

# Independent

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## Feb 8 election to bring political stability, says PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Friday said that the general election on February 8 would bring political stability in the country.

The prime minister, in an interview with a private television channel, said after the elections, the new government would work to achieve political and economic stability.

He said his government successfully achieved most of the targets set by it and a white paper would be issued to enlist those successes.

"The biggest challenges were economic issues," he said, adding the next government would have to work with the International Monetary Fund and bring reforms in the taxation system to take the economy forward.

He said the government carried forward the process

of privatisation of state-owned entities, including Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). The process of privatisation was almost complete, he added.

The prime minister said the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) led the effort to sign \$ 25 billion worth of memorandums of understanding with the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. The SIFC was formed by the previous government after enactment of a law in the Parliament, he recalled.

He said the social media would be regulated and some people would have to stop the wrong use of the medium.

The previous governments worked to control negative aspects of the social media and in future a "national firewall" through use of technology would be created to subdue the negative tendencies, he noted.



ISLAMABAD: The outgoing Ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan Ismatullo Nasredin called on President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## President for greater cooperation on Islamophobia, science among OIC countries

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday stressed the need for increasing cooperation among Islamic countries to overcome the issue of Islamophobia in the world.

The president, in a meeting with outgoing Ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan Ismatullo Nasredin, who paid a farewell call on him, emphasized greater cooperation among the OIC member states in the areas of science and technology to meet modern-day challenges.

He said that Pakistan attached great significance to its relations with

Tajikistan as it was Pakistan's closest Central Asian neighbour.

He highlighted that there was great potential to increase bilateral trade and economic cooperation that needed to be fully exploited. He called for exploring new avenues of economic cooperation for the mutual benefit of the two brotherly countries. President Alvi expressed satisfaction over the steadily expanding bilateral relations between Pakistan and Tajikistan in all areas of mutual interest, especially in trade, energy and defence.



MULTAN: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addresses to his supporters during public gathering meeting as a part of Election Campaign in connection of the General Election 2024 coming ahead, in Multan.

## PPP to bring CM from South Punjab if voted into power: Bilawal

MULTAN (INP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto on Friday pledged to bring chief minister (CM) from South Punjab if his party came to power in the upcoming general elections 2024, while outlining the party's plans for governance.

Addressing a public gathering in Multan in connection with elections 2024, Bilawal Bhutto - who is contesting from Lahore NA-127 - urged the voters to support his party to end the "politics of hatred and division".

Highlighting the unprecedented levels of inflation and unemployment, the PPP chairman claimed, "At present, no party, except the PPP, has a comprehensive plan to tackle these issues. Other political entities are solely focused on elections for their own gains, neglecting the well-being of the people."

"I have personally crafted PPP's economic

plan, and our first priority upon assuming power will be their swift implementation to curb inflation and unemployment," he added.

Bilawal also lauded the sacrifices made by the military and police to eradicate terrorism but pointed out, "The resurgence of terrorism today is a consequence of the social division sown by old politicians. It's time to bury the politics of hatred."

The former foreign minister also said that 17 federal ministries had become redundant after the 18th Amendment, and would be abolished if his party came to power, adding that the Rs300 billion saved in this way would be utilised for the people's welfare through the kissan, mazdoor and youth cards.

Bilawal Bhutto also vowed to stop the annual subsidy of Rs1,500 billion for the elite, opting to impose taxes on capitalists to ease the burden on the poor.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Rotary International calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

## Interim Govt. determined to provide quality health facilities to masses at official level: Ali Mardan Domki

CT CM inaugurates freelance training programme in Mir Chakar Rind University; Says technical training being imparted to youth of province in different fields

ISLAMABAD (APP): The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has stated that the interim government is determined to provide quality healthcare facilities to the masses at public sector level.

The caretaker Chief Minister was speaking on occasion of the inauguration of Mir Hazoor Bakhsh Domki dialysis Unit, new ward of Pediatrics and Intensive Care Unit established in the District Headquarter Hospital Sibi on Friday morning.

Mr. Domki reached Sibi on one-day official visit to Sibi. He formally inaugurated the Mir Hazoor Bakhsh Domki dialysis Unit, new ward of Pediatrics and Intensive Care Unit in the DHQ Hospital.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister said that the government is endeavouring to provide quality healthcare facilities to the masses.

He said that the patients suffering from the kidney diseases would get the facility of dialysis with establishment of dialysis unit at the DHQ Hospital Sibi.

In addition to this, the children patients would also get the quality healthcare facilities with establishment of the pediatric ward in the Hospital, adding he believed.

Meanwhile the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has inaugurated the

## ECP Balochistan chief calls on IGP

QUETTA: The Provincial Election Commissioner Balochistan, Muhammad Farid Afridi met the Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh here at the Central Police Office on Friday.

