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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and Chief of the Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir addressing the participants of Pakistan National Youth Conference.

PM for rejecting, collectively fighting enemies' propaganda against Pakistan

Pakistan's successes in the war against terrorism would not have been possible without the participation and support of the youth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday affirmed that as responsible citizens, the people of Pakistan must reject and collectively fight the vicious propaganda onslaught unleashed by the enemies against Pakistan in the recent past.

The prime minister, addressing the Pakistan National Youth Convention 2024 as the chief guest, said the youth could play a constructive role in dealing with this emerging national secu-

urity challenge provided they remained focused, and fact checked all details through authentic information from the state institutions rather than falling prey to the propaganda.

Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir, NI (M), was the guest of honour. "We, as a nation, have fought the menace of terrorism most valiantly, offering unparalleled sacrifices," he said.

Prime Minister Kakar appreciated the role of armed forces in the fight

against the menace of terrorism with full commitment and professional excellence.

"Pakistan's successes in the war against terrorism would not have been possible without the participation and support of the youth who make 65% of our population," he added.

Addressing the conference, the COAS underscored that the youth were Pakistan's biggest asset, and all optimism of a brighter future was associated with them. Conveying the mes-

sage of hope, the COAS asked the youth to shun dependency. He referred to the historic role played by the youth in creation and development of Pakistan and exhorted them to partake in building the nation through discipline, honest toil and a genuine quest for knowledge. He highlighted the power potential of Pakistan, the demographic dividend, immense mineral wealth, a creative corpus of IT literate workforce, and great prospects in agriculture.

Domki reaches Kech, reviews election arrangements Caretaker Chief Minister pledges to conduct free & fair general elections in peaceful manner

Preparations made for general elections 2024 satisfactory; security arrangements being improved further in Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan has reiterated the government's resolve to conduct free and fair elections in peaceful manner.

He said that all the resources are being mobilized for the general elections in Balochistan, and it would be ensured that the elections are conducted peacefully.

The Chief Minister was chairing a high level meeting held to review the election arrangements in Makran Division, at the Commissioner's office, Turbat on Wednesday.

The caretaker Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Captain (Retd) Mir Muhammad

Zubair Jamali, Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh, Additional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem, besides other concerned high ups.

The Chief Minister was briefed about the preparations made for general elections to be held in Makran Division as elsewhere in the province and country on February 8, 2024.

It was informed that all the necessary preparations have been finalized for conducting the elections in Makran Division.

The Chief Minister on the occasion directed to the concerned to make it sure that free and fair elections are conducted in the Division peacefully.

He said that we are firm to conduct the general elections in the province in peaceful and transparent manner.

He said that the security of all election contesting candidates is being ensured in the province.

He also said that the law and order situation is better than past in the province. However, the security arrangements are being improved further, he added.

Meanwhile, while talking to media in Turbat, the Chief Minister said that all preparations are complete regarding elections in the province.

He also expressed satisfaction over the arrangements made for elections.

COAS says Purpose of social media, propaganda is to spread uncertainty, chaos, despair

Pakistan's forces always ready to tackle any kind of threat and conspiracy; Youth, guardians of the bright and sublime traditions of the nation and country

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir on Wednesday said youth were the guardians of the bright and sublime traditions of the nation and country, the epitome of Allama Iqbal and Quaid-e-Azam's visionary leadership.

Addressing 'Pakistan National Youth Conference' at Jinnah Convention Center, he said: "It gives me great pleasure to address the future builders of Pakistan and Shaheen of Iqbal."

The Army Chief said the establishment of Pakistan highlighted the core issue that Islamic culture and civilization were different from Hindus in all respects and Muslims might not adopt Western civilization and culture.

The youth, he said should have immense confidence in their country, nation, culture, civilization and themselves. "The youth should be sure that they are sion of a great homeland and nation," he added.



TURBAT: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki talking with media members regarding preparation of general elections

66 kids die of pneumonia across Punjab in current month

MULTAN (APP): A total of 66 kids died of pneumonia in public hospitals across South Punjab in the current month while 2,847 patients reported to health facilities.

