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RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Armed Forces, in the early

hours on Thursday, carried

out effective strikes against

hideouts during an intelligence-based operation inside Iran, used by terrorists, re-

sponsible for recent attacks

in Pakistan. The precision

strikes were carried out us-

ing killer drones, rockets,

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Gwadar

Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XIX No. 224, Rajab 07, 1445 AH Friday January 19, 2024, Pages 04, Price Rs. 15



RAWALPINDI: View of missiles fired by Pakistan Armed Forces to target terrorist hideouts inside the Iranian border after Iran violated the country's sovereignty and launched a strike in Balochistan.

Govt. & security institutions fully alert to establish peace:

Effective administrative strategy prepared to tackle any untoward law & order situation in Balochistan: CM



Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has stated that the government and security institutions are fully alert for establishing peace in all districts of the province including border areas, and an effective administrative strategy has been prepared

The Chief Minister was presiding over a high level meeting held to review the measures for the general elections and for maintaining law & order in the province including the bor-

to tackle any situation of included Chief Secretary law and order in the prov- Shakeel Qadir Khan, Addi-

tional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem, Additional Inspector General of police, Jawad Dogar and other concerned high offi-

Secretary Home briefed the in the province including tions by the provincial gov

Terrorists to be swiftly & decisively crushed:

Thursday.

Entire nation stands united with Pak Army, maintains **CT Minister Information**

Independent Report QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has stated that the people of Balochistan express their gratitude to the Pakistan Military for their unwavering protection.

In a tweet on his social media account X on Thursday, Jan Achakzai said that the entire nation stands with erate from within."

vou (Military) today, yesterday, today and tomorrow. He said that "best assured, the terrorists belonging to the banned organizations including Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) would be swiftly and decisively crushed. whether they attempt to infiltrate our borders or op-

Pakistan calls for just, peaceful solution of Kashmir, Palestine issues

KAMPALA (INP): Pakistan has called for just, peaceful, and expeditious resolution of the longstanding Kashmir and

Palestine disputes. According to Kashmir Media Service, the demand was made by Pakistan Foreign Minister, Jalil Abbas Jilani, at the Ministerial meeting of the 19th NAM

Summit in Kampala, Uganda. He said Pakistan will continue to support the movement's efforts towards peace, equality, cooperation, and well-being for all. The Foreign Minister also highlighted Pakistan's commitment to the Non-Aligned Move-

ment and its founding prin-



ciples.

QUETTA: Country Director World Food Program Ms. Coco Ushiyama meeting with Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan

PEMRA asks TV channels to cover Pak-Iran tension with 'utmost care'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulation Authority (PEMRA) on Thursday directed all the satellite TV channel licensees to exercise "utmost care" while reporting over "tension be-

tween Pakistan and Iran". "All the licensees are directed to avoid telecasting/ breaking any unsubstantiated news on recent development surfaced be-tween Pakistan and Iran,"

PEMRA said in a letter ad-

dressed to all the licensees operating in "news & current affairs and regional languages". The Authority urged them to verify the related information from the relevant institutions before broadcasting or airing.

"Licensees are expected to present factual information / reports through their transmission and support state narrative at this crucial time as and when released from the relevant institution," it added.

The Additional Chief

der areas, here at the Chief meeting about the overall Minister secretariat on situation of law and order Those who were border areas besides the present in the meeting were steps taken for general elec-

Info Ministers says:

Airspace violation by Iran under investigation

SLAMABAD (Online) Caretaker Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi has said the government has lodged protest with Iranian authorities over "unprovoked violation" of its airspace, confirming that the "illegal move" is under investiga-

While speaking in a private television talk show, Murtaza Solangi said Pakistan would take appropriate measures while keeping the relevant international laws in the view especially regarding the sovereignty of

the state. To a query, the minister said no political party is being treated discriminately but who were involved in the May 9 incidents, had been arrested and their arrests had nothing to do with the elec-

Murtaza Solangi said the apex court's decision over the intra-party polls of the PTI would promote democracy within the par-

No airspace ban decided for Iran, says CAA

KARACHI (INP): The Paistan Civil Aviation Authority has said that no decision yet taken for banning airspace for Iran, a spokesperson of CAA said on Thursday.

A spokesperson said that the CAA didn't receive any instruction with regard to ban on commercial flights between Iran and Pakistan

The CAA however said that a strict monitoring of the flights from western direction including Iran has been initiated. "All air-borne activi-

ties on western borders of the country being thoroughly monitored," he

"The CAA has received instructions with regard to extra alert for the incoming flights from western direction," sources said.

Sarmachar' loitering munitions and The targeted hideouts were being used by notoristand-off weapons whereas maximum care was taken to ous terrorists including

Pak will not compromise on its national security, territorial integrity

President says:

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday said that Pakistan would not compromise on its national security and territorial integrity and would take all necessary measures to defend its soil.

In a statement issued by the President House Press Wing, he lauded the professionalism of the Armed Forces of Pakistan that targeted the terrorist hideouts the Siestan-o-Baluchistan province of Iran, while avoiding civilian

He stated that terrorism was a common challenge that required global efforts for its elimina-

tions (ISPR) news release

said. The hideouts used by

terrorist organisations,

namely Balochistan Libera-

tion Army and Balochistan

Liberation Front, were suc-

cessfully struck in an intel-

ligence based operation, code name 'Marg Bar

He said that Pakistan fully respected the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states and expected the same from other nations not to violate international law.

The president said that Pakistan and Iran were brotherly countries and they needed to resolve issues through dialogue and mutual consultation.

Nawaz Sharif vows to make Pakistan stand on its feet

HAFIZABAD (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif vowed to make Pakistan stand on its own feet

Addressing his maiden public gathering of election 2024 campaign, Nawaz Shari said that he was ousted



from power by the five Supreme Court judges just because he refused to take a salary from his son.

Nawaz claimed if he had not been removed from power there would have been no gas loadsheding, inflation and unemployment in the country.

The former prime minister further said that before he came to power, terrorism had brought Pakistan to standstill but he took Pakistan out of the crisis. Moreover, Nawaz Sharif promised that he would

bring back Pakistan on the road of development after

BNP to emerge major political

Central Secretary Information claims:

party in elections if free & fair elections conducted

manner, then BNP would

cal party in the province. He said that BNP has

always spoken about the

rights of all nationalities in-

cluding Baloch, Pashtoons,

Commission of Pakistan to

take steps for free and fair

elections in the country in-

cluding Balochistan. He

said that if the issues are

really to be resolved then

the seriousness would have

taker government has

crossed its limits, it would

have to work in the same.

between Iran and Pakistan,

the BNP leader said that

Balochs are settled at both

sides of the Pak-Iran bor-

der and they would suffer

due to the situation

He said that the care-

Referring the tension

to be demonstrated.

He urged the Election

Hazara and others.

Independent Report QUETTA: The central Sec- emerge as the major politi-

retary Information of Balochistan National Party (BNP), Agha Hasan Baloch has claimed that the BNP would emerge as major political party in upcoming general elections in the province, if the same (elections) were conducted free, fair and in transparent manner.

He said that the election campaign is being run by the party all over the province, and it is gaining acceptability following the

Agha Hasan Baloch was addressing press conference here at Quetta Press club on Thursday

Other party leaders ere also present on the oc-

Agha Hasan Baloch said that if the elections were conducted in transparent



QUETTA: Balochistan National Party (BNP) Central Leader, Agha Hassan Baloch addresses to media persons during press conference, at Quetta press club.

