the stint he spent as India's consul general in Karachi (1978-82). It provided a seemingly bottomless reservoir of material which he has used in various books. His *Memoirs of a Maverick: The First Fifty Years (1941-1991)* — was released last year.

He intended his next book to be an autobiographical sequel. His publisher, though, felt it was dominated by the second Himalaya in his life — the late prime minister Rajiv Gandhi. They suggested a biography of Rajiv instead. Hence, Mani's fresh book *The Rajiv I Knew And Why He Was India's Most Misperceived Prime Minister (2024)*.

Ever since 1992, when Mani wrote his affectionate memoir *Remembering Rajiv* within a year of Rajiv's assassination, Mani has been more loyal to the memory of Rajiv Gandhi than Rajiv's widow Sonia and her Congress party have been to him.

The book opens with a chapter on Rajiv's domestic successes: The accords with Punjab, Assam, Mizoram, and Darjeeling. The second discusses the internal controversies that plagued Rajiv's political career: the Shah Bano case, the communal Pandora's box of Babri Masjid, Operation Brasstacks, IPKF, and the Bofors imbroglio.

Most leaders prefer to cruise in international waters than to be buffeted by domestic squalls. Rajiv was no exception. In the third chapter on Rajiv's foreign policy initiatives, Mani lauds Rajiv's efforts on nuclear disarmament, improving relations with China and Pakistan, Indian intervention in the Maldives in 1988, and the establishment of the AF-R-ICA Fund in 1986. Mani provided Rajiv with the catchy acronym: 'Action For Resisting Invasion' [in Mozambique], Colonialism [in Namibia], and Apartheid [in South Africa].

The fourth chapter — Innovative Domestic Initiatives — is a checklist of Rajiv's radial interest in technology missions, Zonal Cultural Centres and Apna Utsavs, Island Development Authority, drought-proofing and the economy.

The concluding fifth chapter is on the Panchayat(i) Raj initiative. Mani's untiring efforts as India's first ever cabinet minister for panchayat raj and as chairman of the Expert Committee on the Panchayats (2011-13) reached its apogee when the committee produced a five-volume report. He dubbed it 'an Encyclopaedia Panchayatica.' To Mani's chagrin, that report now "moulders in forgotten cupboards", ignored by Modi's government.

Mani tried to bring the panchayats centre stage. Instead, in 2013, Mani was eased off-stage by Congress president Sonia Gandhi. To Pakistanis, Mani's comments about Panchayat will be of primary interest. He deals openly with Operation Brasstacks, launched with Rajiv's approval and conducted in 1986/7. That provocative operation — "bigger than any Nato exercise — and the biggest since World War II" — took place on "the vicinity of the Pakistan border, involving half a million Indian Army troops — half the Indian Army within a hundred miles of Pakistani territory — and the deployment of Indian naval forces for an amphibious naval assault in the Korangi creek that led from the sea to Pakistan's commercial capital, Karachi".

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On January 28, 1987, President Ziaul Haq retaliated smokelessly by allowing Dr A.Q. Khan to reveal to the Indian journalist Kuldip Nayar that Pakistan had gone nuclear. Nayyar (hoping to earn more than kudos for this explosive disclosure) deliberately withheld publication of this till March 1, by which time confrontation had cooled to consultation.

Mani's recollection of that speech bulges with pride: "It was the distilled essence of all I had learned of Pakistan and Pakistanis in my three years in Karachi. And here it was pouring forth from the mouth of the prime minister!"

Despite Mani's unquenchable optimism, his dream of "an uninterupted relationship between India and Pakistan will remain unfulfilled. Certainly, as long as his nemesis PM Modi and the BJP continue to rule India. That could go on until 2039, when Mani will be all of 97 years old. Mani's janambhumi is Lahore, in Pakistan — both magnets he finds impossible to resist. -- Courtesy Dawn

Championing SDGs



Furqan Hyder Shaikh

Pakistan is one of the countries which adopted the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 — also called 'global goals' — in order to attain lasting development, peace, and prosperity for its people. It is a matter of much pride that Pakistan was the first country to adopt the SDGs at the country level when it officially passed a parliamentary resolution to this effect in 2016. The Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives has since established SDG Support Units through provincial planning and development departments to provide guidance on their implementation and track the progress made.

Implementing the SDGs in spirit promises to end poverty and inequality, ensure the protection of the Earth, and ensure that all people on this planet have access to the enjoyment of health, justice, and prosperity. Pakistan has spent eight years engaging with the SDGs and streamlining and localising them. But though it was proactive in adopting the SDGs, their implementation could be better. One wonders how many people know about the SDGs in, for example, Sindh's Tharparkar and coastal belt. How many SDG-driven schools have been operationalised? How many children at Sindh's high schools and colleges know about the SDGs? How many introductory sessions have been organised at schools and colleges in Hyderabad?

In mid-2023, I moved

to Mithi, Tharparkar, where I asked a member of a local business association about the SDGs. Puzzled, he asked, "What is an SDG?" The reply made me think that if the business community in Sindh was not aware of the SDGs, how could the SDGs be localised and streamlined? An honest, meaningful commitment to achieving SDGs entails localising them on the ground level. The business community, academia, health sector, food entities, builders, exploration and production companies, universities, development sector, and parliamentarians all need to educate themselves on SDGs and think about what practical initiatives they can take in this regard.

A much-needed step in streamlining and localising the SDGs is to translate them into local languages. For example, in Sindh, these languages would include Sindhi, Urdu, Marwari, Brahvi and Dhatki. In Tharparkar (as well as a large portion of the areas that comprise the Mirpurkhas division), Dhatki is the most common language spoken locally. Access to a Dhatki version of the SDGs would greatly help the locals as they go about planning their future business and non-business activities.