Health Department South Punjab Spokesperson Assad Ullah Shahzad told APP on Wednesday that 41 deaths were reported from Children Complex Multan, nine from Bahawal Victoria Hospital Bahawalpur, 14 from Allama Iqbal Teaching Hospital D G Khan, and one each from Sheikh Zayed Hospital Rahim Yar Khan and Sir Sadiq Abbasi Hospital Bahawalpur while no death was reported from Nishtar Hospital Multan by January 23.

Solangi for improving fact check mechanism to counter misinformation

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi Wednesday said that the mechanism for fact-checking will have to be improved in the arena of digital media to counter fake news and misinformation.

Delivering his speech at the 2nd International Media and Communication Conference here, he said that the year 2024 was the year of elections in different countries including Pakistan, India, Indonesia, United States of America.

He urged the media industry to play a responsible role as its responsibility was to protect the public interest. "Journalism is primarily about defending the public's right to know," Murtaza Solangi main-

tained.

The minister said the challenges of the digital age were also great as artificial intelligence, deep fake, voice cloning and misinformation factories have made it difficult to sift fact from fiction.

He said that besides the benefits of modern technology in media, there were many risks also involved.

He said that many tasks are being done by using artificial intelligence and voice cloning.

The fundamental principle of journalism was the gatekeeper system to verify the facts but the new media had ignored "the gatekeeper".

In the era of artificial intelligence, deep fake, cyber cloning, he said it had become difficult to bring the truth to people, Murtaza Solangi opined.

Would prefer to form govt with independent candidates if elected: Bilawal

LAHORE (INP): In an interview with Reuters in Larkana, Bilawal said, "You know, lots of independent politicians, probably the highest (number) in our history, are taking part in the coming elections."



It should be noted that after the PTI was stripped of its iconic 'bat' symbol, most of the independents would comprise PTI leaders who are contesting the upcoming elections as independent candidates. Party leader Gohar Khan has also expressed fears of horse-trading and floor crossing.

Positioning himself as an alternate to the PML-N and PTL, Bilawal had recently called on supporters of ex-PM Imran Khan to vote for him while their leader is in jail. In the 2013 elections, the PPP came second after PML-N, garnering 42 of the 342 seats up for grabs. In 2018, with 54 seats, it was runner-up to the parties of both Nawaz and Imran.

However, Bilawal ruled out joining hands with either contender saying he preferred to form a government with independent candidates. The PPP chairman spoke to Reuters in an interview during a gruelling four-week campaign that took him to more than 33 towns, while other parties began canvassing just last week.

SC stops JUI's candidate from contesting election from NA-252

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Wednesday dismissed the appeal of JUI's candidate Abdul Hafiz Loni and upheld the verdict of election tribunal for rejecting his nomination papers from NA-252.

A three-member bench of the top court headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa heard the appeal of Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam (JUI)'s candidate Abdul Hafiz Loni.

The top court rejected the appeal of JUI candidate Abdul Hafiz Loni and upheld the decision of the Election Tribunal and the Balochistan High Court.

During the course of proceeding, the petitioner lawyer adopted the stance that his client has completed his sentence announced in a graft refer-

ence. He prayed the court to allow Abdul Hafiz Loni to contest the elections. Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Isa noted that the petitioner has spent only 2 years and 2 months in jail while the NAB court had sentenced him to 10 years jail term along fine worth Rs 50 million. The chief justice remarked that the petitioner said that the accused has been out of jail for 8 years your client on payroll and didn't even pay the amount of fine.

The CJP further remarked that such people should not represent the people of Balochistan instead they should sit at home. Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar said that the property of the petitioner should be confiscated if he does not pay the fine.

124 candidates in run for 17 seats: Final list of candidates contesting election on reserve seats issued

Independent Report
QUETTA: The final list of candidates contesting elections on the reserve seats of women and minorities in the national and Balochistan assemblies has been issued on Wednesday.

According to the Provincial Election Commissioner (PEC) Balochistan, Muhammad Farid Afridi, in all 28 candidates have been finalized for three seats reserved for women in the National Assembly from Balochistan.