Shafaq, Asghar alias Basham and Wazir alias Wazi, amongst others. Pakistan Armed Forces

Operation Marg Bar Sarmachar:

Pakistan carried out effective strikes against

terrorists' hideouts inside Iran: ISPR

Sole objective of act was in pursuit of Pakistan's own security and national interest- FO; PM Kakar cuts

remain in a perpetual state of readiness to ensure safety of Pakistan citizens against acts of terrorism. "Our resolve to ensure

that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan is respected and safeguarded against any misadventure,

NSC meeting

likely on Pakistan-Iran

tension

ISLAMABAD (Online):

National Security Council

(NSC) meeting is likely to

be convened on tense situ-

ation between Pakistan and

will be determined on return

of care taker Prime Minis-

ter (PM) Anwaarull Had

Kakar to home

The date for meeting

Sources said the meet-

ing will mull prevailing

post-attack situation as

Pakistan retaliated against

unprovoked violation of its

airspace by Iran and tar-

geted militant hideouts in

the neighbouring country.

The meeting will be attended by chiefs of Army,

Navy and Air Force. The

meeting will also review law

and order situation in the

country, besides affairs re-

lating to holding of general

elections in February. The

participants will be also be

briefed about operation

against Baloch militants in

will be taken in the meeting

in the perspective of na-

tional security related mat-

ters and tense situation be

tween Pakistan and Iran.

Pakistan envoy

to Iran

Mudassar Tipu

arrives back

in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pa-

kistan Ambassador to Iran

Muhammad Mudassar

Tipu arrived back in the

country from Tehran after

tensions between the

Mudassar Tipu arrived

neighbourly countries esca-

back in Islamabad today

morning after Pakistan had

decided to recall its envoy

from Iran following an air

attack on a Pakistani village

which left two children

of Foreign affairs, Pakistani

Ambassador Mudassar

Tipu has held farewell meet-

ings with Pakistani diplo-

matic staff in Tehran before

heading back to the coun-

JIT decides to take

stern action

against responsible

for launching anti

judiciary campaign

ISLAMABAD (Online):

First meeting of JIT was

held in FIA headquarters

Islamabad on the matter of

prevention of anti judiciary

sided over by Additional

Director General (ADG)

the meeting to take stern

action against those in-

volved in maligning judi-

ciary on social media.

action in the meeting.

The meeting was pre-

It has been decided in

As per sources officers

The meeting directed

sensitive institutions

presented report on plan of

PTA to collect and present

the details of those in-

volved in fomenting, up-

loading, sharing and com-

of those responsible for

spreading anti judiciary

material is likely in next

Sources said the arrest

menting hate material.

material.

According to Ministry

lated on Thursday.

Important decisions

defeat all enemies of Pakistan with the support of the people of Pakistan," the ISPR said. It added that going forward, dialogue and cooperation were deemed prudent in resolving bilat- undertook a series of highly eral issues between the two

Meanwhile Pakistan

countries.

neighbouring brotherly

short World Economic Forum visit in Dayos; China offers to mediate as Pakistan-Iran border tensions flare avoid collateral damage, an Inter Services Public Rela- alias Soghat, Sahil alias affirm our determination to cally targeted precision" military strikes against terrorist hideouts in Siestan-o-Baluchistan province of Iran, killing a number of terrorists 'This morning Pakistan coordinated and specifically targeted precision military strikes against terrorist hideouts in Siestan-o-



DAVOS: Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, His Highness Faisal bin Farhan bin Abdullah calls on the Caretaker Prime Minister, Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum.

Pakistan desires to deepen bilateral engagement with Saudi Arabia: PM

DAVOS (APP): Foreign ments. Prime Minister Minister of Saudi Arabia, Faisal bin Farhan bin Abdullah Thursday called on Caretaker Prime Minister, Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on the sidelines of the 54th annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF).

The prime minister underlined the strategic imrelations between Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, rooted in common cultural heritage and shared

viewed regional develop- of Saudi Arabia.

Kakar noted that close brotherly relations between the two countries were a factor in regional stability.

He said Pakistan desires to deepen bilateral engagement including through trade, investment and people-to-people exchanges. The prime minisportance of close brotherly ter appreciated the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and underlined the highest esteem the people of Pakistan held for the leadership and The two sides also re- the people of the Kingdom

Bilawal pledges to issue 'Kisan Card' after coming into power

(INP): Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari announced to give "Kisan Card" to provide relief to the farmers on the pattern of

NAUSHAHRO FEROZE said and added that the needy people will also get free electricity up to 300 units in the "Jiyala's government"

The PPP chairman said that now only two parties



Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP).

Addressing a public gathering in connections with the General Elections 2024 in Naushahro Feroze, the PPP chairman said that his party will form the federal as well as the Sindh government with support of the people. He said that after becoming the prime minster, he would increase the basic salary to two

We will also build

three million new houses for

are vving the General Elections 2024, reiterating the real contest would be between "Arrow" and "Lion"

Bilawal said that he once again came to Naushahro Feroze with a request to vote for the PPP. 'The people of Naushahro Feroze also voted for the PPP candidates during the 2018 elections. You people also welcomed me on way to long march," he added.

Bilawal said that his party has a special plan for Naushahro Feroze which the poor and give them ownership rights," Bilawal age during the floods.

US condemns Iran's strikes on Pakistan, Syria, Iraq

WASHINGTON (INP): The United States has condemned Iran's recent attacks in Pakistan, Iraq and Syria, which Tehran said were carried out against "anti-Iranian terrorist

groups".
"So we do condemn those strikes. We've seen Iran violate the sovereign borders of three of its neighbors in just the past couple of days," State Department spokesman Matthew Miller told reporters dur-

ing a briefing. He further said, in response to a question, that the US always wanted to see peace and stability, "es-

pecially in this region, where it's been the focus of our diplomatic efforts since October 7'

Pakistan on Wednesday recalled its ambassador to Iran and blocked an Iranian envoy from returning to Islamabad after an airstrike in Balochistan killed two children. The raid took place late on Tuesday following similar attacks in Iraq and Syria.

Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said the attack near the two countries' shared border was "unprovoked" and a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty.

Daily soice of Masse Independent

Iranian strikes

Relations between Pakistan and Iran stand at a very delicate juncture after the latter struck targets inside Pakistani territory on Tuesday. While Tehran has claimed it hit "strongholds" of the Jaish al-Adl terrorist group in the air strikes, Pakistan says two minors had lost their lives in the Panjgur attack.

On Monday, Iran had carried out similar strikes inside Iraq and Syria, hitting what it said were "spy headquarters" and "terrorist" bases in these states. The Foreign Office has reacted with a sternly worded statement, condemning this unjustifiable violation of Pakistani sovereignty and warning of "serious consequences".

Indeed, the attack, as it said, is "completely unacceptable" — and Tehran should take note. The situation is deteriorating rapidly, as on Wednesday Pakistan recalled its ambassador from Tehran and suspended all high-level bilateral visits. The Iranian envoy in Pakistan, currently in his home country, will also not be allowed to return to Islamabad. The violation of Pakistani territory is totally indefensible; such unilateral actions — especially resulting in the loss of innocent lives — may do irreparable harm to bilateral ties. The activity of militant groups on both sides of the border is one of the biggest irritants in the bilateral relationship, and Pakistan and Iran need to address this issue in a mature fashion to ensure the situation does not worsen further.

There were several terrorist attacks last year, with the last major incident occurring in December 2023, in which 11 Iranian law enforcers were killed in an ambush on a police station.

Iranian officials had claimed the assailants entered from Pakistan. Meanwhile there were also two attacks last year, apparently originating from Iran, in which several Pakistani troops were martyred.

Border security, particularly the elimination of safe spaces for terrorist groups, is an area both states must work on jointly, instead of pursuing unilateral actions. The immediate need is to prevent a rupture in ties. China, which enjoys cordial relations with both states, and has urged "both sides to exercise restraint", can perhaps use its good offices to help resolve this sensitive matter.