During the meeting, the PEC offered fatiha for the departed soul of police cop martyred in the firing incident took place at the Office of Regional Election Commissioner Turbat the other day.

Speaking on the occasion, PEC paid rich tributes to the martyr police cop saying that he foiled the attack at the office of Election Commissioner Turbat by sacrificing his life.

Mr. Afridi said that there is a very important role of police in conducting the elections in peaceful manner.

The IGP said that we are resolute to make the exercise of elections peaceful.

## Big challenge to overcome severe energy crisis in Balochistan: Governor

QUETTA: A MoU being signed between BUIITEMS and BRSP in presence of Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

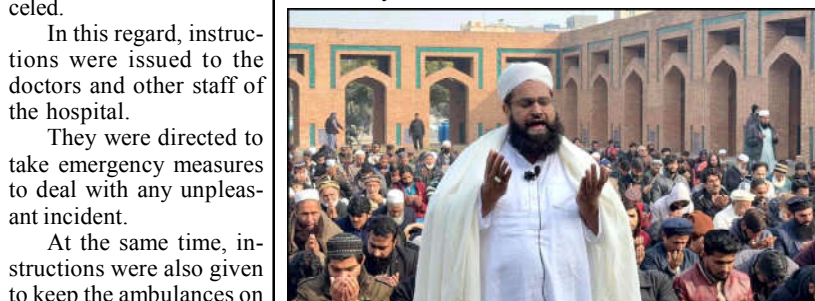
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that there is a severe energy crisis in the country including Balochistan, and it is a big challenge for us to overcome it.

In this regard, we have to adopt scientific innovation, just because we would be able to overcome the energy crisis by adopting modern means.

For the purpose, we have to adopt modern means to generate solar energy.

The Governor was speaking on occasion of the ceremony of signing of memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS) and Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP), here on Friday.

It may be mentioned



QUETTA: A MoU being signed between BUIITEMS and BRSP in presence of Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

## CEO cancels leaves of doctors, paramedical staffs in view of election

QUETTA (APP): Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dr. Saeed Ahmed Mirwani on Friday chaired a meeting of hospital consultants and doctors under the implementation of medical emergency regarding the upcoming elections.

In the meeting, an emergency was imposed in the hospital regarding the general elections, leaves of doctors, medical and paramedical staff were canceled.

In this regard, instructions were issued to the doctors and other staff of the hospital.

They were directed to take emergency measures to deal with any unpleasant incident.

At the same time, instructions were also given to keep the ambulances on standby. The administration was also directed to ensure the presence of doctors, paramedical staff and all kinds of medicines in the hospital, during the meeting.

## World Court orders Israel to prevent acts of genocide in Gaza

International Court of Justice fails to order ceasefire, says it would not throw out the case, as Israel requested; Pakistan welcomes provisional measures by ICJ in Gaza

THE HAGUE: The World Court ordered Israel on Friday to prevent acts of genocide against the Palestinians and do more to help civilians, although it stopped short of ordering a ceasefire as requested by South Africa.

While the ruling denied Palestinian hopes of a binding order to halt the war in Gaza, it also represented a legal setback for Israel, which had hoped to throw out a case brought under the genocide convention established in the ashes of the Holocaust.

The court found that Palestinians were protected under the convention, and that there was a case to be heard about whether their rights were being denied in a war that the court said was causing grievous humanitarian harm. It also called for Palestinian armed groups to release hostages captured in the Oct. 7 attacks that precipitated the conflict.

Palestinian officials largely hailed the decision.

The Palestinian Foreign Ministry said it was a welcome reminder "no state is above the law". Sami Abu Zuhri, a senior Hamas official told Reuters the decision would contribute to "isolating the occupation and exposing its crimes in Gaza."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that the court had "justly rejected the outrageous demand" to deprive Israel of what he called the "basic right to defend itself", by ordering it to halt fighting.



SIBI: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki addressing inaugural ceremony of DigiBizz Freelance Training Program

## Section 144 imposed owing to security threats in Quetta

QUETTA: In view of the security threats, section 144 has been imposed in the provincial metropolis.

According to the caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai, the section 144 has been imposed for two weeks in the metropolis.

Jan Achakzai said that public gatherings would not be held under the section 144.

All the concerned departments and agencies have been directed to ensure protection of the life and property of the common men.

The caretaker Minister Information announced that it would be essential for all the political parties to get No-Objection certificate (NOC) before holding the public meetings in Quetta.

Jan Achakzai said that it is top priority of the interim government to maintain law and order in the province.

## No one can be restrained from contesting election on basis of abscondment: SC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) while allowing PTI leader Umar Aslam to contest election has remarked no one can be stopped from contesting the election on the basis of being absconder.