Similarly, 63 candidates have been declared eligible for 11 seats reserved for women in Balochistan's provincial assembly while 33 candidates' papers finalized for three seats reserved for non-Muslims in the provincial assembly.

HC reserves verdict on PTI founder's plea against jail trail

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday reserved its verdict on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder's plea challenging his jail trial in the Toshakhana and Al-Qadir Trust cases, following the completion of arguments.

PMLN will generate employment opportunities for youth after coming into power: Nawaz



NANKANA SAHIB (INP): PML-N Quaid, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif has assured to generate employment opportunities for youth after coming into power.

Addressing at a public gathering in Nankana Sahib today, he said PML-N aims at undertaking historical development work with a

commitment to rebuild the country.

Nawaz Sharif said serving the public is the manifesto of PML-N.

Nawaz Sharif on Wednesday asserted that Pakistan plunged into crises after he was unjustly removed as the prime minister on false charges.

Continued on page 2

Dr. Gohar Ejaz assumes charge of caretaker Interior Minister



ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Industries and Production Division Dr. Gohar Ejaz HI, SI on Wednesday assumed the charge of caretaker Federal Minister for Interior.

Senior officials of the Ministry welcomed Dr.

Gohar Ejaz on this arrival in the Ministry of Interior.

The Interior Minister was given a detailed briefing regarding the Ministry of Interior and its subsidiaries in the Introductory meeting with senior officers of the ministry.

The important portfolio was vacated after the resignation of Sarfraz Bugti as caretaker minister for interior.

Sarfraz Bugti had resigned from the portfolio for taking part in the general elections of 2024.



ISLAMABAD: Relatives of Baluchistan missing persons stands in a queue waiting for boarding in a bus after the finish Sitting protest (Dharna) in front of National Press Club in Federal Capital.

IMF to 'send' review mission to Pakistan after elections 2024

ISLAMABAD (INP): Following Pakistan's assurance to impose new taxes, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Wednesday "decided" to send its review mission to Pakistan after election 2024, sources said.

IMF will continue further talks on the Standby Arrangement (SBA) programme with the newly elected government of Pakistan after highly anticipated general elections.

However, the "IMF has not confirmed the schedule for conducting the second review". The last confirmation was made by the monetary fund in July 2023 which stated that the talks on the 2nd review will be held with the new government.

The International Monetary Fund has already made a \$1.9 billion disbursement out of the total \$3 billion under the nine-month Stand-By Arrangement (SBA).

Sources said that newly elected government in Pakistan is expected to take full charge till the end of February 2024 after the general election.



LAHORE: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi addressing the Second International Media and Communication Conference at University of Management and Technology.

Election preparations reviewed in Rakhshan: Govt. machinery being mobilized for general elections, says CS

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan has stated that the government machinery is being mobilized for conducting free and fair elections in the province.

He said that every possible measures would be taken so as to conduct the elections in peaceful manner.

The Chief Secretary was presiding over a meeting held to review the arrangements for elections in Rakhshan Division, in Kharan on Wednesday.

Those who were present at the meeting were the caretaker Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Zubair Jamali, Additional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem, Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh, Secretary Local Government, Noor Ahmed Pirani, Commissioner Rakhshan, Shah Irfan Gharshen, besides other concerned high ups.

Addressing the meeting, the Chief Secretary said that all preparations have been finalized for the elections in light of directives of the Election Commission of Pakistan.

He said that his visit is aimed at reviewing the arrangements for elections and mobilizing the government machinery for the same.

He assured that every possible effort would be made to ensure peaceful and transparent elections in the province.

He directed to the concerned officials to ensure availability of the basic facilities including water, electricity at the polling stations. The ramps should also be constructed at the polling stations to ensure that disabled persons may also cast their votes, adding he stressed.

Earlier, during the briefing, it was informed that the preparations are complete for February 8 elections in Rakhshan Division.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Political hustle bustle ahead of elections

As February 8 upcoming poll season approaches fast in the country, political hustle and bustle is seen in every nook and cranny of the country, including Quetta and different other parts of Balochistan...