Meanwhile, it is also true that various foreign actors would like to see a permanent break in Pakistan-Iran ties; the capitals of both countries must, therefore, prevent an escalation and work to re-

After matters have cooled down, the mechanism that exists for border security management should be actively used to target militants threatening either state's security through joint operations. Under no circumstances should either state's sovereignty be violated through unilateral actions. The Iranian authorities must particularly work to prevent a repeat of such attacks. At a time when the fires of conflict threaten to consume the region, both sides must act with restraint and statesmanship to prevent this crisis from growing.

Read, and gone

the reader as somehow

defective !



F.S. Aijazuddin

Recently, I needed material on the 1971 East Pakistan crisis from a section in my library. There, I unearthed a squirm of termites feasting on my books. As I consigned their residual fragments to a pyre, it occurred to me that, whereas once I owned my books, now they owned me. My remaining days would be consumed in ensuring

their preservation. My collection had been built up over years, since the mid-1960s. Sporadic purchases gave way to more selective accessions which were germane to whichever of my books I happened to be tion. School libraries beworking on. Their subjects covered Pahari painting, Sikh art, British and European artists working in the north of the subcontinent, antique maps, on Dr Henry Kissinger's secret visit to Beijing in July 1971, US foreign policy towards Pakistan between 1969-74, and the journeys of the British vicereine Charlotte, Lady Canning, from Kolkata to the Khyber

I justified spending money on these books poses, as books were not as accessible as they are today on the internet or through search engines. As one author put it, my library is "a cave of words that I'd made myself".

Intellectual hermits may burrow themselves in such caverns of learnwhether to read a book or to write one, but they

Orhan Pamuk, lamented: library", I donated 500 of "I live in a country sin- my books to Lums in gularly devoid of books Lahore, where students and libraries [,] in a coun-could broaden their try that views the non- minds beyond managereader as the norm and

expanded his library un-12,000 volumes. In a moment of candour, he admitted that he had truly loved only "perhaps 10 or 15" of them. The rest he needed for his work. "If I were to compare my library to that of a wellread friend in a rich Western country, his would have fewer books than mine does.

That is not surprising. The tradition of public libraries predates the ancient Great Library at Alexandria, said to contain 400,000 scrolls before it was burnt down. Over the centuries, most developed countries have regarded libraries as necessary adjuncts to educacame a barometer of their attitude to education. One author admitted that his parents bore him but he was reared by libraries. Private libraries have always been a luxury. Bibliophiles know that each book has an identity of its own; each set of covers contains the output of a creative mind; each volume is a friend who never fails. Together, they are the sum of many lifetimes and the accumulated wisdom of the ages. Pamuk mentions that it took an because they were essen- earthquake for him to detial for reference pur- cide that he needed to weed out his library. "Like a sultan pacing among a crowd of slaves, singling the ones to be lashed, like a capitalist pointing out

The decision to balkanise my library was ing, trying to decide made for me by ravenous tombs were incised with termites. Following the hieroglyphics, ensuring historian Shelby Foote's have perforce also to live in an outer world. The is just a group of build-Turkish Nobel laureate, ings gathered around a Courtesy Dawn

the lackeys to be sacked,

I made my selection sum-

ment sciences, engineering and law.

They can delve into Over the years, he the origins of Mehrgarh, the history of the til he had more than Mughals, the Sikhs and British rule. They can see Pakistan through the eyes of more recent chroniclers like Herbert Feldman and S.M. Burke. Through the memoirs of former politicians, retired bureaucrats, and extinct state functionaries, they can relive their careers. And they will be able to uncurl secrets not taken by authors to the grave.

Books on interfaith subjects have proved more difficult to place. There are too few Hindus, Sikhs, and Zoroastrians left to form a bulk readership.

Will one ever stop buying books? Pamuk tried, but found to his dismay that he continued acquiring them faster than he could throw them away: "For me, the imperative is not to own good books but to write them.

But then, if authors stopped buying books, where would they find a

readership for theirs? The nightmare of every author/ bibliophile is if his precious library ends up on the footpath. I found a Persian/ Urdu/ Eng-lish dictionary signed by Ghulam Mustafa Tabassum for sale on a hand-cart in Anarkali bazaar. And I bought in Peshawar a romanised version of the Injil-i-Muqqadas (the New Testament), dated 1860, weighed on a scale against some stones. Perhaps the Ancient

Egyptians were wiser than we thought. Their they took enough reading matter with them to last beyond eternity.

Time to reflect



Rashid Amjad

In a recent article in Dawn, the World Bank South Asia vice president, together with the country director, put forward a five-point development strategy to move Pakistan onto a path of sustained and equitable growth. Encompassing improving human capital, generating additional revenues, opening up the economy, transforming agriculture and removing energy inefficiencies, few would disagree with their listed priorities in the medium to long term.

Yet they seem to overlook that the real problem Pakistan faces is in the immediate future; its economy comes to a grinding halt whenever any attempt is made to move it off the ground and move forward. Why?

To illustrate: after achieving near six per cent growth in the preceding two years, 2022-23, the economy abruptly reversed direction as economic growth became negative, inflation rose to an unprecedented 35pc, the country came perilously close to default as reserves fell to less than a month of imports, and poverty levels increased. Even given specific factors such as external shocks (war in Europe, resulting in a sharp rise in oil and food prices) and internal shocks (floods) coupled with poor economic management, it was not the first time this had happened. Over the last three decades, we have gone through frequently recurring stop-go cycles of default. in which episodes of growth have become shorter and shorter, and down

episodes of very low Rs400 by June 2024 - but growth longer and more frequent.

It is time we seriously questioned some critical aspects of the macroeconomic model we have followed, which has created this recurring situation. came down hard on hoardthat, by running huge unsustainable fiscal deficits, our own policymakers must share a large part of the blame, we must also seriously examine some conditionalities, IMF which, rather than improving, accentuate the problem by opting for pure--ly market-driven solutions to resolve basic structural deficiencies in the economy. To elaborate, the

IMF's solution to our re-

curring stop-go cycles

was to opt for a market-

driven exchange rate and

reduce tariffs on imported raw material to encourage more competitive exports — which, in theory, was not unwise. But in doing so, it failed to take into account the working of Pakistan's complex, multilayered, imperfect foreign exchange market. With a large diaspora and migrant workers abroad who send back as remittances an amount equal to or slightly more than our total export earnings, foreign exchange transfers by resident Pakistanis (including for investment in real estate abroad), hoarders, smugglers and profiteers in the domestic market had disastrous consequences. The rupee-dollar exchange rate came crashing down from Rs110 in 2018 to Rs340 in 2023 once the marketdriven exchange rate was introduced, triggering uncertainty and fanning inflation. Foreign reserves again fell to disastrously low levels, fuelled also by large inflows of imports resulting from lower tariffs, thereby bringing the economy to the very edge

would have gone further roeconomic stability. -possibly to

for the timely strong-arm action taken by the government's new and powerful economic decision-making body, the Special Investment Facilitation Council. The SIFC While no one can deny ers, profiteers and illegal currency networks manipulating the exchange rate market (including some commercial banks, one is sorry to suggest). Since then, the exchange rate has steadied at between Rs280 and Rs300 to the dollar. To move out of these recurring crises and reignite growth with macroeconomic stability, it is important for the next elected government to propose changes in a future continuation of the IMF programme, which, given our current situation, is highly desirable. These are as follows:

Move away from the market-driven exchange rate in favour of a managed exchange rate, while ensuring that it is in line with the real effective exchange rate to maintain export competitiveness and adjusts for relative

rises in inflation. Build up our reserves in as short a time as possible through innovative solutions, including diverting at least 10pc of any new foreign investment into a sovereign reserve fund and 10 to 15pc of foreign exchange from the remittances sent annually by our workers and diaspora abroad. Draw a red line at a level below which our reserves will not be allowed to fall (say, initially three months' imports or \$15 billion) and if they do, take suitable measures to reduce imports.