A 3-member bench of SC presided over by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah took up the case for hearing Friday.

The counsel said nomination papers of Umar Aslam were rejected being absconder in May 9 cases.

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah remarked tell us where it is written the absconder person cannot contest election. How can any one be

## SC allows Sanam Javed, Pervaiz Elahi to contest elections

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Supreme Court (SC) of Pakistan on Friday allowed five candidates of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), including incarcerated activist Sanam Javed, to contest the upcoming general elections, slated for Feb 8, 2024.

Besides Sanam Javed, the top court approved appeals of PTI candidates Umer Aslam, Major (ret) Tahir Sadiq, and Shaukat Mahmood Basra against returning officers' (ROs) decisions to reject their nomination papers from different constituencies.

A division bench comprising Justice Irfan Saadat Khan and Justice Muneeb Akhtar overturned the rejection of PTI leaders' nomination papers by the Lahore High Court (LHC) and the election tribunal.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court also allowed incarcerated party president Pervaiz Elahi to contest the upcoming February 8 elections.

A three-member SC bench headed by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah allowed the PTI leader to contest the general election from the PP-32 constituency of Gujarat district.

Elahi had filed a petition in the Supreme Court to seek permission to contest the general election.

## Nawaz pledges massive job & income opportunities to mitigate inflation effects

BUREWALA (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on Friday said that there had been great transformation since his ouster from power with massive inflation and price hike disrupting the social fabric of society and pledged to fully mitigate their effects by ensuring job and income opportunities for all following the mandate on February 8.

Addressing a public meeting in Burewala, the thrice elected prime minister said that "Roti" (bread), which was available for Rs 4 per piece during the last PNL-N government, was now priced at Rs 20, while the electricity bill of Rs 500 had now jumped to Rs 20,000, with no gas supply.

## Chairman PkMAP addresses corner meeting: Free, fair and transparent elections necessary for changing fate of country

QUETTA: The Chairman Pashtoonkhaw Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) Mehmood Khan Achakzai has stated that the free, fair and transparent elections are necessary for changing fate of the country.

If fate of the country has to be changed then free, fair and transparent elections would be necessary.

The Chairman PkMAP was addressing a corner meeting and reception arranged by the party's Shaldira unit on Friday.

Besides Chairman, other senior leaders of the

party also participated and addressed the public gathering.

Mehmood Khan Achakzai said that we want that general elections are conducted in democratic manner and there should be no element of rigging in the same (elections).

The Chairman PkMAP said that we believe in equality and as such equal treatment should be meted out with all the nationalities in country, he stressed.

A large number of the party workers and other people participated in the gathering.



# Communication to foster global understanding: Governor

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that in the realm of media, communication plays a pivotal role in shaping societies and fostering global understanding.

He gave this message at the concluding ceremony of the 2nd International Media and Communication Conference organised by Punjab University Department of Communication and Media Research and University of Management and Technology.

On this occasion, Chairman PHEC Prof Dr. Shahid Munir, PU VC Prof Dr. Khalid Mahmood, Rector UMT Dr. Asif Raza, Leads University VC Dr. Nadeem Ahmad Bhatti, DG PEMRA Ikram Barkat, Director School of Communication Studies Prof Dr. Nosheena Saleem, Dean School of Media and Communication Studies, UMT Dr. Anjum Zia, researchers, eminent journalists, alumnus, faculty members and a large number of students were present.

Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that intersection of academia and media is crucial for nurturing critical thinking and fostering innovation and he believes the insights gained here will pave the way for a more informed and interconnected world.

He stated that the conference has been a

testament to our commitment to exploring the dynamic landscape of media in the 21st century.

He said the diverse perspectives shared by esteemed speakers from around the world have undoubtedly contributed to a wealth of knowledge that will guide our future endeavors. He said the recommendations and discussions from this conference will serve as a roadmap for enhancing media communication practices, promoting ethical journalism, and addressing the evolving challenges in this digital age.

Dr. Shahid Munir said that the transformative power of technology



**PESHAWAR:** Group photo after the meeting of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali with the representative delegation of Young Doctors Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at Governor House.

# Jamal chairs Iqbal Academy governing body meeting

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah hoped on Friday that the guidance and recommendations of the Iqbal Academy governing body members would help the academy pursue its mission of promoting Iqbal's works and messages among the young generation.

Presiding over a meeting of the Iqbal Academy Pakistan governing body here at Aiwan-e-Iqbal, he said that it was due to efforts of scholars that the tradition of

understanding of Iqbal's works was progressing in a good way, adding that all concerned want to see Iqbal Academy, a national institution for promotion of Iqbal's thoughts, more strong and active and in this regard it would be provided all kinds of support so that it could play its role in a better way.