Human smuggling

Azwar Shakeel

Though rampant, human smuggling in Pakistan remains poorly documented. Only when a tragedy occurs does the issue take centre stage. A nationwide crackdown was announced after a fishing boat carrying hundreds of Pakistani migrants capsized off the southern coast of Greece last June...

Dubai, followed by irregular migration to Turkey or Libya, and onwards to Italy or Greece. Unemployment, lack of opportunity, poverty, and insecurity remain the primary drivers pushing people out. Pressures of traditional masculinity is another prominent push factor...

ie, mode of travel, comfort of travel (front seat or trunk of the car, below or above the deck on a ship, etc), number of attempts, and documentation. The FIA is the law-enforcement agency tasked by law to crack down on smugglers and safeguard the rights of migrants. But it is seen as complicit in the entire process...

Genocidal collusion

Mahir Ali

Whether he's trying to crack a joke or pretending to be serious, Joe Biden's octogenarian visage is permanently contorted into a grimace. That may have something to do with all the lies he has felt obliged to spout since Oct 7; from the nonsense about having seen pictures of be-headed babies to the recent assurance that the Israeli prime minister does not reject every variant of a two-state solution...

That verdict is reflected in Gaza, where the extermination campaign would be virtually impossible for Israel to continue without the steady supply of US weaponry and largesse. America could halt the genocide at a stroke. But neither the White House nor much of the Congress seems to have any interest in pushing for peace. The mealy-mouthed rhetoric from the US and its acolytes about a two-state solution conveys a whiff of absurdity after decades of sponsoring Zionist designs on Palestinian territories...

a bunch of Iranian Revolutionary Guard advisers in Damascus. Iran has vowed to retaliate against the outrage in Syria, but is disinclined to directly take on Israel or the US — there have been reports of back-channel contacts with the latter. Hopefully, the de-escalation following the Balochistan stoush will avert future belligerence. Tehran purportedly attacked a 'takfiri' outfit that had claimed credit for terrorist activity in Iran; Islamabad hit back. But even a limited exchange of fire serves as an unfortunate distraction from the genocide unfolding in real time in the Gaza Strip...

Commerce News

Effective implementation of bold reforms imperative to usher new era of development: Dr. Shamshad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar Wednesday said that effective implementation of bold and ambitious reforms was imperative to usher in a new era of development and prosperity in the country. The accomplishment of this goal, however, is contingent upon addressing critical underlying

institutional, governance, and structural constraints, he said during a seminar on "Pakistan's Economic Crisis: Challenges and the Way Forward," organized by NUST Institute of Policy Studies (NIPS) at the University's main campus here. Dr. Shamshad Akhtar highlighted five key areas that have increased the vulnerability of Pakistan's economy to domestic and global shocks.

The first area, he mentioned is unsustainable fiscal policy due to revenue gaps and unproductive expenditure; second, fiscal non-sustainability has enhanced government recourse to public debt which has increased; third, climate shocks as the global warming model predicts that Pakistan's weather patterns would become even more volatile and extreme in the decades ahead, with an average

increase in temperatures by 1.3 to 4.9 percent by 2090; fourth, the lack of innovation and diversity in the structure of the economy; and fifth, the failure to integrate Pakistan's economy with the rest of the world. Dr. Shamshad further stressed five critical areas of reforms essential to reducing Pakistan's vulnerabilities and fostering sustainable growth that included.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a review meeting on reduction of the energy sector's circular debt.



Federal Minister MNFS&R Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik along with Ms. Jessica Mudjitaba-Fernandez, Program Manager USDA, Mr. Keith Metzner, USAID, Chairman PARC, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali & Mr. Babar Ehsan Bajwa, CABI's Senior Regional Director, Asia, presiding a dialogue on regulatory harmonization in Pakistan for Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) and Bio-pesticides.