A prudently managed exchange rate supported by adequate reserves would reduce market uncertainty and lift economic activity and investment, steady grow--th. The country urgently needs to The exchange rate revive growth with mac-Courtesv Dawn

Commerce News

Pakistan, Dubai ink over \$3 bln pact in diverse fields

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Dubai have inked more than \$3 billion investment pact in diverse fields including cooperation in railways, economic zones infrastructure

The agreement was signed at the World Economic Forum in Davos Minister Communication, Railways and Maritime Affairs Shahid Ashraf Tarar and Chairman of Ports, Customs and Free Zone Corporation (PCFC) Sultan Ahmed bin

According to the Ministry of Railways, the cooperation covers the development of a dedicated freight corridor, multimodal logistics park, and freight terminals.

The Dubai Port (DP) World will work on

at Qasim International Container Terminal which is Pakistan's leading trade gateway and plans to city, to the develop an economic zone Marshalling near the terminal.

Both governments away. have signed two Inter-Governmental Framework their relations in the marine establishment of a Dedicated Freight Corridor and Economic Zone near

Pakistan Railways and Port Qasim Authority will act on behalf of the Pakistan development of the projects.

rail-based Dedicated Freight Corridor is planned to run from infrastructure development Karachi Port on the navigation channel.

Arabian Sea, passing approximately 50 km

Karachi besides improving Agreements to strengthen road safety. It will significantly improve and logistics sectors, efficiency, and transport including the potential times and reduce the overall cost of logistics.

Pakistan Railways is Pakistan's national, stateowned railway company, The DP World will act owning and operating on behalf of the Dubai nearly 8,000 route-km of Government, while railway across the country, from Peshawar in the northwest to Karachi in the south. The Qasim Government, for the International Container Terminal, a second framework agreement was signed with Pakistan's Ministry of Maritime Affairs to dredge the

DAVOS: Caretaker Prime Minister, Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar witnessing Federal Minister for Communications, Railways, & Maritime Affairs Shahid Ashraf Tarar and Government of Dubai inked more than \$3 billion investment pact on cooperation in Railways, Economic Zones and Infrastructure at the World Economic Forum. **Minister says:**

Govt initiative in exploration sector to attract investment

Caretaker Federal Minister of Energy, Muhammad Ali, expressed hope on Thursday that the government's initiative in the exploration sector would attract investment in the oil and gas sectors.

During presentation at the National Seminar on "Pakistan's Economy Crisis: Challenges and the Way Forward," organized by NUST, the minister government is set to permit leading oil and gas E&P

Mari Gas, and foreign entities, to directly sell 50 percent of gas to the private sector and the remaining 50 percent to state-owned gas companies. This initiative aims to encourage companies to invest more in oil and gas exploration.

Muhammad Ali emphasized the importance of geographical and seismic studies to enhance onshore and offshore exploration. He called for investment in outlined that the refineries, explorations, and infrastructure, stressing companies, including the need for research and

hydrocarbons, renewables, and minerals sectors to meet domestic energy requirements. The

highlighted the significance of optimizing allocations for natural gas, revisiting priority orders, and revising Petroleum and LPG policies for the conversion of domestic consumers from natural gas to LPG. He also advocated for devolution of power to ease business processes and investment in Genco's improvement.

Pak total liquid foreign reserves reach \$ 13.145 billion

KARACHI (APP): The total liquid foreign reserves of Pakistan stood at US\$ 13,145.1 million while reserves held by State Bank reached \$ 8,027.4 million in the week ended on January 12, 2023.

The State Bank of Pakistan, in a statement issued here on Thursday, informed that SBP's reserves decreased by \$127 million to \$8,027.4 million due to debt repayments during the week under review.

mln for agriculture sector uplift projects

Govt releases Rs3,097.50

The government has Research. released an of amount of the total allocation of Rs8.850 billion.

The amount was released during the first 06 months of the current financial year (July-December) for the ongoing development schemes, besides initiating the new projects of vital importance, said an official

Talking to APP here on Rs3.097.50 million for Monday, he said that out of

various agriculture and the total released funds, an livestock uplift projects under the Public Sector Development Program development schemes (PSDP) 2023-24 as against during the period under review for achieving sustainable agriculture growth and economic development of the country. The government has allocated Rs 8.850 billion for the Ministry of National completion of different Food Security and Research in its PSDP) 2023-24 for different projects relating to agriculture and livestock

sectors' development in the



Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar is delivering her keynote address to Digital Transformation-Envisioning the Pakistan Digital

Shamshad stresses to lower revenue expenditure gap

Shamshad Akhtar, Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs on Thursday said that a comprehensive overhaul of the government's fiscal apparatus is vital to lower the revenue-expenditure gap. Bold reforms would lead to a new era of development and prosperity in the country, the minister said.

Effective implementation of ambitious reforms will depend on addressing critical underlying institutional, governance, and structural constraints, said Dr Shamshad Akhtar, Caretaker

ISLAMABAD (Online): Dr Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, during the keynote address on Pakistan's economic challenges and the way forward, said a press release issued here.

She highlighted five key areas that have increased the vulnerability of Pakistan's economy to domestic and global shocks: first, unsustainable fiscal policy due to revenue gaps and unproductive expenditure, second, fiscal unsustainability has enhanced government recourse to public debt which has increased.

LAHORE: CEO Trade Development Authority of Pakistan Muhammad Zubair Motiwala inaugurates the 3rd Engineering and Health Care Show at Expo Pakistan achieves record breaking exports target in

2nd, quarter of FY, 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): resilience and commitment The Ministry of Commerce on Thursday said that Pakistan has achieved record-breaking exports target and surpassing expectations at the end of second quarter

of Financial Year 2024. events, Pakistan has Financial Year 2024. transitioned from facing potential default to achieving its current account,

showcasing the nation's

to economic stability, said a press release issued here. In December 2023, Pakistan achieved an impressive current account surplus of \$397 million. This surplus contributed to the overall surplus of \$198 million in In a remarkable turn of the second quarter of

This substantial increase in surplus is a testament to a record-breaking surplus in the effective economic strategies implemented by the government.

PSX stays bearish, loses 364 points

SLAMABAD (APP) The 100-index of Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bearish trend on Thursday, losing 364.93 points, a negative change of 0.57 percent, closing at 63,202.40 points against 63,567.34 points the previous trading day.

A total of 445,797,697 shares valuing Rs.14.236 billion were traded during the day as compared to 421,331,988 shares valuing Rs.18.579 billion the last day.

Some 345 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 96 of them recorded gains and 227 sustained losses, whereas the share prices remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were K-Electric Limited with 59,720,141 shares at Rs.5.47 per share, PIAC(A) with 40,427,500 shares at Rs.11.56 per share and WorldCall Telecom with 35,387,750

shares at Rs.1.30 per share.

IT exports witnesses remarkable surge in December 2023, Saif ISLAMABAD (APP): to facilitate the country's

Interim IT Minister Dr Umar Saif Thursday said that Pakistan's Information Technology exports experienced a remarkable surge of 22% in December 2023, reaching a total of \$303 million where annually millions of youths across the country will get opportunities to sit and

Talking to PTV news channel, he explained that Pakistan has recently undertaken historic steps burgeoning workforce of freelancers and to promote the IT industry. The government had

launched an initiative to build 10,000 co-working spaces across Pakistan for online freelancers, he added.