The governing body members offered Faheha on the demise of renowned scholar, former member governing body Prof Dr. Rafiuddin Hashmi and paid him tribute over his services regarding Iqbal Studies.



**RAWALPINDI:** SAPM Jawad Sohrab Malik lays foundation stone of new academic block of OPF School.

# Governor urges doctors to work with dedication, assure cooperation to solve problems

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali Friday reiterated his commitment to address the problems of young doctors urging them to serve the ailing community with utmost dedication and professionalism.

He was talking to a 15-member delegation of the Young Doctors Association that called on

him at Governor House. The delegation included Dr. Faisal Barakzai, Dr. Adnan, Dr. Karamat and Dr. Mudassar Khan. The delegation apprised the governor about their issues including depriving them of training and inadequate facilities of induction in Post Graduate Medical Institute. The governor listened to their concerns patiently and assured them of cooperation and

assistance. He said that the significance of doctors could not be undermined owing to their profession adding their problems would be addressed promptly with the help of the provincial government.

He also urged doctors to work compassionately to help out ailing community and treat them politely abiding by the principles of their profession.



**LAHORE:** Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah presiding over the Governing Body meeting of Iqbal Academy Pakistan at Aiwan-e-Iqbal.

# 46 children died of pneumonia in three hospitals in city so far

PESHAWAR (APP): With the increase in the severity of the cold, the infection is becoming viral, and so far, 46 children have died of pneumonia in three major hospitals in the city.

Hospital officials told mediamen here on Friday that pneumonia was affecting children with low immunity, and a total of 46 children died of pneumonia in three hospitals in the city, including 20 patients each in Lady Reading and Khyber Teaching Hospitals and six in Hayatabad Medical Complex.

The hospital's officials said that more than 700 children affected by pneumonia are being brought to OPD on a daily basis, and more than capacity children are being treated at Lady Reading Hospital.

"Most of the affected children belong to adjoining areas," the officials confirmed.

# Punjab to introduce first social welfare policy: Minister

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Health and Social Welfare Minister Prof Dr. Javed Akram revealed on Friday that the provincial government would introduce its first social welfare policy.

Addressing a dialogue on the policy draft at LUMS here on Friday, he highlighted the significance of the initiative for enhancing departmental services and performance. The minister, attending as the special guest, emphasised the

policy's potential for welfare of people. Secretary Social Welfare and Baitul-Mal Zahoor Hussain outlined plans for seeking cabinet approval post-consultation. DG Social Welfare and Baitul-Mal Mudassar Riaz Malik underscored the policy's alignment with Pakistan's Constitution, existing laws, and international agreements. Stakeholder, including Amin Bait ul Mal Jubir Ghani, participated in a comprehensive presentation.

# Killers get death penalty on two counts

FAISALABAD (APP): A sessions court handed down death penalty on two counts to each of five convicts for killing former president District Bar Association and his driver.

According to the prosecution, five accused including Suleman, Sajjad, Abdullah, Naem and Hasan Ali shot dead former President District Bar Naveed Mukhtar Ghumman and his driver Binyamin over an old enmity on January 10, last year.

Batala Colony police registered a case and submitted challan in the court.

# LHC stops planting of palm trees along highways, motorways

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday stopped planting of palm trees along highways and motorways.

Justice Shahid Karim passed the orders while hearing petitions, filed by Haroon Farooq and others against ineffective measures for controlling smog.

During the proceedings, the Environment Protection Department (EPD) director general appeared before the court and submitted that palm trees were ineffective barriers against pollution, adding that they did not prove successful on Islamabad motorways and highways.

The court questioned the bizarre renovation of

underpasses in the city, criticising the unconventional lighting that malfunctioned on the first day. The court also stressed the urgency for water conservation and observed that there were predictions about water scarcity by 2026-2027, envisioning a future where water tankers become a common sight in Lahore.

The court addressed the provincial law officer and asked what steps had been taken by the Water and Sanitation Agency for installing water meters.

To which, a member of the Judicial Water and Environment Commission stated that a one-year timeline had been given for installing water meters.

# Judges not caring how the case is running: Aleema

RAWALPINDI (Online): Aleema Khan sister of PTI founder has said it is worrisome situation that judges are not caring how the case is running.

Judge Dilawar awarded illegal sentence to PTI founder. We say to Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa that our appeal be heard, she said this while talking to media men outside Adiala jail here Friday.

She went on to say that judges are not caring case is running how. It

seems as if they have been given date that they have to announce decision at such and such date. Judge Dilawar awarded sentence to PTI founder illegally. PTI founder was arrested on August 15 illegally. Election Commission has disqualified PTI founder. What punishment was awarded by Judge Dilawar was suspended by high court judge Aamir Farooq.