FPCCI & EFP meet GSP+ compliance and SDGs discussed: Saqib

Independent Report KARACHI: Mr. Saqib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI, has said that the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) and Employers' Federation of Pakistan (EFP) have agreed, in principle, to converge their policy advocacy; skills development & awareness and research & development resources to enable Pakistan to continue to capitalize on its GSP+ status with the European Union (EU) as new EU parliament and EU

Commission will be in place by June 2024; and, there might be some review or policy changes in rules framework for Pakistan's GSP+ status. Mr. Saqib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI, explained that Pakistan should remain on course on EU requirements on human rights; labor rights; environmental standards and good governance. These are principally the four areas where Pakistan's performance comes under review.

Rupee gains 12 paisa against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistani Rupee on Wednesday witnessed an appreciation of 12 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs279.67 against the previous day's closing of Rs279.79. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs278.9 and Rs280.9 respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by 83 paisa to close at Rs304.20 against the last day's closing of Rs305.03, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

PM for effective, durable strategy to do away with circular debt energy sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday directed the Ministry of Energy to formulate an effective and durable strategy to do away with the circular debt of the energy sector. The prime minister, chairing a meeting to discuss the strategy to reduce circular debt of the energy sector, said all the stakeholders would have to put in collective efforts for

reduction in the circular debt. He told the participants of the meeting that soon after coming to the power, the caretaker government took measures for economic revival and was taking all-out steps to reduce the circular debt. He said the anti-power theft operation had led to an enhanced recovery of the electricity dues of the power distribution companies.

SBP Multan chief says: SBP software application prepared to receive account holders complaints

Independent Report MULTAN: Chief Manager State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Multan, Javed Iqbal Marth has said that the central bank has prepared a software application to enable account holders to file complaints against banks. He was speaking at a ceremony organized by the Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) with industrialists notably MCCI president Mian Rashid Iqbal, former president Khawaja Muhammad Hussain,

Naveed Ahmad Chughtai, Saleha Hassan, and others were present, according to a release issued by MCCI on Wednesday. The SBP Multan chief said that account holders mostly do not speak against banks despite having complaints, however, added that the new software application would facilitate them to do so whenever they have any problem relating to the bank and it would trigger a process to resolve their grievances.

Draft regulations of bio-pesticide policy to be submitted before cabinet

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security and Research, Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik on Wednesday said that draft regulations of bio-pesticides policy had been finalized and would be submitted before the federal cabinet for approval to promote the use of bio-pesticides in the country. Addressing a high-level "dialogue on regulatory harmonization in Pakistan for MRLs and bio-

pesticides", the minister said that the use of bio-pesticides would help mitigate the issues related to aflatoxin and make the local agriculture commodities more resilient to capture the international market. The event was organized by the Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC) in collaboration with USID, USDA and CABI to share the outcome of joint collaboration to mitigate the adverse impact of aflatoxin in local agriculture products, besides measures taken to mitigate its negative impact on exports of rice, maize, wheat and fruits. The minister said that due to the presence of micro-toxin elements, the exports from the country remained under regulatory pressure and expressed the hope that the promotion of bio-pesticides would help to overcome such challenges besides reducing reliance on costly fertilizers, which consume costly inputs like electricity and gas.

PSX stays bullish, gains 368 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Wednesday, gaining 368.21 points, a positive change of 0.57 percent, closing at 64,822.43 points against 64,454.22 points the previous trading day. A total of 479,982,148 shares valuing Rs.22,501 billion were traded during the day as compared to 425,709,896 shares valuing Rs.24,995 billion.

APTMA chairman briefs US consul general on Pakistan's textile sector

LAHORE (APP): All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA) Chairman (Northern Zone) Kamran Arshad briefed Ms. Kristin K. Hawkins, United States consul general in Lahore, on the prospects and needs of Pakistan's textile sector so as to find more ways and means to foster bilateral trade and economic relations between the two countries. APTMA Vice

Chairman Ahmad Shafi, former chairman Adil Bashir and Hamid Zaman, and Secretary General Raza Baqir, along with senior members of APTMA representing leading textile groups, were also present. They discussed the enormous potential to work together in the field of cotton and textile, besides expanding trade and investment relations in other focused areas.