Dr Saif said that

information and communications technology is the main key to opening the door to stabilising and strengthening Pakistan's economy

Ties between Pakistan, KSA deep rooted due to common religion and culture: Baligh

LAHORE: Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) Nawaf Bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malkiy called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman and discussed matters of mutual interest, promotion of bilateral relations, and mutual cooperation during a

Speaking on the occasion, the Governor Punjab said that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have long brotherly historical relations.

meeting at the Governor's

House here on Thursday.

He said that the ties between Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are deep rooted due to common religion and delegations between

Islamia Manzoor Cantt.

Independent Report

PESHAWAR: KP Caretaker

Minister for Industries,

Commerce & Technical

Education and Newly

Merged Districts Affairs, Dr

Amer Abdullah has said that

bringing effective reforms in

the governance system with

time is essential for the

promotion of business

guest at a consultation

workshop in a local hotel

regarding possible reforms in

the rules and regulations for

Speaking as a chief

activities and investment.

Saudi government is taking very good steps regarding tourism. He said that the simplification of the visa policy by the Saudi government for foreign tourists is a good initiative. The Governor Punjab said that the Saudi government's new investment initiatives Pakistan

encouraging. He said that it is good to see that more Saudi business delegations are visiting Pakistan. He said that there are favourable opportunities in Pakistan investors.

Governor further said that there should be maximum exchange of student

AHORE: Special Assistant to Prime Minister

Allama Tahir Ashrafi talking to the media at Jamia

Effective reforms essential

for promotion of business,

investment: Dr Amer

culture. He said that the Pakistan and Saudi companies are also semiconductors, which are the basis of all technologies. He said that Pakistani universities are providing education in medical and various other disciplines. He said that Pakistani doctors are known for professional competence all over the world. He said that Saudi students should come to study Pakistani universities.

On this occasion, Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman and the Saudi Ambassador discussed the situation in

New PEC Punjab takes charge

LAHORE (APP): Newly-posted Provincial Election Commissioner (PEC) Punjab Aijaz Anwar Chohan took charge of his office here on Thursday.

According to a spokesperson of PEC Punjab, Joint Provincial Election Commissioner Sain Bakhsh Channai welcomed the provincial election chief on his arrival at the PEC office. Aijaz Anwar Chohan also chaired an introductory meeting of the officers wherein the director elections gave a detailed briefing regarding the preparations for the general elections, to be held on February 8, 2024.

Addressing the meeting, the PEC Punjab urged the officers to perform their duties with hard work, honesty and integrity and establish a strong chain of communication with their field officers to ensure timely completion of all stages of the general elections.

said He punctuality and dedication should be ensured in the office so that all the affairs were completed in a good



Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rahman at Governor House.

KP CM meets PAJCCI delegation; discusses closure of Pak-Afghan border

Shinwari

Airport.
210 grams Ice drug

was recovered from a

passenger going to Doha at Jinnah Airport Karachi.

recovered from a passenger

going to Malaysia at Allama Iqbal Airport.

tablets were recovered

from a container being sent

to Thailand from South

Asia Pakistan Terminal

operation, 210 kg hashish

and 7 kg opium were

recovered in two separate

operations conducted near

Karachi.In

88 grams heroin was

354,400 intoxicated

seventh

ANF recovers 389 kg

drugs in 11 operations;

arrests 10 accused

PESHAWAR (APP): Industries and other relevant officials were Caretaker Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa present on the occasion. Justice ® Syed Arshad Hussain Shah on Thursday held a meeting with a Coordinator PAJCCI, Ziadelegation comprising ul-Haq Sarhadi, President members of the Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI) and discussed problems being faced by businessmen due to the closure of Pak-Afghan

Caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce & Technical Education, Dr Amer Abdullah, Secretary

RAWALPINDI (APP):

Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting 11

operations across the

country managed to

recover 389 kg drugs and

arrested 10 accused, said an

ANF Headquarters spokesman here on

hashish-filled capsules were recovered from the

stomach of a passenger going to Abu Dhabi at

tablets were recovered

Bacha Khan Airport.

He informed that five

250 grams intoxicated

Thursday.

Minister Justice ® Syed hundreds of goods-laden delegation included trucks were stuck on both sides of Pakistan and Afghanistan due to the

Sarhad Chamber of closure of the border. Commerce and Industry They said a large (SCCI), Faud Ishaq, number of trucks were Director PAJCCI, Imtiaz carrying perishable items Ahmad Ali, Vice Chairman like fresh fruit, vegetables, All Pakistan Customs poultry and other items Agents Association, which may get rotten due Farooq Ahmad and Ex. border crossing Presidents SCCI, Zahid restrictions, inflicting Muhammad Faizi.

significant financial losses on the business community of both countries. **US** political

officer meets

PPP leader

LAHORE (APP): The Political Officer of the High American Commission, Robert Kane, met with the Additional Secretary General of Pakistan People's Party Zulfikar Ali Bader at his residence, in which he discussed the current political and economic situation of the country and bilateral relations between Pakistan and the

United States. Apart from this, the environment of general elections in Pakistan and the impact of elections on the country's development and prosperity were also

Caretaker KP Minister chairs meeting of reforms committees

Independent Report

ESHĀWAR: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Local Government and rural development Amir Nadeem Durrani said that the caretaker government's mandate is limited but our effort is to give a better roadmap to the next elected government. He said I desire to work for the betterment of the people adding that reforms in local government are the need of the hour.

Appreciating the efforts of the Reforms Committee, he said the local government department should develop long and short-term plans.

He expressed these

views while presiding over the joint meeting of the Reforms Committees formed to review the problems and challenges faced by Urban Development Area Authorities, TMAs, WSSCs and Peshawar Development Authority here on Thursday. The meeting was held in the conference room of the local government which was attended by the members of the reforms committees.

At the meeting, Nadeem Durrani was brief about the establishment of the reforms committees and was told that Urban Area Development Authorities, TMAs, WSSCs.



LAHORE: H.E. Leslie Scanlon; Canadian High Commissioner meeting with Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Raza Naqvi.

Youth Alliance protest against black marketing. artificial scarcity of urea

MIRPUR MATHELO: In Mirpur Mathelo, on the call of youth alliance against black marketing and artificial scarcity of urea fertilizer, farmers and political social leaders staged a protest outside the office of Deputy Commissioner Ghotki in Mirpur Mathelo. And shouting slogans against the dealers of urea fertilizer.

According to the details, due to the nexus of the dealers of urea fertilizer in Mirpur Mathelo, the series of black marketing of artificial shortage of urea fertilizer has not ended. The lead-

Tanveer Ahmed Soomro ers staged a protest outside the office of Deputy Commissioner Ghotki in Mirpur Mathelo and locked the main gate of Deputy Commissioner Ghotki's office, Ayaz Khahawar, Waqar Bozdar and others while talking to the media. said that they have been protesting against the black marketing of urea fertilizer for the past two months, but no action has been taken against the dealers who sold urea fertilizer worth Rs. 35 hundred for Rs. 6,000. Fertilizer has exceeded six thousand rupees which is cruelty and

abuse to the farmers.

International News

from two passengers going operations conducted to Muscat from Multan Theera Orakzai area.

Houthis strike another US vessel

sector here on Thursday, the

Caretaker Minister said that

he wants to improve the

rules and regulations while

the said regulations while keeping the public interest and rights in mind.

The workshop was jointly organized by the

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board

of Investment and Trade (KP-

BoIT) and the Federal Board

of Investment (BoI) (Prime

Minister's Office). Besides,

Secretary Industries Syed

Zulfigar Ali Shah, Chief

Executive Officer (CEO)

Pakhtunkhwa

Khyber

the business and investment Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Oil.

taken responsibility for an attack on the US-owned cargo vessel Genco Picardy, a spokesman for the militant group announced on Wednesday

The United Kingdom Organization (UKMTO) had received a report of an attack on a merchant ship around 60 nautical miles southeast of the Yemeni port of Aden.