She went on to say it was also joke that judgment was not suspended.

# International News

# Gaza's Health Ministry blames Israeli troops for deadly shooting as crowd waited for aid

**Monitoring Desk**  
RAFAH: Gaza's Health Ministry and witnesses said Israeli troops opened fire as a crowd of Palestinians gathered for humanitarian aid in Gaza City on Thursday, killing at least 20 and wounding dozens.

The Israeli military said it was looking into the reports. The Associated Press could not independently confirm the details of what happened.

Witnesses and health officials said the shooting took place at a roundabout on Gaza City's southern edge, where a large crowd had gathered for distribution of food. Footage posted online and confirmed to have been taken on the main road near the roundabout showed hundreds of people fleeing,

some carrying boxes of aid, as fire rang out in the background. Men loaded wounded Palestinians onto horse and donkey carts that took off charging down the avenue. At Shifa Hospital, where casualties were treated, Mohammad al-Reafi lay on the floor, his bloodied leg bandaged, as medics worked on other wounded around them. He said Israeli troops fired into the crowd.

"We were going to get flour... young people were martyred and other young people were injured," he said. Health Ministry spokesperson Ashraf al-Qidra said 20 people were killed and 150 others wounded by the shooting.

A number of aid agencies distribute food and

other supplies in Gaza. It was not immediately known which one was operating in the area at the time of the incident. The UN refugee agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, and the UN World Food Program both said they were not involved.

Israeli troops and tanks pushed into Gaza City shortly after the ground invasion began in October and have been battling Palestinian militants there for nearly two months. The military says it has largely dismantled Hamas in northern Gaza but is still facing pockets of resistance, and large swaths of Gaza City and surrounding areas have been reduced to rubble by Israeli bombardment.



**Judges at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) rule on emergency measures against Israel following accusations by South Africa that the Israeli military operation in Gaza is a state-led genocide, in The Hague, Netherlands.**

# Canada to re-start Turkey arms exports

**Monitoring Desk**  
ISTANBUL: Canada and Turkey have reached a deal to restart Canadian exports of drone parts in exchange for more transparency on where they are used, and it would take effect after Ankara completes its ratification of Sweden's NATO bid, two sources told Reuters.

After 20 months of delay, Turkey moved swiftly this week to endorse Sweden's membership in the Western military alliance, including a parliamentary vote and presidential sign-off, leaving Hungary as the sole ally yet to ratify it.

Turkey is expected to send the final documents to Washington as soon as Friday, which would clear the

way for Canada to immediately lift the export controls that it adopted in 2020, the two sources said, requesting anonymity.

The agreement was reached in early January after months of talks, said one person familiar with the process. A second person familiar with the plan said the sides agreed it would take effect after Sweden's ratification was complete.

Turkey's foreign ministry declined to comment.

Canadian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Charlotte MacLeod told Reuters that while the export controls currently remained in place, Ottawa aimed to resolve the issue with Turkey given its status as a NATO ally.

# Ukraine invites China's Xi to 'peace summit'

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: Ukraine has invited Chinese President Xi Jinping to participate in a planned "peace summit" of world leaders in Switzerland, a top diplomatic adviser to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, as Russia's invasion approaches its second anniversary.

China has close ties with Russia and has refrained from criticising its invasion of Ukraine but has also said the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries must be respected and has offered to help mediate the conflict.

"We are definitely inviting China to participate in the summit, at the highest level, at the level of the President of the People's Republic of China," the adviser, Ihor Zhovkva, told Reuters in an interview this week.

"China's participation will be very important to us. We are working with the Chinese side. We involve our partners in the world so that they convey to the Chinese side how important it is to participate in such a summit."

# US assails Israeli attack on UN facility in Gaza

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: The United States has condemned the Israeli assault on a UN facility in Khan Yunis, emphasising the protection of civilians and the need to respect the sanctity of UN facilities.

"You've heard me say it before, you've heard [Secretary of State Antony Blinken] say it before [...]. Civilians must be protected, and the protected nature of UN facilities must be respected."



**Ecuadorian authorities place drug packages in a container, as part of the more than 20 tons of seized drugs to be destroyed at an undisclosed location, in Ecuador.**

# King Charles admitted to London hospital for prostate treatment

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: Britain's King Charles went into hospital on Friday to have planned treatment to address an enlarged prostate, Buckingham Palace said, joining his daughter-in-law Kate who is recovering from surgery.

The king was pictured arriving with his wife Queen Camilla at the private London Clinic in west London, where Kate, the Princess of Wales, is also having treatment after undergoing abdominal surgery last week.