President calls for education emergency to enroll 26m out-of-school children

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday called for the enrollment of around 26 million out-of-school children in the country through drastic measures including education emergency, double shifts in educational institutes and utilizing the mosques for teaching purposes.

The president, addressing an event in connection with the World Education Day, also suggested a mechanism to engage the newly graduated and intermediate students for teaching the out-of-school children, offering them a stipend.

Additionally, he also advocated the promotion of online education, besides extending the facilities to doctors, engineers, and trained workforce in the country to discourage the trend of moving abroad.

He said the alarming figure of 26 million out-of-school children was worri-

some for the country and exemplified other countries including Sri Lanka and Bangladesh where children enrollment was around 98 to 100 percent.

He said the educating the children was of paramount importance to produce a skilled and qualified workforce, not merely the laborers. Lauding the contribution of the partner organisations, the president said the country should take advantage of their services for benefit of the future generations.

He informed the gathering that since Pakistan's inception, around 55,000 schools were built and the enrollment of out-of-school children required another 50,000 schools which was extremely difficult, considering educational budget of the provinces. In such a scenario, the out-of-box solutions were a must to cope with the challenge, he added.

Reiterating his sugges-

tion to use the mosque platform as a centre of learning, he said the worship places were equipped with all basic facilities including electricity and clean drinking water. The platform can be used to teach out-of-school children in alternative timings including both boys and girls at separate mosques, he added.

President Alvi lauded the Benazir Income Support Program for its contributions to child and mother's health and suggested to link financial assistance with the enrollment of out-of-school children.

Highlighting the ratio of 15-20 percent of Dyslexia disease in the country, he appreciated the measures taken for the suffering children.

The president also said the enrollment in higher education after intermediate was around 10-12 percent in Pakistan as compared to 24 percent in neighboring countries.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi addressing a ceremony to commemorate the International Day of Education.

Pak urges 'concrete' UN steps to end Israeli Gaza slaughter; pushes for 2-state solution

UNITED NATIONS (APP): A senior Pakistani diplomat has called for "concrete steps" by the United Nations to stop the Israeli slaughter of the people in Gaza, as he underscored that a lasting end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can only come through a two-state solution.

"It is now time for the Security Council, for the entire membership of the United Nations, to consider measures by which to reverse this wanton rejection of peace," Ambassador Munir Akram told the 15-member body on Tuesday, referring to the repudiation of the two-state formula by Israel.

"We hope the Council will be able, finally, to adopt a resolution demanding a

complete cessation of hostilities, full access to humanitarian assistance for the besieged population of Gaza, and international protection for the Palestinian people," he said in a high-level Council debate on the Middle East crisis.

Tuesday's meeting featured more than 60 speakers, including many ministers, who discussed the need for a humanitarian ceasefire, the urgency with which to scale up aid, the importance of pursuing a two-State solution and the imperative to avoid further regional escalation.

Deploing Israel's defiance of world opinion, Ambassador Akram said, "If the Israeli leadership persists in refusing peace, the Security Council, the General Assembly.

Pakistan benefiting from first CPEC phase; engaged with China for next one: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday said that having achieved the first phase of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Pakistan was benefiting from its early harvest projects while remaining engaged with China to execute the next phase.

"We have already achieved the CPEC's first phase and we are benefiting from its early harvest projects. We are entering the second phase. We do need more deliberations when it comes to the second phase," he said in an interview with China Global Television Network (CGTN) during his visit to Davos to attend the World Economic Forum.

He said CPEC's second phase required road and air connectivity around

the industrialisation projects.

"Both sides are engaged and we have developed a lot of connectivity, road, air and rest of connectivity corridor. We are benefiting from the ecosystem of doing trade with one another," he remarked.

Asked how he articulated the Chinese economy, Prime Minister Kakar said, "I am always sanguine about it. There are 1.5 billion consumers and 1.5 billion producers... How can you divorce 1.5 billion people from 8 billion people? It has to remain connected."

He said being a huge marketplace, both China and the world were interested in each other.