"Master reports vessel has been hit on the port side by an Uncrewed Aerial System," the UKMTO said in their incident report late on Wednesday, referring to a likely drone attack. The report said the resulting fire was extinguished and that the vessel and crew were safe and proceeding to their

Brigadier General Yahya Saree claimed responsibility for the attack in a televised address, naming the vessel as the US-owned

the Yemeni Armed Forces carried out a targeting operation against the American ship... in the Gulf of Aden... leaving direct hits," Saree said. He reiterated that Yemeni armed forces "will not hesitate to target all sources of threat in the Arab and Red Seas within the legitimate right to defend dear Yemen and to oppressed Palestinian people.

The US Central Command said on X (formerly Twitter) that the ship was indeed US-owned and op-

Houthi spokesman erated, while flying the flag adier General Yahya of the Marshall Islands. There were no injuries and some damage reported," CENTCOM said, adding that the ship was "seawor-Genco Picardy. thy and continuing under-The naval forces of

The Houthis have carried out dozens of drone and missile attacks in the Red Sea since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war in October.

The militant group has vowed to continue until the war ends and the blockade of Gaza is lifted.

The increased risk of attack has forced major shipcontinue supporting the ping firms to respond by avoiding the Suez Canal, the fastest cargo route from Asia to Europe. The traffic route normally accounts for 15% of the world's commercial shipping.

Singapore transport minister resigns over corruption charges

SINGAPORE (AFP) APP):Singapore's transport minister has resigned his post after being charged with 27 offences in a corruption probe that has also ensnared a billionaire hotel tycoon. S. Iswaran was arrested in July of 2023 and released on bail in connection with a rare top-level graft investigation in the city-state.

Iswaran, 61, said he would plead not guilty to the charges filed by the powerful Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau when he appeared in court on

Thursday.
Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong revealed shortly after Thursday's hearing that Iswaran had submitted his resignation from the government, parliament and ruling People's Action Party (PAP) on January 16 after being given formal notice of the charges against him.

Iswaran has also pledged to return the money received as part of his salary and allowances since his arrest. Lee said



S. Iswaran, Singapore's former transport minister, arrives at the State Court

Tel Aviv steps up Gaza strikes after medicine-aid deal

Monitoring Desk GAZA CITY: Tel Aviv

stepped up air strikes on Wednesday over the Gaza Strip's south, where medicines were expected to be delivered for Israeli prisoners in exchange for humanitarian aid under a newly brokered deal.

But nearly 24 hours after the deal was announced on Tuesday night, a Hamas official set new conditions for providing the drugs, insisting Israel must not inspect the trucks car-

Violence has also surged in the Israeli-occupied West Bank since Oct 7 to a level not seen since the second Palestinian uprising between 2000 and

Israeli army raids and attacks by settlers have killed around 350 people in the territory, according to a tally based on sources from both sides. Air strikes and artillery fire targeted Khan Yunis throughout Tuesday night, according to eyewitnesses in the southern Gaza Strip's biggest city.

Plight of Palestinians echoes in US Senate

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: The

plight of the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank echoed in the US Senate on Tuesday evening as senators debated a resolution questioning US aid to Israel.

The lawmakers overwhelmingly rejected the move by Senator Bernie Sanders, a former presidential candidate, to tie US aid to Israel's treatment of Palestinians but he did succeed in generating a passionate debate on the issue.

The Senate voted 72 to 11 against the resolution, with nine Democrats, and one Republican, Rand Paul, supporting Sanders. The Hill, a Washington newspaper focusing on Congressional activities, observed that "the number of Democrats who supported the measure reflects rising dissatisfaction among progressives over the civilian casualties in Gaza, which are now said to exceed

pointed out that those backing the proposal were sending a pointed message to President Joe Biden that the war in Gaza is becoming a major problem for his

23 killed in Thai fireworks factory blast **Monitoring Desk**

BANGKOK: three people died after an explosion at a fireworks factory in central Thailand on Wednesday, the provincial governor said.

Images shared by the local rescue service showed metal debris littered on the ground, and a huge plume of black smoke. The blast occurred at around 3pm (0800 GMT) near Sala Khao township, in central Suphan Buri province.

We received reports from EOD team that there were 23 confirmed dead," Nattapat Suwanprateep, Suphan Buri province governor.

Winter weather upends travel in Germany for a second day

BERLIN (Internews): Heavy snowfall and icy conditions upended air, car and train travel across Germany for a second day on Thursday.

At Frankfurt airport, Germany's largest hub, more than 300 out of almost 1,000 planned arrivals and departures were cancelled in the morning, according to spokesperson.

Trains to and from Paris were again cancelled German rail operator Deutsche Bahn said, and for other train journeys.

Biden aims for North Carolina as 2024 election comes into focus

U.S. President Joe Biden will fix his gaze on one of the prizes of the 2024 election three days after Donald Trump's Iowa Republican primary triumph, taking his economic pitch to closely contested North

Carolina on Thursday.
After Trump's 51% win in the Iowa caucus cemented his front-runner status for Republicans, Biden heads to North Carolina, the state his Democrats are most optimistic about converting in 2024. Trump narrowly won the state in 2020 by 74,483 votes and 1.3 per-

for broadband internet, is Biden's fourth this month to an anticipated battleground state in the 2024 presidential election. It comes as Biden's re-

election campaign, launched nearly nine months ago, revs up into general-election mode with hires across a series of the states where voting preferences can swing to either party. Since 1980, North Carolina has only backed one Democrat in a presidential election: Barack Obama in 2008. But Biden's loss there in 2020 was narrower than Obama's in 2012 and Hillary centage points. The trip, tied Clinton's in 2016.



factory near Sala Khao township in Thailand's Suphan Buri province.

Red Sea ship diversions boost bunker demand, prices in Africa, Mediterranean

(Internews): The re-routing of a growing number of ships around Africa to avoid potential attacks in the Red Sea is altering refu- Iran-allied Houthis, which eling patterns and boosting demand for bunker fuel at far-flung ports, from the Mauritius to South Africa to the Canary Islands.

Ships are also expected to top up more at Asia. Singapore and Rotterdam, the two busiest bunkering ports and where fuel is competitively priced, as they try to hedge against uncertainty over route attacks by the Houthis. changes, traders and ana-

lysts said.

SINGAPORE/CAPE ships in the Red Sea and TOWN/LONDON retaliatory U.S. strikes have retaliatory U.S. strikes have ratcheted-up tensions in the Middle East as the Gaza war rages on.

The attacks by the they say are in support of Palestinians, target a route that accounts for about 15% of the world's shipping traffic and acts as a vital conduit between Europe and

Hundreds of large vessels have rerouted around the southern tip of Africa, adding 10-14 days of travel. to avoid drone and missile

"Ships are diverting away from the Red Sea and Attacks by Yemen's re-routing around the coast Houthi militia on merchant of South and West Africa.

Israeli forces search a Red Crescent ambulance during a raid in Tulkarm, occupied West Bank. Japan counts down to

precision 'moon sniper'

TOKYO (Internews): Ja- JAXA says is unprecpan aims to become the fifth country to put a spacecraft on the moon when it attempts a precision landing on Friday, in what would be a boost for a space programme that has suffered a wave of setbacks and been

eclipsed by rival China. Dubbed the "moon sniper", the Japan Aeronumber of private-sector space Exploration Agency (JAXA) probe is attempting to land within the moon as part of 100 metres (328 feet) of NASA's its target, a technology programme.

landing mission edented and essential in the search for moon water and human habitability. Japan is increasingly looking to play a bigger role in space, partnering with close ally Washington to respond to China' military and technological might, including in space. Japan boasts a space startups and aims to send an astronaut to

President says:

Use of technology vital to

Pak Navy vows concrete action to enhance maritime security

Ahmed Bilgrami has emphasized the Pakistan Navy's commitment to addressing current simmering issues in a tangible way, aiming to ensure security in the country's maritime

He made these remarks during the concluding ceremony of the inaugural Maritime Security Exercise SEA GUARD-24 in Karachi today.