There is a pressing need for the Sindh Education and Literacy Department, in consultation with the Sindh SDG Support Unit, to develop an object-oriented educational booklet that can help make students and teachers aware of the SDGs and their practical applications in real-world scenarios. A weekly session on SDGs and what possible ideas can be drawn from SDGs should be discussed, evaluated, and projected.

If one is to think opportunistically, the Sindh government is currently reconstructing the flood-damaged houses of those affected by the 2022 mon-

soon in different districts, including Mirpurkhas, Badin, Sanghar, and Tando Mohammad Khan, through a dedicated entity called Sindh People's Housing for Flood Affecteds (SPHF). There is a unique opportunity to turn this reconstruction project into a showcase for SDG localisation. If the houses and their attached communities can be used to demonstrate the benefits of the 17 SDGs, this will facilitate others' understanding of what the SDGs could look like at the rural level. It will encourage local children to ask their teachers and elders questions about their importance. Word will spread by mouth, opening new avenues for sustainable development and good governance in the country's vast rural areas.

To implement the SDGs effectively, governments at all levels need to understand their importance in their provinces' everyday affairs. All policies need to be consciously driven by at least one of the 17 SDGs in alignment with each government's administrative targets. This will ensure that governments will remain dedicated to streamlining the SDGs into their development agenda.

It is also imperative that an SDG forum be established by provincial governments at the district level. This forum could invite researchers, economists, engineers, NGOs, teachers, university faculty, representatives of the business community, chambers of commerce and industry, and the youth to contribute to the implementation of SDGs at the district level. Informed input and novel ideas will open up innovative mechanisms to achieve global goals by 'acting locally and impacting globally'. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

President directs insurance company to refund Rs 100,000 with profit

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has directed EFU Life Assurance Ltd to refund Rs 100,000 along with profit to a poor lady who had been misled to obtain the insurance policy.

According to a press release issued by the President House Press Wing on Thursday, Zubaida Begum had obtained an amount of Rs 100,000 by participating in a local "committee" and intended to deposit the amount in her bank account, but she was fraudulently issued an insurance policy at the bank.

Being a poor lady, when she expressed her inability to pay an annual premium of Rs 100,000 and asked for a refund of her deposit, she was told that she'd only be refunded an amount of Rs 40,000, being the prevailing cash value of the policy.

Feeling aggrieved, she approached the Federal Insurance Ombudsman (FIO) but her grievance was not addressed. Later, she filed a representation with the

President against the decision of FIO. The president personally heard the case of the aggrieved lady, and after going through the record, decided the matter in her favour.

In his decision, he observed that the complainant was entitled at least to the refund of the principal amount as her claim was just and fair.

He added that the mis-selling of the policy to a poor lady who never opted to purchase the policy in the first place and thereafter the denial of the refund of the deposited premium amount by the company constituted maladministration.

The president noted that FIO had directed the insurance company to refund Rs 40,000 to the woman, without appreciating the fact that an amount of Rs 60,000 was remaining to be paid by the company.

He said that as per Insurance Ordinance 2000, FIO was to ensure the protection of the interests of insurance

policyholders, and non-refund of even the deposited amount by the insurance company was a sheer violation of the spirit of the Ordinance.

He stated that FIO had failed to follow the spirit of the Ordinance and had not realized that Rs 100,000 had been kept by the company since 2020.

and they must also have earned considerable profit on it by investing it.

The president wrote that the equitable principle of enrichment envisaged that no one should unjustly enrich themselves at the expense of others.

He added that it would be unjust to deprive the lady of her share in respect of the profit earned on her money.

The president, therefore, accepted the representation of Ms Zubaida Begum and directed EFU Life Assurance to refund the full amount of Rs 100,000 with profit to the complainant within 30 days of the order.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Khalida Ateeb, Chairperson Senate Standing Committee on Industries and Production presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

EU Ambassador visits FPCCI: GSP+ status enabled 108% export growth in a decade

Independent Report
KARACHI: Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has stressed that the 27-country economic alliance of European Union — with a cumulative GDP of almost \$20 trillion — can help Pakistan steer out of the chronically dilapidated state of the economy of Pakistan; and, enhancing our exports to the EU nations should be the cornerstone of broader economic relations.

Pakistan has achieved an encouraging 108 percent growth in exports to EU over a period of 10 years; however, in order to retain our GSP Plus status, we must not be complacent and be vigilantly continuing to fulfill EU criteria, he added.

It is pertinent to note

that H.E. Dr. Riina Kionka, Ambassador of EU in Pakistan, has paid a detailed visit to the FPCCI Head Office in Karachi; along with her senior team members; aimed at offering the apex body their full support in fulfilling GSP+ opportunities and requirements.

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, explained that Pakistan is, indeed, a major beneficiary of GSP Plus since 2014 as it has facilitated our exports to European Union. Under this scheme, Pakistan is eligible to export around two third of products at zero tariff rate or at preferential tariff rate; and, Pakistan's GSP+ status has been extended to 2027 as of now.

Finance Minister advocates climate action & embraces carbon market initiatives

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: The caretaker Finance Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ahmed Rasul Bangash, took center stage as the Chief Guest at a workshop on 'Navigating Voluntary Carbon Markets in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa', emphasizing the critical role of climate finance in sustainable development.

The session was organized by UK-Aid funded Sustainable Energy and Economic Development (SEED) Program with the aim to explore how Khyber Pakhtunkhwa can realize its significant capacity for carbon projects, particularly those centered around

nature-based solutions and renewable energy projects. In his address, Finance Minister Mr. Bangash underscored the urgency of addressing climate change challenges, recognizing them as a global imperative that demands collective action. He highlighted the adverse impacts already affecting communities and ecosystems, emphasizing the need for innovative approaches to mitigate environmental risks and build resilience.

The Finance Minister acknowledged the significance of voluntary carbon markets in unlocking climate finance and at the same time building resilience.