Questioned about his government's priorities, the prime minister highlighted

the economic revival, the transformation of technology and taxation reforms.

He said Pakistan was on the middle ground amidst the discourse between Global North and South, and other conflicts in the region.

Domestically, he said, the government needed to earn more and spend less.

The prime minister said that Pakistan should remain focused on taking the advantage of opportunities in the region, including the Belt and Road Initiative and the relocation of Chinese industry.

He advocated the policy envisaging to encourage business and provide them electricity on competitive price to help the businesses produce competitive goods for export to the international market.



LAHORE: Caretaker Federal Minister of Communications, Shahid Ashraf Chaired the meeting at Chief Secretary Office.

Caretaker Minister for Finance says: Govt taking measures for promotion of technical education in Balochistan

INDEPENDENT REPORT QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Finance and Revenue, Amjad Rasheed has stated that the interim provincial government is taking measures for promotion of technical education in the province.

He exhorted the youngsters to learn skills along with education.

He hailed the establishment of sub office of the Overseas Employment Corporation and believed that it would have far reaching results in time to come.

Amjad Rasheed was speaking on occasion of the visit of Technical Training Center here on Wednesday.

The Principal TTC Shoaib Anwar Shirazi briefed the visiting Minister about overall functioning of the Center.

Meanwhile, he also visited different sections of the Center and reviewed its functioning.

DG PDMA calls on Chinese CG in Karachi

INDEPENDENT REPORT QUETTA: The Director General Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Jahanzaib Khan called on the Chinese Consul General, Mr Yang Yungdang in Chinese Consulate, Karachi on Wednesday.

During the course of meeting, DG PDMA briefed the Chinese diplomat about the overall functioning of the Authority in detail.

Speaking to the DG PDMA assured every possible cooperation to DG PDMA for enhancing capacity of the Authority besides putting it on modern lines.

China ready to work with Pak to upgrade CPEC: Wang

BEIJING (APP): China on Wednesday said it was ready to work with Pakistan to upgrade the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and accelerate the building of an even closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era.

"China stands ready to work with Pakistan to deliver on the important common understandings between the leaders of the two countries, deepen political mutual trust, and expand practical cooperation," Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin said during his regular briefing on a question by APP correspondent.

Baseless things are threat for freedom of expression, journalism: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (Online): Caretaker federal information minister Murtaza Solangi has said baseless things are threat for freedom of expression and journalism.

He said this while talking to media men here Wednesday.

He indicated that 2024 is year of election in different countries. The elections are taking place in Pakistan, India, US and Indonesia.

General election is going to be held on February 8 in Pakistan while elections are taking place in Indonesia after one week. Election in US will be held in November.

He held the threat of evening Vloggers has come fore due to different reason in Pakistan. Millions of views come on their baseless things. This is serious threat to freedom of expression and freedom of media.

we talked of propaganda of Hitler era and today we are talking of this as well.

News room will have to make fact check departments.

Mobile are in the hands of 150 million people in our country. It has become hard to bring truth before the people.

Pak, Russia sign MoU on cooperation in sports, physical culture

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Russia on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at enhancing bilateral cooperation in the fields of sports and physical culture. The MoU was signed between Pakistan's Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination and Sports Ministry of Russia, Pakistan's Embassy in Moscow said on its X account. The document was signed by Pakistan's Ambassador to Russia Muhammad Khalid.



QUETTA: Accountant General Balochistan Nasrullah Jan meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar.

Farooq urges people to make successful to NP on Feb, 8 by votes

QUETTA (APP): National Party (NP)'s candidate from PB-46 Haji Farooq Shahwani on Wednesday said that people should make successful the National Party on February 8 through their votes for wider interest of Balochistan. He expressed these views while addressing at corner meeting at Hazarganj area. A large number of people including party workers attended the meeting. A member of Provincial Working Committee of National Party and a nominated candidate from PB-46 Haji Farooq Shahwani said that the National Party was a party that was politically serious and upholds Balochi traditions. The vision of the National Party is an educated Balochistan. During the last five years, the members of the Nationalist Political Party elected from the areas received development funds worth billions of rupees, which instead of being spent for the development and prosperity of the people of the respective areas were used for their interest, he claimed.