A royal source said Charles had visited Kate

ahead of his own treatment. "The king was this morning admitted to a London hospital for scheduled treatment," Buckingham Palace said in a statement.

"His majesty would like to thank all those who have sent their good wishes over the past week and is delighted to learn that his diagnosis is having a positive impact on public health awareness." Last week the palace that Charles, 75, would undergo a "corrective procedure" for a benign condition which was common among men over 50.

# Japanese craft makes successful, pin-point Moon landing

**Monitoring Desk**  
TOKYO: Japan's "Moon Sniper" craft made a pin-point lunar landing despite trouble, the space agency said on Thursday as it released the first images from the mission. A photo taken by a mini-rover showed the boxy yellow lander sitting intact at a slight angle on the rocky grey surface, lunar slopes rising in the distance.

The unmanned Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM) — dubbed the "Moon Sniper" for its precision technology.

# Trump opens up lead over Biden in rematch many Americans don't want

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: Donald Trump leads Democratic President Joe Biden by six percentage points in a Reuters/Ipsos poll that showed Americans are unhappy about an election rematch that came into sharper focus this week.

The nationwide poll of 1,250 US adults showed Trump leading Biden 40% to 34% with the rest unsure or planning to vote for someone else or no one. The poll had a margin of error of three percentage points.

That represented a gain for Trump after a

Reuters/Ipsos poll conducted earlier this month showed him and Biden tied, though a nationwide survey does not capture the subtleties of the electoral college contest that will be decided this fall in just a handful of competitive states.

As Trump handily beat his sole remaining primary challenger, Nikki Haley in New Hampshire on Tuesday, some 67% of respondents polled Monday through Wednesday said they were "tired of seeing the same candidates in presidential elections and want someone new."



**Injured people receive treatment in Gaza City's Al-Shifa hospital, following a reported Israeli strike, that according to Gaza's Health Ministry, killed at least 20 and wounded more than 150 as they waited for humanitarian aid.**

# Taiwan reports Chinese 'combat patrols'

**Monitoring Desk**  
TAIPEI: Taiwan's defence ministry said it detected 23 Chinese air force planes operating around Taiwan and carrying out "joint combat readiness patrols" with Chinese warships on Friday, ahead of high-level China-US talks in Thailand.

China, which views Taiwan as its own territory, has over the past four years regularly sent warplanes and warships into the skies and waters around the island as

it seeks to assert sovereignty claims that the Taipei government rejects. Taiwan's defence ministry said that starting around 4p.m. (0800 GMT) on Friday it had detected 23 Chinese aircraft including Su-30 fighters and drones operating off northern and central Taiwan and to the island's southwest.

Thirteen of those aircraft crossed the Taiwan Strait's median line, or areas close by, working with Chinese warships.



MUZAFFRABAD: Students of school and college hold placards during protest as they observe Indian Republic Day as Black Day during an anti-Indian protest in the city, to show their solidarity with people of Indian-administered Kashmir.

# Minster urges political parties to prioritize education in their election manifestos

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhi on Friday urged all the political parties to prioritize education and governance agenda in their election manifestos for the next five years to improve the quality of education in the country. We need to focus on developing educational infrastructure, improving learning system, framing sustainable policy and initiatives as well as ensuring training of teachers and enrollment of out of school children to achieve objectives of quality education for all, he underscored. The minister expressed the views while presiding over meetings during visits to the regional offices of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) and Inter Board Coordination Commission (IBCC) at Karachi and talking to media persons on the occasion. The minister visited different sections of the regional offices where he received the briefing on the working, role, functions and issues being faced and future strategies of the organizations. Madad Ali Sindhi observed that over 25 million out of school children, the dilapidated condition of public sector educational institutions, disconnection between teachers and parents, non-utilization of earmarked funds and other issues indicate that the education sector could not get proper attention of political parties in the past and remained excluded from their manifestos while bureaucracy also failed to play a positive role in the regard. Now it has been inevitable that whichever political party comes into power after the upcoming general elections must dedicate its five year term to improve the education in Pakistan as it was the only option for development of the country, he maintained and emphasized that people should also urge their representatives for taking measures in the regard. The minister said that during the short tenure of the caretaker government, he had adopted a proactive approach to improve the educational standards and deal with the issues and 20 out of 50 schools of federal capital were selected for reforms. Those educational institutes were being transformed as model schools with provision of missing facilities and improvement of their management, he said and added that the caretaker government was also focusing on universities and boards and measures were taken to resolve their issues while chairmen of educational boards were directed to improve the system and ensure transparency in examination and assessment processes.