Freelancers to start receiving payments from PayPal in February: Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif on Thursday said that under the pilot project, 10,000 freelancers would start receiving payments from PayPal in February.

Addressing a Tech Destination Pakistan event that featured the launch of E-Rozgar Centers in the country, he said, "In February, we are going to start the first pilot project in which 10,000 freelancers in Pakistan would be able to start receiving payments through PayPal."

The minister further mentioned that in March, the program would be scaled up and everyone

would have access to payments from PayPal and Stripe across the country.

He clarified that while PayPal itself is not coming to Pakistan, an agreement has been reached where remittances would be channeled through PayPal via a third party.

Under the newly devised program, the freelancers will not need to open a PayPal account. Instead, individuals outside the country will make payments from their PayPal accounts, and the funds will be promptly deposited into the freelancers' accounts, the minister explained.

The minister said that the government has

devised a mechanism for the opening of bank accounts for freelancers. He mentioned that only freelancers would have to provide evidence that they have an account on Fiverr, Upwork, Elance, Toptal, or Crosswork. The minister added, "The IT industry would have a 50 percent dollar retention policy, which means that whatever you earn, you will keep 50 percent of that in dollars. You will get a debit card from that bank so that you can freely spend that money domestically or internationally." He highlighted that the government has allocated enough funds for the establishment of E-Rozgar centers across the country through a public-private.



Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, is presenting the commemorative shield to H.E. Dr. Riina Kionka, Ambassador of EU in Pakistan. Mr. Asif Sakhi & Mr. Aun Ali Syed, VPs FPCCI; Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, former SVP FPCCI; Mr. Shabbir Mansha, former VP FPCCI; Mr. Adeel Siddiqui, President HCCI and Sahibzadi Mahin Khan were also present on the occasion.

No plans to hand over DISCOs to any institution

ISLAMABAD (APP): In response to recent news circulating in the media, the Ministry of Energy, Power Division, on Thursday, categorically denied any plans to hand over Distribution Companies (DISCOs) to any institution. The statement issued by the Ministry of Energy, Power Division, clarified that the news circulating in the media about DISCOs being handed over to the army is incorrect. The ministry further said, "Neither is there any change in the management of DISCOs nor are they being handed over to any other institution."

'Empowering women can ensure sustained economic growth'

LAHORE (APP): Coordinator to Minister of State and Federal Tax Ombudsman Meher Kashif Younis on Thursday said that empowering women at grassroots level in Pakistan had great significance for fostering sustainable economic growth. Addressing a round-table conference on "Impact of Empowering Women in Economic Growth" here, he added that women had a pivotal role to play in the economic and overall development so prioritising their empowerment became paramount.

Kashif Meher was of the view that investing in women's education, healthcare and economic opportunities not only enhanced their well-being but also propelled the nation towards prosperity. He said economic empowerment involved creating opportunities for women to enter and thrive in various sectors. Micro-finance initiatives, vocational training programmes, and support for women entrepreneurs could boost economic growth by tapping the potential of women in the workforce, he suggested.

KP Governor lends support to Civil Society's call of banning e-cigarettes, vaping

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali Thursday extended support to Civil Society's call for banning e-cigarettes and vaping while keeping in view its harms to public health and increasing use of modern tobacco products among youth.

He expressed these views while talking with a delegation that called on him under the chairmanship of Qamar Naseem, Programme Manager Blue Veins, a non-governmental organization.

Other members of the delegation included Ajmal Shah, Coordinator Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tobacco Control Cell, Dr. Ihtisham, Chest Specialist LRH, Dr. Qazi Shahbaz, Chairman Provincial Doctors Association, Mohammad Rizwan, Provincial Coordinator National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) and Sana Ahmad, Program Coordinator Blue Veins.

Speaking during the meeting, Qamar Naseem apprised Governor Haji Ghulam Ali that new tobacco products are emerging in the whole world at a very fast speed.

In our country, he continued, these products are available very easily in markets and due to deceiving slogans of harm reduction or 'Quit smoking and start vaping' is attracting a large number of people towards consumption of smokeless tobacco.

Qamar said due to lack of latest legislation in the

country, the existing laws on tobacco control cannot be enforced on the use or sale of modern smokeless tobacco products which use is increasing due to easy availability in markets and advertisement in media.

The delegation members requested the Governor for measures to impose a ban on vapes and all forms of e-cigarettes. In this regard, they also suggested legislation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Responding to the points, Governor KP Haji Ghulam Ali while expressing his agreement to the call extended support for imposition of ban on these products with the purpose of protecting public health, especially youth.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Sindh Mohsin Naqvi distributing laptops amongst the students of King Edwards Medical College.

'Pneumonia cases rises in Punjab' Minister advise citizens to maintain a healthy diet, use face masks

LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Health and Population Welfare Dr Jamal Nasir Thursday urged people to remain vigilant while maintaining a healthy diet and using face masks as 'pneumonia cases' were continuously rising due to smog weather.

Talking to a private news channel he pointed out that people with weak immunity due to chronic cardiac, kidney and liver diseases or diabetes could easily contract the respiratory disease in cold weather.

Health experts warned of an acute rise in pneumonia cases among elderly people and children, adding, citizens asked to use plenty of rest, warm beverages, steam baths or the use of humidifiers in houses for air moisture and timely consultations with doctors.

He said that the major cause of increased cases was undiagnosed influenza and pneumonia cases, adding, citizens to immediately consult doctors and receive treatment after having respiratory issues.

LAHORE (Online): PML-N has issued party ticket to Chaudhry Muhammad Iqbal father in law of Farah Gogi from Gujranwala for election-2024.

PML-N has announced party candidates from Gujranwala division.

Chaudhry Muhammad Iqbal will be PML-N candidate from PP-68 Gujranwala. He was elected MPA on PML-N ticket earlier. He was defeated by Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi in the election for speaker Punjab Assembly in 2018.