During his address, he stated that the exercise aimed to review response procedures against maritime security incidents, identify gaps, and propose ways to improve the response tering mutual understandmechanism

KARACHI (APP): Vice Highlighting the scope Chief of Naval Staff Ovais of the exercise, the Vice Naval Chief mentioned that it provided an opportunity to strengthen and rejuvenate the bonds among diverse maritime stakeholders in the country, including shipping, fishing, law enforcement, and private entities, through a common platform-the Joint Maritime Information Coordination Ovais Ahmed Bilgrami

expressed appreciation for the efforts of all stakeholders in making the exercise a success, as it served as a platform for engaging in tactical exercises, exchanging best practices, and fos-



DAVOS: Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif addressing Pakistani professionals in Switzerland.

Pak isn't Iraq or Syria, it will respond if treated this way: ex-envoy

ISLAMABAD (INP): Tehran's envoy. Former Pakistani ambassador Abdul Basit has issued a strong response to Iran's recent airstrikes in Balochistan, claiming that Pakistan "is not Iraq or Syria" and warning of fur-

ther consequences. Basit, speaking to a private Tv news channel, highlighted that if Pakistan is treated in this way, it will respond also. He also highlighted the history of concern and cooperation with Iran, but asserted that Tehran's "unprovoked" attack, which killed two children, has pushed the relationship to a critical point. He stressed that Islamabad

The former ambassador pointed to Iran's growing regional ambitions claiming that its "expansion of capabilities across Asia' is a "dangerous game." He further warned that Tehran's actions will only lead to its own isolation, urging them to resolve the dispute diplomatically and avoid creating further con-

Basit also drew a historical parallel, recalling Iran's 2010 arrest and ex ecution of the Jundullah chief, the predecessor to the targeted Jaish-ul-Adl group. This, he argued demonstrates Iran's capachas "responded appropriately" by recalling its ambassador and blocking once again.

Egypt envoy of calls on Minister for Defense, security issues discuss

RAWALPINDI (Online): Ambassador of Egypt Dr Ihab Abdel Hamid Hasan has called on Minister for Defense Lieutenant General (retired) Anwar Ali Haider in his office Defense Ministry Rawalpindi on Thurs-

Defense Minister said that Pakistan and Egypt have cordial historical and traditional relations

Defense Minister said that both countries can

projects and cooperation in

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pa-

Authority (PTA) orga-

nized a two-day workshop

on 'IPv6 Transition' and

'Routing Security' in col-

laboration with the Asia-

Pacific Network Informa-

tion Centre (APNIC), the

Internet Society (ISOC),

and the Pakistan Network

(PKNOG). The workshop

featured esteemed foreign

speakers and witnessed ac-

Defense industry by gath-

ering their military strength. desires for peace and develcommitment to work with Pakistan in all matters of

Egypt and Pakistan have immense potential to develop in all sectors because both countries are facing common challenges and have common strategic interests. We hold the same opment. The guest thanked the Defense Minister and expressed his government's work for collaborative mutual interest, including defense

QUETTA: Country Director UNICEFAbdullah A Fadel and Ms. Maryam meet-

tive participation from pro-

industry, underscoring the

collective commitment to

staying abreast of techno-

logical advancements, said a

news release issued here on

Thursday. Speaking on the

occasion, Chairman PTA,

Major General ® Hafeez Ur

Rehman said that PTA is

well aware of the importance

of capacity building therefore

it is working closely with in

ternational stakeholders.



dent Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Chinese military expert Pakistan's plan to buy Chinese FC-31 stealth fighter jets 'win-win' cooperation

Pakistan's plan to procure FC-31 stealth fighter jets from China will not only significantly enhance the Pakistan Air Force (PAF)'s capabilities, but also open up the international market for the Chinese aircraft, marking a win-win cooperation, Chinese military expert said. The FC-31 has strong comprehensive air combat capabilities, including its stealth advantages that allow it to spot opponents first and launch surprise attacks, Wei Dongxu, a Beijing-based military expert, told the Global Times.

The aircraft has outstanding situational awareness and can carry a wide selection of munitions, including not only air-to-air missiles but also precision

missiles, Wei said. The PAF has long

been using weapons and equipment procured from China, including J-10C medium fighter jets, JF-17 light fighter jets, HQ-9BE longrange surface-to-air missile systems, HQ-16FE midto-long-range surface-to-air missile systems and the YLC-8E anti-stealth 3D surveillance radar systems.

Pakistan will have no difficulties integrating the FC-31 into its combat systems, and the stealth aircraft will in return significantly enhance its military capabilities by a generation, experts said.

The FC-31 will allow the PAF to enjoy a generational gap over its rivals with fast delivery, while

ground and air-to-surface not likely get stealth fighter jets anytime soon, Wei said. The purchase plan will also benefit China, Wei said, noting that if Pakistan finalizes the deal, other countries, particularly those from the Middle East,

could also follow. In potential joint exercises with other countries, the Pakistan Air Force could display the capabilities of the FC-31, and more potential customers will get to know how competitive the Chinese aircraft is, Wei

Independently developed by the state-owned Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC), the FC-31 is a single-seat, twinengine, medium stealth fighter jet that analysts said is comparable with, if not



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani exchanging views with Mohamed Eboo, Resident Representative of Canada during meeting held at Parliament House in Islamabad.

Federal minister announces to organize awareness sessions on interfaith harmony in rural areas

KARACHI (APP): Federal said that all human beings anyone receives informagovernment under its endeavour to promote interfaith harmony will organize awareness sessions on the subject in rural areas especially in schools and col-

leges across the country. He was addressing a seminar titled "Religious Minorities and Interfaith Social Tolerance in Pakistan" organized by Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony in collaboration with Iqra University Karachi.

The Federal Minister, speaking at the occasion,

Minister for Religious Af- were family of Almighty tion about any act of blasfairs and Interfaith Har- Allah and he taught man- phemy one must verify and mony Aneeq Ahmed Thurs- kind through his last report it to higher authoriday announced that the Prophet Muhammad SAW ties instead of taking the law to be kind and polite in their dealings. Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) teachings on tolerance, em-

bedded in the conquest of Mecca and Treaty of Hudebia, should always be kept in mind while dealing with the people of different faiths, Aneeq Ahmed stated adding that the hearts of non-Muslim brothers could be won through kindness and politeness rather than misplaced arguments.

While expressing condemnation on incidents like into hands and resorting to violence. The Minister commended the role of Ulema for raising voices against the intolerable acts in society and uttered that the message of interfaith harmony should be disseminated through knowledge and evidence. Aneeq Ahmed said

that the ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony was organizing a series of awareness events on interfaith harmony in cities, particularly in higher Jaranwala, he said that if education institutions.

Jan Achakzai visits SSP Traffic office; praises control mechanism

Independent Report

UETTA: The caretaker rovincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai visited the Office of Senior Superintendent of Police (Traffic) here on Thursday.

The caretaker Minister Information met the SSP Traffic Behram Khan Mandokhail who briefed him about the functioning of the Traffic Police and the traffic management system in Quetta city.

Jan Achakzai appreciated the traffic control and management mechanism of traffic police in Quetta.