# PM told PTA revenue surges to Rs 850b; access to cellular services reaches 90pc

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA) Major General (Retd) Hafeezur Rehman on Friday called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar here. In the meeting, the PTA chairman presented to the prime minister the annual report 2023 of the Authority. The prime minister was informed that the PTA's revenue increased by 17 percent to Rs 850 billion comparing the last year while the access to cellular services in the country had reached 90 percent. The PTA chief said that the number of cellular consumers had touched 192 million and high-speed broadband users reached 130 million during 2023. The prime minister lauded the services of the PTA chairman and his team in extending mobile phone and Internet services to the common man.

# 'Pak effectively highlighting Ram temple issue at every global forum': Munir Akram

ISLAMABAD (APP): Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, Ambassador Munir Akram Friday strongly condemned the recent consecration of 'Ram Temple' on the demolished Babri Mosque's site and expressed commitment for effectively highlighting the gross rights violations in IOJK and temple issue at every global forum. Talking to a private news channel, he said that the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries were supporting the efforts for preserving universally recognized and regionally important sacred sites, meetings with high level UN representatives were also being conducting to highlight the issue. The ambassador said that Pakistan urged the top official for the U.N. Alliance of Civilizations to play their active role for the protection of Islamic sites in India. The OIC Ambassadors had also acknowledged the importance of the issue, he said, adding, we were writing letters to seek urgent intervention for the protection of religious sites in India. He further said "We are also demanding action plan over protection of religious sites," adding, Indian friendly countries also needed to mobilize more diplomatic efforts to control Hindua-like policies in India. He said UN officials were encouraging Pakistan's efforts for raising Kashmir cause at world forums, adding, the right of the Kashmiri people to self-determination had been acknowledged.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva Bilal Ahmed had a meeting with Director General World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Daren Tang and discussed ways and means to promote IP ecosystem in Pakistan. During the meeting, the envoy appreciated the DG's people-centric vision, WIPO's IP projects in Pakistan and IP awareness programmes for youth besides incentivizing a culture of innovation.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman PTA, Major General (R) Hafeez-ur-Rehman calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

# 226 staff found absent in various districts: Departmental action initiated against absentee polling staff, maintains PEC Balochistan

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial Election Commission (PEC) Balochistan, Muhammad Farid Afridi has stated that departmental action has been initiated against the polling staff who remained absent from the training process continued in different parts of the province. According to the PEC Balochistan, the departmental action has been started against the absentee staff in different parts of the province. It was mentioned that action was taken against 15 absentee polling staff in Kachhi district, 107 absentee staff in Khuzdar, seven of Usta Muhammad, 70 of Killa Saifullah district and 27 of Chaman district. These polling staff appointed as the presiding officers and polling officers had been found absent from the training sessions being conducted for the upcoming general elections. The PEC said that all DROs have been directed to ensure attendance of the polling staff in the training sessions. He also directed to take strict action against the absentee staff including immediate suspension from their service.

# Kashmir Day: Public holiday announced on Feb 5

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government has declared February 5 (Monday) a public holiday on the occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day, stated a notification issued on Friday. The State of Pakistan will observe a one-minute silence at 10am on February 5 (Monday) - public holiday - in a show of solidarity with the people of Kashmir in their struggle for freedom from India, according to the notification.

# Kashmiris observed India's Republic Day as Black Day

SRINAGAR (INP): Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) and across the world observed India's Republic Day as a Black Day amid complete strike in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) in protest against India's persistent denial of their right to self-determination. According to Kashmir Media Service, call for the observance of the Black Day was given by the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) and other Hurriyat organizations. In the occupied territory, a complete strike was observed, while anti-India demonstrations and rallies planned in Azad Kashmir, Pakistan, and various world capitals. Jailed APHC Chairman Masarrat Aalam Butt and incarcerated senior leader Shabbir Ahmed Shah, both detained in India's Tihar jail, reiterated the call for a Black Day in every corner of the territory. APHC leaders and affiliated parties condemned India for a reign of terror, including widespread repression, frequent cordon.

# Siraj seeks electoral support of public for JI's candidates in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD (APP): The Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Sirajul Haq has urged the people to cast their votes over the election symbol scale (Tarazoo) if they want accountability of the corrupt rulers. Addressing the party's public meeting in Latifabad here on Friday Haq vowed to change dispensation of government which replicated the Western governance model and to replace it with an Islamic system if JI formed the government. "We don't accept the monarchy of 2 political families in Pakistan," he said. He argued that the time of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, Pakistan Peoples Party and Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan was over, adding that his party would form the government after the February 8 polls. He maintained that PML-N and PPP had ruled Punjab and Sindh, respectively, for 3 decades but their performance had remained dismally poor. Haq also criticized PML-N's chief Mian Nawaz Sharif and PPP's Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari for their efforts to become elected as the Prime Minister of Pakistan. "The people of Pakistan are brave but their leadership is in the hands of cowards," he asserted. He claimed that JI was the only political party which practically supported Palestinians when they were facing brutal and inhuman Israeli onslaught. The JI's Ameer asked did the Sindh government establish a public sector university or an advanced tertiary care hospital in Hyderabad during the last 15 consecutive years of their government? "The people were deceived in the name of Karachi-Hyderabad motorway," he alleged.