May 9 incident Court approves 14 days judicial remand of PTI founder in 12 cases

RAWALPINDI (Online): 14 days judicial remand of PTI founder Imran Khan in 12 cases related to May 9 incident has been approved.

12 cases pertaining to May 9 incidents were heard in Adiala Jail against former Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan Thursday. The case came up for hearing before Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) led by judge Ijaz Asif.

Imran Khan was presented in the court on completion of two days physical remand.

Malik Faisal and Shahbaz Khosa represented PTI founder in the court. The investigation officers requested the court during hearing of the case to extend physical remand of Imran Khan for further 30 days.

The court however rejected the plea for further physical remand of Imran Khan. The court sent Imran Khan to jail on judicial remand for 14 days in 12 cases related to May 9 incidents.

PML-N issues ticket to father in law of Gogi from Gujranwala

LAHORE (Online): PML-N has issued party ticket to Chaudhry Muhammad Iqbal father in law of Farah Gogi from Gujranwala for election-2024.

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ANF seizes 250 kg drugs in five operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations across the country managed to recover 250 kg of drugs and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that 637 grams of weed was recovered from a parcel sent from Thailand at the courier office in Rawalpindi while three accused were arrested.

In an operation, 128.5 kg hashish and 53.5 kg opium were recovered near Swabi Interchange.

36 kg hashish was recovered from an accused rounded up from Ring Road Peshawar.

KP Govt decides to launch major literacy campaign in merged districts; Dr. Aamer

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged Districts Affairs, Industries, Commerce and Technical Education Dr. Aamer Abdullah has said that the provincial government has decided to launch a major literacy campaign of "Ham Da Tolo Dapara" (Education for All) to increase literacy rate in the merged districts. He said that the aim of this campaign was to promote the boys and girls education in these districts, adding that in order to make this campaign successful, it had been decided to establish a task force at the district

level. While introducing technical education and skills training courses in general educational institutions, the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) has been assigned the task of conducting a feasibility study about identification of suitable institutions for the merged districts.



PESHAWAR: Traffic Warden Officials are removing tinted sheet from a car at Cantt Bazar.

Lawyers Grand Alliance organizes event

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the event on behalf of the members. Punjab Bar Council Ijaz Ahmad Khan Gormani said that the bar association was given the status of district so that by activating the district courts, the citizens do not have to travel miles to solve the problems faced by them. I played a role in providing facilities by activating the dispensary. He said that the candidates for the national elections should stop criticizing the Bar Association. By creating a pleasant atmosphere between the bar and the bench, solve the problems of the petitioners and lawyers on priority basis and make the Grand Alliance group successful.



LARKANA: A woman busy selecting used warm clothes at Old Bus Stand Road.

Health minister advocates raising age limit for girl marriages

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Dr. Jamal Nasir Thursday emphasised the necessity of increasing the age limit for girl marriages.

In a consultative session, organised by the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) here, he cited hormonal changes during adolescence that often lead to physiological disorders. The minister highlighted the potential health risks

faced by young brides. Dr. Nasir pointed out that subjecting minor girls or those not physically or emotionally mature to marriage could result in multiple problems for them. He emphasised the importance of protecting the fundamental rights of females, backed by medical evidence showing their genetic and natural vulnerability. Early marriages, he warned, could lead to a drastic deterioration in the physical health of young brides, contributing to societal issues surrounding infertility.

Bid to smuggle heroin abroad foiled; 3 held

PESHAWAR (APP): The Excise police station, Mardan Region on Thursday foiled a bid to smuggle heroin abroad and arrested an international drug smuggler along with two facilitators while recovering 57 swallowed capsules. According to the spokesman of Excise, the Excise police acting on a tip-off conducted an operation on Ring Road Chamtar Chowk, district Mardan and intercepted a suspected vehicle with three persons onboard and going to Islamabad International Airport.

The police took the main accused Naveed, a resident of Kot Radha Kishan, district Kasur, to MMC Hospital where a health team recovered 57 swallowed capsules of heroin from his stomach.

The Excise police arrested the international drug smuggler along with the real owner of the drug Habib-ul-Haq, and co-facilitator Fazl Muhammad, residents of Bara.

International News

Abbas agrees to reunite West Bank, Gaza: Blinken

US supports establishment of independent Palestinian state

MANAMA: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Wednesday that Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas was committed to reforming the Palestinian Authority in a way that could "reunite" Gaza and the occupied West Bank under its leadership.

In a related development, Egypt and Jordan warned against any Israeli reoccupation in the Gaza Strip. Blinken was speaking to reporters in Bahrain after meeting with Abbas in the West Bank city of Ramallah during a tour of the Middle East aimed at preventing an escalation of the Israel-Hamas conflict.

"We talked [...] about the importance of reforming the Palestinian Authority, policy and governance so that it can effectively take responsibility for Gaza... so that Gaza and the West Bank can be reunited under a Palestinian leadership," he said.

"It's very clear to me for president Abbas that he's prepared to move forward and engage in all of these efforts."

Blinken said Abbas was committed to reforming the Palestinian Authority. "What I take away from this meeting is that he is committed to that and is very much prepared to move forward," Blinken told AFP in response to a question about Abbas's commitment to reforming the PA.

Egypt and Jordan while warning against any

Israeli reoccupation in the Gaza Strip appealed for the uprooted residents to be allowed to return to their homes as the Arab countries' leaders met Abbas.

United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has demanded the Yemeni Houthis to immediately stop attacks on ships in the Red Sea.

According to media reports, 11 of the 15 permanent members of the Security Council voted in favor of the resolution, 4 countries including Russia and China did not participate in the voting, and no country opposed the resolution.

The Security Council resolution endorsed a US-led task force to protect ships from attack.