He said that the traffic of Quetta city is being managed well by the traffic police despite the resources constraints. He stressed the need

to create awareness among the citizens about the traf-

He urged the citizens to follow the traffic laws.

Seminar on role of women in peace, nation building organized in Turbat

women in peace and nation

from University of Turbat, Government Girls College Turbat, University Makran, Panjgur and Uni-

Zubaida Jalal was the chief guest while the panelists were journalist and an-chor SAMAA news Kiran Naz, Minister for Women Development Shania Khan, Principal Mand Girls High School Rahima Jalal, social activist and politician Meena Majeed Baloch, Prof Dr Gul Hassan of University of Turbat and researcher BBTN Dr Siraj Bashir.

sector of Azad Jammu and Kashmir to increase the

overall literacy rate in the He was talking to a delegation of the Kashmir se children. Education Foundation which called on him at at

The president said the education could be brought to the remote and difficult areas with the help of tech-

Aiwan-e-Sadr.

nology in the education

nology.

He said the use of information technology in the education sector will reduce costs while it would

number of students while Thursday stressed the need maintaining the quality of to increase use of the techeducation.

President Alvi maintained that around 28 million children in Pakistan do not go to school while thousands of new schools would be needed to educate

He said mosques could also be used as educational centers for this

The delegation briefed the president about the Foundation's role in promoting quality education and literacy in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and rural

Azad Jammu and

increase literacy rate also help increasing the Kashmir Textbook Board Hussain Bukhari and Foundation Chairman Muzaffar Muhammad Qureshi also

participated in the meeting. It was informed in the meeting that the foundation runs three schools and a teacher training college in Punjab and Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

The delegation informed the president that the aim of the foundation was to promote education and character-building of the youth.

The president appreciated the foundation's role in promoting education in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and rural Punjab



DAVOS: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar held a meeting with Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, Group Chairman and CEO of UAE-based DP World, a multinational logistics company on the sidelines of the World Eco-

UNICEF assures full cooperation to work on better healthcare of mother & infants in Balochistan

Muhammad Khan Jogezai

Independent Report

QUETTA: The country Director UNICEF, Abdullah A. Fadil has assured that the UNICEF would extend full cooperation to work on the better healthcare of the mothers and infants in the province.

He also assured to work on the roadmap and work plan of the provincial government in this regard.

The country Director of UNICEF was in meeting with the caretaker Minister Health, Dr. Amir

Ambassador of Pakistan in

Czech Republic Ayesha Ali

on Thursday met with President of the Senate of

Czech Republic Miloš

discussed the ways to strengthen the Pak-Czech

with the President of the Senate of the Czech Repub-

lic Miloš Vystrcil at his an-

nual reception for the dip-

lomatic corps," the ambas-

sador wrote on her X ac-

In the meeting, they

'Honored to meet

Vystrcil.

relations.

Also present in the provincial representative of

here on Thursday.

UNÍCEF, Mariym, Dr. Aamir Alizai. field security officer, Naseeb Kakar and Dr. Amin Khan Mandokhail. The Country Director

and Provincial representa-tive of UNICEF appreciated the roadmap as discussed with them by the

sentatives also briefed the meeting were included the overall functioning and contribution of the Fund in

sector

health

Balochistan. Earlier, the Minister Health Dr. Jogezai appreciated the services being rendered by UNICEF in the health sector of the prov-

He told that the government is ensuring effecinterim Health Minister tive steps for saving the during the course of meet- people from diseases.

Commissioner Quetta Pakistan envoy meets Czech inspects solid waste senate president management plant

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Commissioner Quetta Division, Muhammad Hamza Shafqaat visited the solid waste management plant at eastern bypass, Quetta on Thursday

The Commissioner was briefed about different parts of the solid waste management plant plant, issues and it's operation.

The Commissioner directed to rehabilitate the solid waste management plant within a week

He said that the longstanding issue of solid waste would be resolved after making the plant operational.

So, every possible steps would be taken to keep functioning the plant, adding he assured.

He said that solid

waste management plant would resolve the issues of solid waste in Quetta city

The Commissioner stressed the need to properly dispose the solid waste by the people.



Waste Plant

SHC allows Fahmida, **Zulfigar Mirza** to contest election KARACHI (Online): Sindh

High Court (SHC) has allowed Fahmida Mirza and Zulfigar Mirza to contest The court has ac

cepted constitutional petitions of Fahmida Mirza and Zulfiqar Mirza. Fahmida Mirza and

Zulfigar Mirza had filed nomination papers from NA-223 while Zulfiqar Mirza had filed nomination papers from PS-70, 71 and Returning officer and

election tribunal had rejected their nomination papers. Fahmida Mirza and Zulfigar Mirza were charged that they were bank defaulters.

appreciates digital transformation efforts ISLAMABAD (APP): the implementation of the Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr.

Finance Minister

Shamshad Akhtar, here on Thursday commended the initiatives undertaken by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Karandaaz for the digital transformation of Pakistan. Speaking at the 'Pakistan Digital Stake' Workshop here, the Minister said the creation of Digital Stake by these organizations was in line with the government's policy of digitization She said digital transactions play a vital role in empowering both urban residents and business individuals, offering them the flexibility to complete financial transactions

promptly and with ease. The collaborative efforts extend beyond the private sector, with active participation from key government institutions such as the State Bank of Pakistan, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) and the Accountability Bureau.

'Pakistan Digital Stake,' reinforcing the government's commitment to the digitization agenda, she added.

Dr. Shamshad Akhtar underscored the importance of the project for Pakistan's progress, asserting, this initiative was of utmost importance for the development of the country adding the government would use all available resources to ensure its success. The minister reiter-

ated the government's commitment to financial inclusion, economic self-sufficiency, poverty reduction, and transparency in governance. Drawing inspiration from the positive impacts of digital transformation in the United Arab Emirates, Estonia, and Singapore, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar expressed confidence in the potential of 'Digital Stake' to bring similar improvements to Pakistan. The 'Pakistan Digital Stake' aims to establish the country on digital lines, creating opportunities for millions of Pakistanis to These entities are con- engage in daily financial

Efforts should be made to avoid complication with Iran, Khawaja Asif should make a joint strat-ISLAMABAD (Online):

Group

PTA hosts workshop

on IPv6 Transition &

Routing Security

Former Defense Minister Khawaja Asif said that we should try to avoid complication with Iran. While talking to Private TV channel, Khawaja

Asif said that during our tenure, we had very good relations with Iran. Pakistan had played an active role in resolving Saudi Arabia-Iran conflict.

movements.

egy to deal with terrorism. Baloch separatist movements are going on in Pakistan and Iran.

Pakistan and Iran need to jointly deal with these It is pertinent to say that according to foreign

Khawaja Asif said that

office, Pakistan has targeted specific hideouts of PML-N leader said terrorist in Sistan province

ing with caretaker Provincial Health Minister Dr. Amir Muhammad Jogezai **IHC** accepts petitions against jail trial of Toshakhana, £190 million reference

ISLAMABAD (APP):The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday accepted the petitions of PTI founder against the trial of Toshakhana case and the £190 million reference in jail, for hearing. IHC bench comprising Justice Gul Hassan Aurangzeb and Justice Arbab Tahir heard the PTI founder's plea against the jail trial for the two cases. The court issued directives to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and the Interior Ministry to submit their replies on Monday. It also issued directives to schedule the case to be heard by any avail-

able bench on Monday.

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TURBAT (APP): A seminar was organized here on Thursday on the role of

About 400 girl students and faculty participated in the seminar held at Sheikha Fatima bin Mubarak Cadet College Turbat through Voice of Balochistan (VoB). The students came versity of Gwadar. Prominent politician

QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Information Minister Jan Achakzai visiting office of SSP Traffic