He said that the people of Saryab today were deprived of all basic facilities, people should make Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch and National Party successful to end the deprivations of Balochistan.



QUETTA: Needy people are taking warm clothes from Wall of Kindness (Diwar-e-Meharban), near Commissioner office in Quetta.

BBISE finalize arrangements for annual matric exams on Feb 20

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BBISE) Controller, Abida Kakar on Wednesday said that matric exams would start from February 20 and in this regard, all necessary preparation has been made to conduct the exam in a peaceful environment.

Talking to media here, she said that during the examination, if any supervisory staff tried to sabotage the examination process, strict action would be taken against him.

During the exams, she said that all the photostat shops will remain closed and mobile phones would not be allowed in and around the

ECP unveils final list of ten minority seats in NA

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has unveiled the ultimate compilation of ten minority seats within the National Assembly.

The final list consists of candidates from different parties, with 10 representing Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), 5 from Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F), 2 from Tehreek-e-Labbaik (TLP), 7 from Pakistan People's Party (PPP), 4 from Jamaat-e-Islami, and 3 from Mutahidda Quomi Movement (MQM).



QUETTA: Principal Technical Training Center Shoaib Anwar Sherazi briefed caretaker Provincial Finance Minister Amjad Rasheed during his visit of center.

Health Secretary directs to take action against unregistered & substandard private hospitals

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Health Secretary Abdullah Khan on Wednesday directed the Healthcare Commission to take strict action against unregistered hospitals and substandard private hospitals to improve and regulate services of private hospitals.

The Secretary instructed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Healthcare Commission to take steps to meet the standards of the hospital for the interest of patients, said a press release issued here.

He said that measures were being taken to improve treatment quality in hospitals of the province saying that no compromise would be made on the standard of the hospitals. The secretary said that the Health Department was taking steps to regularize the sale of medicines which would be regularly monitored by drug inspectors.

Afridi gets protective bail in 2 cases

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday granted protective bail to PTI leader Shehryar Khan Afridi in two cases and stopped the police from arresting him till February 6. Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani heard the case of Afridi seeking protective bail in two FIR registered in Kohat against him. The court accepted the bail against surety bonds worth Rs 20,000 and stopped the police from arresting the petitioner. The court also instructed the petitioner to approach the relevant court for relief during the period.



QUETTA: Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafiqat and Executive Director Forum for Dignity Initiatives Uzma Yaqoob signing a MoU.

FDI ED meeting with Commissioner: Special measures stressed for making easy access of female voters to polling stations

Commissioner office, FDI ink MoU to conduct awareness session in educational institutions

INDEPENDENT REPORT QUETTA: The Executive Director of Forum for Dignity Initiative (FDI) Ms Uzma Yaqoob along with Ms Shayan Imran had meeting with the Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat here on Wednesday.

During the course of meeting, the matters about preparations of the upcoming general elections, women representation in the voting process were discussed.

They also discussed the accessibility of women, disabled persons and transgender to the polling stations.

The meeting stressed maximum participation of women voters in the polling stations.

For the purpose, easy access of women should be ensured, it was further stressed.

APP adds: The Office of Commissioner Quetta Division has inked a Memorandum of Understanding with Forum for Dignity Initiatives to conduct awareness sessions in educational institutions of Quetta Division regarding the kind treatment and attitudes towards persons with disabilities, transgender and women.

Commissioner Quetta Division Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat and Executive Director Forum for Dignity Initiatives (FDI) Uzma Yaqoob signed the agreement.

The Commissioner's Office and FDI will collaborate to engage the youth of Quetta Division in climate education, innovation, policy and leadership.

According to the plan, educational institutions in the provincial capital will be selected to hold sessions on climate action.



KHARAN: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan and Caretaker Home Minister Captain (retd) Mir Muhammad Zubair Khan Jamali presiding over a meeting regarding preparation for upcoming general elections