USA has announced relaxation of visa requirements for foreigners. The United States has changed the prerequisites for all non-immigrant visa interview waivers. The US State Department has changed the prerequisites for all non-immigrant visa interview waivers. With the new changes, applicants will be able to get study and visit visas without appearing for an interview. Washington attracts a large number of international students, and is among the top destinations for higher education due to its excellent academic institutions, diverse academic programs and research opportunities. The State Department added that applicants may be eligible for a visa interview waiver if they obtain a nonimmigrant visa.



Al Jazeera journalist Wael Al-Dahdoh attends the funeral of his son, Palestinian journalist Hamza Al-Dahdoh, after Hamza was killed in an Israeli strike, in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip.

Oil tanker involved in U.S.-Iran dispute boarded by armed guards near Oman, diverted

DUBAI (Internews): An oil tanker caught up in a dispute last year between the United States and Iran was boarded by armed individuals off the coast of Oman on Thursday and appeared to have changed course towards Iran, according to UK maritime sources.

The Marshall Islands-flagged tanker St Nikolas was boarded by armed intruders as it sailed close to the Omani city of Sohar, according to British maritime security firm Ambrey, and its AIS tracking system was turned off as it headed in the direction of the Iranian port of Bandar-e-Jask.

In 2023 the St Nikolas was seized by the United States in a sanctions enforcement operation when it sailed under a different name, Suez Rajan.

The United States said at the time that Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) had been trying to send contraband Iranian oil to China, in violation of U.S. sanctions.

The ship loaded 145,000 metric tonnes of oil in the Iraqi port of Basra and was heading to Aliaga in western Turkey via the Suez Canal.

Hamza Wael Dahdoh and Mustafa Thuria, who also worked as a video stringer for a foreign news agency and other news organisations, were killed on Sunday while they were on an assignment for the Qatar-based channel in the city of Rafah.

The army said in a statement on Wednesday its "intelligence has confirmed that both the deceased were members of Gaza-based terrorist organisations actively involved in attacks against IDF (army) forces."

"Prior to the strike, the two operated drones, posing an imminent threat to IDF troops," the army said.

There was no immediate reaction available from the television channel and

Afghan women detained over 'improper' hijab

KABUL: A Taliban official has said several girls and women were detained recently in Kabul for not covering themselves properly, after reports circulated of a crackdown in the Afghan capital.

In a video posted on Wednesday, security official Ehsanullah Saqib told a gathering of religious scholars in Kabul's western Dasht-e-Barchi neighbourhood that in the past week "we have detained a number of women and girls who were without hijab, with the help of women police".

Women have been squeezed from public life, barred from travelling without a male relative.

WHO cancels sixth aid mission to Gaza over security concerns

LONDON: The World Health Organisation (WHO) cancelled another planned medical aid mission to Gaza on Wednesday over security concerns, the sixth such cancellation in two weeks, and sounded a fresh alarm over the spread of infectious disease there.

The UN body's director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said it was the sixth mission to northern Gaza cancelled by the UN agency because requests to visit

had not been approved or assurances over security provided since its last visit, on Dec 26.

"Intense bombardment, restrictions on movement, fuel shortage and interrupted communications make it impossible for WHO and our partners to reach those in need," he told a virtual press conference from Geneva. "We call on Israel to approve requests by WHO and other partners to deliver humanitarian aid."

Israel army claims two journalists slain in Gaza strike were 'terror operatives'

TEL AVIV (INP): Israel's army claimed on Wednesday that two Al Jazeera journalists it killed in an air strike in Gaza were "terror operatives".

Hamza Wael Dahdoh and Mustafa Thuria, who also worked as a video stringer for a foreign news agency and other news organisations, were killed on Sunday while they were on an assignment for the Qatar-based channel in the city of Rafah.

The army said in a statement on Wednesday its "intelligence has confirmed that both the deceased were members of Gaza-based terrorist organisations actively involved in attacks against IDF (army) forces."

"Prior to the strike, the two operated drones, posing an imminent threat to IDF troops," the army said.

There was no immediate reaction available from the television channel and

families of the two men. When asked on Wednesday reporters about what kind of drones were used by the two men and the nature of the threat the drones posed to Israeli troops, the army said it was "checking".

It said Thuria was identified in a document found by troops in Gaza to be a member of Hamas's Gaza City Brigade, while Dahdoh was identified as a "terrorist" belonging to Islamic Jihad.

The army statement included a copy of a document it said was a list of "operatives from an electronic engineering unit of the Islamic Jihad, including Dahdoh and his military number".

Dahdoh and Thuria were killed when the car they were travelling in was hit by two rockets on a street in Rafah, according to witnesses. A third journalist and the driver of the car were wounded.

Brazil expresses support for South African genocide case against Israel

SAO PAULO (Internews): Brazil has expressed its support for the case filed by South Africa at the International Court of Justice against Israel's attacks on the Gaza Strip, which have caused more than 23,000 deaths since Oct. 7.

The Brazilian decision was taken hours after President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva met in Brasilia with Palestinian Ambassador Ibrahim Alzein.

Although Lula emphasized that his administration immediately condemned the Hamas attack of Oct. 7, he affirmed that "such acts do not justify Israel's indiscriminate, recurrent and disproportionate use of force against civilians."

Brazil's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that considering "the flagrant violations of international

humanitarian law," Lula expressed support for South Africa's case with the goal of ordering "Israel to immediately cease all acts and measures that may constitute genocide or related crimes under the terms of the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide."

The statement emphasized that Lula has been making efforts in the international community for a ceasefire, the liberation of Hamas-held hostages, and the creation of humanitarian corridors to protect Palestinian civilians. "The Brazilian government reiterates its defense of the two-state solution, with an economically viable Palestinian state living side by side with Israel, in peace and security, within mutually agreed and internationally recognized borders."



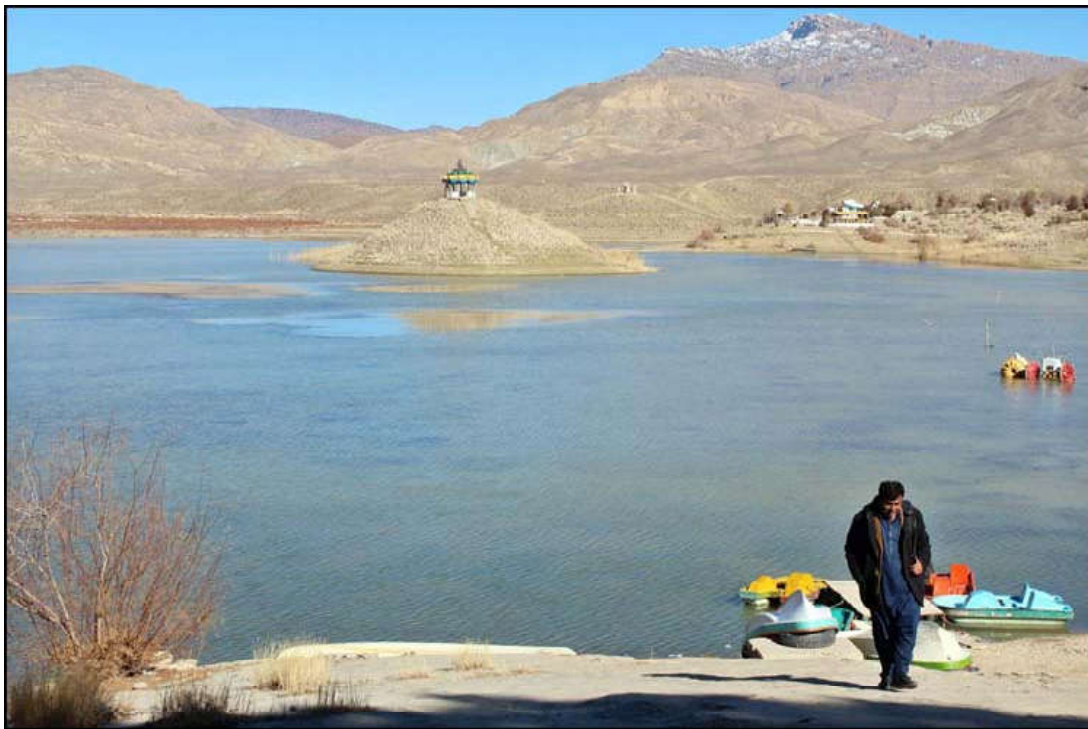
A demonstrator holds a sign during a protest as judges at The International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the Hague, hear a request for emergency measures to order Israel to stop its military actions in Gaza, in Amman Jordan.

Soldiers on the streets as Ecuador declares war on cartels

QUITO: Hundreds of soldiers patrolled near-deserted streets in Ecuador's capital Wednesday after the government and drug mafias declared war on each other, leaving residents gripped with fear.

On Tuesday, officials said another narco boss — Los Lobos leader Fabricio Colon Pico — also escaped since his arrest last Friday for alleged involvement in a

plot to assassinate Ecuador's attorney general. Ecuador President Daniel Noboa said on Wednesday that his country was "at war" with drug gangs who are holding more than 130 prison guards and other staff hostage and who briefly captured a TV station live on air and set off explosions in a surge of violence that has left city streets deserted.



QUETTA: Hanna Lake Quetta presenting a panoramic view after refilling in recent light snowfall.

PM for harnessing true IT potential thru HR training, enabling environment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday said that with a focus on training of human resources as per contemporary requirements, enabling environment and imbuing the spirit of entrepreneurship in the youth, the true potential of Pakistan's IT sector could be harnessed. "This will turn around and uplift our economy in the short to medium term, Inshallah... I assure you of the government's full support to help you explore the untapped potential in Pakistan's IT sector," he said addressing a Tech Destination Pakistan event which featured the launch of E-Rozgar Centers in the country. He said the government through its Digital Policy envisioned bringing economic prosperity and citizen empowerment through digital transformation as it was working on the vision of "Digital Pakistan" through multiple cross-sectoral digital transformation initiatives. He said the government was taking every step possible to facilitate the IT sector by creating an enabling environment and an ecosystem through a broad range of legislative, policy, regulatory and operational initiatives with a focus on inclusion to help reap full benefits of digitalization. He said the IT sector was the government's focus for achieving a sustainable economic development and realize the full potential of technological advancement. The prime minister said that Pakistan had experienced significant growth in the information and communication technology sector in recent years. The country's ICT industry has become an important contributor to the economy, generating revenue, attracting FDI and creating jobs, he added. "We are exporting IT and IT-enabled services to more than 190 countries. Our IT industry is an integral part of the knowledge economy thereby earning its reputation as a leading offshore outsourcing destination through innovation, availability of talent, government incentives and other initiatives for the IT sector. With over 90% Teledensity, Pakistan was recently ranked as the 2nd most financially attractive destination in the world for offshore outsourcing of IT and IT enabled Services (ITeS). Pakistan was also ranked as the third most popular country for freelancing," he said. Prime Minister Kakar said the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and its various committees had already started to deliver and perform their role in an active manner. "Among other priority sectors, the inclusion of IT Sector under the umbrella of SIFC demonstrates the commitment of our government to further promoting the ICT industry.

Solangi asks political parties to give vision for economic revival of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Thursday that major political parties would have to give vision for the economic future of the country. Delivering his speech at the seminar on "Pakistan Elections 2024: Economic Reforms Agenda of Political Parties", hosted by Press Information Department here, he said, "Political parties should give a vision for the betterment of the country." The minister said emphatically that improvement of the economy and economics was the need of the hour. Stressing the need to discuss the country's issues openly, he said that everyone should agree on the economic direction of the country. There was no ban on politics, but there should be no politics on the future of the country, Murtaza Solangi maintained. The minister opined that politics was the concentration of economy and economic interests. "Our main issues are education, health, gender equality," Murtaza Solangi remarked. The minister requested the future rulers and political parties to bring realistic economic reform agenda and do not make promises that were difficult to be fulfilled. The minister said that 2024 was the year of elections which would be held on February 8. "No one should have any doubt about holding of elections in the country", he said. The minister said that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), using its authority, had given the date of elections and it stood by that position. He said that ECP was the only constitutional institution in Pakistan, which had to give the schedule and also the date and no other institution had the power to change it.

PML-N leaves 11 provincial, 7 NA seats vacant for seat adjustment with IPP

LAHORE (INP): The Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) has left 11 provincial and 7 National Assembly (NA) seats vacant for seat adjustment with the Isteqam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) in the upcoming general elections which are slated to be held on Feb 8. There is a possibility that IPP leader Aleem Khan will contest on NA-117 Shahdara Lahore, Aun Chaudhry from NA-128 Lahore, Jahangir Khan Tareen from NA-149 Multan, Nauman Langrial from NA-143 Chichawatani. Similarly, there is a possibility of seat adjustment with Aamir Kayani from NA-47 Islamabad, Ghulam Sarwar Khan from NA-54 Taxila, and Engineer Gul Asghar from NA-88 Khushab. Ammar Siddique Khan from PP-12 Rawalpindi, Raja Yawar Kamal from PP-24 Jhelum are likely to be adjusted. Amir Haider Singha from PP-81 Khushab, Ajmal Cheema from PP-98 Faisalabad will also expected to adjust seats. PP-149 Lahore Aleem Khan, PP-180 Kasur Colonel Hashim Dogar, PP-204 Sahiwal Falak Sher Langrial are also likely to be adjusted.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar addresses the Tech Destination Pakistan Ceremony.



QUETTA: Additional Chief Secretary Home Zahid Saleem meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar.

Pak, KSA sign various hajj related agreements

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) have signed different agreements and Memorandums of Understanding to provide better facilities to Pakistani pilgrims during this year's Hajj. Director General Hajj Abdul Wahab Soomro signed these agreements on behalf of the government of Pakistan. In a memorandum of understanding, both nations committed to providing enhanced facilities for Pakistani pilgrims. Speaking on the occasion, Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed said that Pakistani pilgrims would be provided better accommodations at Mina and Arafat for the upcoming Hajj. The signing event, attended by Dr. Syed Attul-Rahman, Secretary of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, and Joint Secretary Hajj Sajjad Yaldran, also had the presence of Zia-ul-Rehman, Director of the Jeddah-based Hajj Affairs Office Pakistan, along with Faheem Afridi and Zaigham Nawaz. Aneeq Ahmed, reiterated the ministry's committed endeavours to improve facilities for pilgrims. He conveyed that the ministry officials are diligently striving to enhance facilities for pilgrims. Following the ceremony, Saudi officials presented the Pakistani delegation with a souvenir featuring the cover of the Kaaba.

Mehbooba Mufti escapes unhurt in road accident

ISLAMABAD (APP): Peoples Democratic Party President Mehbooba Mufti on Thursday met with a road accident while she was on her way to Islamabad district of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. According to Kashmir Media Service, Mehbooba Mufti escaped unhurt. However, her driver sustained injuries. The accident took place in the Sangam area of the district in South Kashmir.

Section 232 of law on limiting disqualification period to 5 years challenged

LAHORE (Online): Section 232 of the law on limiting disqualification period to 5 years has been challenged in Lahore High Court (LHC). The petitioner Mian Shabbir Ismail has filed the petition through Azhar Siddique advocate in LHC making federal government and others respondents. The petitioner has taken plea in the petition that parliament is not authorized to enact legislation with simple majority. Violation of law has been committed. The petition said article 62-1/F of section 232 of the law on limiting disqualification period to 5 years has been violated. Parliament cannot limit disqualification period to 5 years. The petitioner has requested the court to declare as unconstitutional section 232 of the law on limiting the disqualification period to five years.

PML-N starting election campaign from Jan 15

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz leader Marriyum Aurangzeb has said the PML-N is starting its election campaign from January 15. Talking to the media here on Thursday, she said the PML-N would hold public gatherings across the country. Regarding seat adjustments, she said the party would make an announcement when any final decision in that regard would be made. She said if country's three-time prime minister could be held accountable, then anyone could face accountability. Nawaz Sharif faced accountability because his intentions were clear, she added.

PPP believes in serving humanity without race or color: Rozi Khan

QUETTA (APP)-Pakistan People's Party (PPP)'s Balochistan General Secretary Rozi Khan Kakar and National Assembly Constituency NA-262 Haji Ramzan Achakzai said that the PPP believed in serving humanity without race or color and the party would win elections on February 8 with a huge majority. They expressed these views while addressing at the party's provincial secretariat on the occasion of the resignation of Sardar Ashraf Khan Kakar, the head of Kakar National Jirga and independent candidate from NA-262 constituency of the Provincial Assembly, in favor of Haji Ramzan Achakzai, the candidate of the PPP. Sardar Ashraf Khan Nasir said that he had decided to participate in the elections held on February 8 as an independent candidate after consulting with his friends, he announced his withdrawing in favor of PPP's candidate Haji Ramzan Achakzai. He also declared full support to the candidates of the PPP Party on the Provincial Assembly seats from National Assembly Constituency NA 262, 263 and 264 of Quetta.



QUETTA: Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafqaat presiding over a meeting regarding traffic problems and its solutions in the city.



QUETTA: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Nazaryati (JUI-N) Provincial Chief, Maulana Abdul Qadir Luni addresses to media persons during press conference, at Quetta press club.

Qambar Dashti says Timely completion & transparency in dev. projects top priority

Independent Report QUETTA: The Secretary Communications and Works Department, Qambar Dashti has categorically stated that the timely completion of all development projects is top priority of the government and as such all the projects should be completed well in time ensuring transparency in them. The Secretary C&W was chairing a meeting to review the progress of ongoing development projects for the year 2023-24, here on Thursday. The meeting reviewed the progress of development projects of three circles of the department. The chief engineers of the circles briefed the meeting about development projects being executed by their respective circles in different areas of the province. The Secretary believed that a strong and effective infrastructure and communication system is the guarantor of development of Balochistan. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Dashti directed chief engineers of all three circles to expedite pace of development projects so as to move ahead the development process besides benefiting the common men. He also said that there is a key role of C&W department in development and prosperity of the province.

11 PTI dissidents get PML-N tickets for Feb 8 polls

LAHORE (INP) - Eleven politicians who left the PTI got the PML-N tickets for the upcoming elections. Notable recipients include Raja Riaz from Faisalabad and Farrukh Altaf from Jhelum, along with others like Riaz Mazari from Rajanpur and Syed Mubeen from Rahim Yar Khan, Basit Bukhari from Muzaffargarh and Sami Gilani from Bahawalpur. Meanwhile, Abdul Ghaffar Watto from Bahawalnagar and Amir Gopang secured tickets in Muzaffargarh, while Ahmed Hassan Dehar and Qasim Noon managed to get tickets in Multan. Wajaha Qamar secured a ticket for reserved seats.

Quetta Administration to expedite land record digitalization

QUETTA (APP): The Quetta Administration is committed to digitalize the land record in order to secure the land records digitally and to ensure transparency and accountability in land management and real estate transactions. This was told by Commissioner Quetta Division Muhammad Hamza Shafqaat while chairing a meeting to review the progress of digitalization of land records and the work of the Periodical Record of Land Rights (fard or jamabandi). The Commissioner expressed satisfaction over the progress made so far in Jamabandi work and said that action should be taken against patwaris on their heedlessness and warning should be issued to them. Additional Commissioner Quetta Division Subhan Salim Dashti, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Quetta Division Hananif Kibzai, Assistant Commissioner Political Quetta Division Kaleemullah, Assistant Deputy Commissioner Revenue Quetta Muhammad Riaz, besides Sub-Registrar, Joint Sub-Registrar, Settlement Officer and Tehsildars, Deputy Tehsildars, Qanoqo and Patwaris were present in the meeting.

PTI local leader Shah Khalid shot dead in Swabi

SWABI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) local leader Shah Khalid was shot dead by unknown assailants in broad daylight in Swabi district on Thursday. According to the details, two armed motorcycle riders opened fire on the vehicle of PTI leader, killing him on the spot. His body was taken to the hospital for further medical examination. The attackers managed to escape from the scene. Soon after the incident, Police reached the crime scene and cordoned off the area for investigation. An investigation into the case has been launched, said police.

Delay in KP, Punjab polls: SC wraps up petition being in-fructuous

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa has said to the petitioner Zafar Ali Shah during the hearing of petition against delay in Punjab and KP polls that "the institution can be responsible for not fixing your petition in time in polls in Punjab and KP and not I. The CJP remarked while presiding over 3-member bench of Supreme Court (SC) during the hearing of petition against delay in Punjab, KP polls here Thursday. The court remarked the petition has become in-fructuous after announcement of date of February 8 for polls. Now the date for polls has come. How can we hear your petition.



QUETTA: Chief of Balochistan Grant Alliance Haji Mir Lashkari Khan Raisani addressing a awareness seminar about social media.

Ban imposed on sale & purchase of new rickshaws & motorcycle trollies in Quetta: Commissioner

Independent Report Zarghoon road. QUETTA: The Commissioner Quetta Division, Muhammad Hamza Shafqaat has stated that complete ban has been imposed on the sale and purchase of new rickshaws and motorcycle trollies in the division. In this regard, a letter would be sent to the Provincial Home Department. He said that NOC would not be issued to any plaza having no parking. Moreover, the action would also be taken against those manufacturing illegal rickshaws and the show rooms selling them. The Commissioner also directed to take action against the illegal parking stands and the hospitals creating traffic issues on steps to tackle the mismanaged traffic and rush in the Quetta city. He directed to take action against the encroachments at the main roads and footpaths in the city. The Commissioner directed to seal the plazas using parking spaces for other purposes. He warned that stern action would be taken against the illegal rickshaws and showrooms. He emphasized upon taking steps for creating awareness among the general public about traffic in Quetta. The Quetta Metropolitan Corporation and Deputy Commissioner Quetta office should submit the report of action taken against the encroachments on daily basis, he maintained. Addressing the meeting, the Commissioner stressed the need to take

SC to hear ECP's appeal pertaining to PTI's election symbol

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan will hear the appeal of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday against restoration of 'cricket bat' as the election symbol of PTI. A three-member bench of the top court, headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hilali will hear the case against the verdict of (PHC).

Pakistan passport ranks as 4th worst around globe

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistani passport remained the fourth worst around the world in the New Year as well with no improvement seen in its position for at least the last five years. The passport has been ranked the fourth worst, following its declining trend from July last year, as per data from UK-based citizenship and residence advisory firm Henley and Partners, which ranks 199 nations on its index. The country's passport ranks 101st (out of 104) on the Henley Passport Index with a score of 34, according to the firm's Global Mobility Report 2024. This means that citizens with an ordinary Pakistani passport can have visa-free access to only 34 out of 227 destinations included in the index. Around 199 passports have been analysed for the ranking which is based on the number of countries and territories (destinations) passport holders can access without a prior visa. The index is based on data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA). In a big shakeup of a quarterly ranking of the world's most powerful passports, an unprecedented six countries are tied in the top spot for the hottest travel documents.



QUETTA: Secretary Communication & Works Qambar Dashti presiding over a meeting to review progress on ongoing development projects.