# SPL is a welcome initiative: Aseefa

KARACHI (APP): Former President Asif Ali Zardari's daughter Aseefa Bhutto Zardari has said that Sindh Premier League (SPL) will not only convey the potential possessed by the youngsters of Sindh to the nation, but also the entire world. Speaking at the opening ceremony of the SPL here as a chief guest on Friday night, she said that the Sindh Premier League is a welcome initiative in the province. The youth of Sindh were capable of reaching new heights in all walks of life. The nation will elect the right people this time around. Aseefa said that Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto taught the nation that Pakistan belongs to everyone.

# Lehri requests people to make successful BNP's candidate from PB-44

QUETTA (APP): A social activist of Killa-Jio Mir Abdul Rahman Lehri on Friday requested the people of Killa-Jio to seal the axe on February 8 and make successful Balochistan National Party (BNP)'s candidate PB-44 Haji Mir Waheed Lehri. In his statement issued here on Friday, he said that the leader of BNP's nominated candidate for PB-44 Mir Abdul Waheed Lehri has a personality dedicated to the people and the spirit of service. He said that people of the circle would make it successful by sealing the axe. He said that after his success there would be a complete change in the PB-44 area saying that youth would get employment and peace and order situation would be established in the entire area. He said that he has always done the politics of principles and we were doing it and we would implement the vision of the people of PB-44.

# ANP to support IPP in Punjab for Feb 8 polls

LAHORE (INP): The Awami National Party (ANP) has committed its support to Istehkam e Pakistan Party (IPP) candidates in the upcoming polls on February 8. Ameer Bahadar Khan, the general secretary of ANP Punjab, met with IPP President Abdul Aleem Khan and announced ANP's decision to support IPP in Punjab. Bashir Ahmed, the chairman of the Hazara Welfare Association, has also pledged support for IPP. In another significant development, Mubshir Laal, the former president of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf Ravi Town, has joined IPP. Laal, along with his party workers, will actively participate in the election campaign for Abdul Aleem Khan in the NA-117 constituency.

# ECP decides to make SMS service 8300 free of charge from Monday next

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has decided to make SMS service 8300 free of charge from Monday next. The announcement was made by ECP's Spokesperson, Syed Nadeem Hyder, Additional Director General Nighat Sadique, and the Project Director of Project Management Unit whilst participating in Suno FM network's talk show 'Forum' this morning. They said the voters can check details of their constituencies and polling stations by sending the number of their computerized identity cards to 8300. The ECP officials said the voters are required to bring their Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) to the polling station for voting. A vote can be cast even if the CNIC is expired or using the token issued for the issuance of a new CNIC.

# Illegal weapons recovered

QUETTA (INP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), in a targeted operation against drug trafficking has recovered a significant cache of weapons along the coastal belt of Gwadar. The operation, carried out in the Padizar area, unfolded when an ANF team observed individuals unloading goods near the shoreline. Despite the team's prompt response, the suspects managed to escape in the cover of darkness. Upon inspecting the shipment left behind, the ANF discovered a trove of sophisticated weapons, leading to their confiscation. Among the seized items were 259 9mm Glock pistols. The ANF spokesperson highlighted that these operations exemplify the agency's unwavering commitment to addressing threats to national security, extending beyond counter-narcotics efforts. This successful mission underscores the crucial role of ANF in safeguarding the region, demonstrating their determination to combat multifaceted challenges endangering the nation.

# PTI's Senator Saifullah Abro joins PPP

KARACHI (INP): PTI Senator Saifullah Abro called on Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and expressed his trust in his leadership. On the occasion, Senator Saifullah announced to withdraw from the election race in NA-194 constituency and promised to support candidate of Pakistan People's Party. Abro was elected as senator on PTI's technocrat seat from Larkana for March 2022 term. PTI candidates from Sukkur announced to quit election race to support Pakistan Peoples' Party candidates in the district. PTI nominated candidate from NA 200 Noman Islam Sheikh planned to withdraw election race and support PPP senior leader Khurshid Shah.

# QESCO to hold online open court under Loralai circle on Jan 30

QUETTA (APP): The Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) will organize an open court (Khuli Kehchari) online for the consumers of Loralai and Killa Saifullah circles on January 30, 2024 (Monday) to address their complaints related to the electricity issues. According to the press release issued here on Friday, Superintending Engineer QESCO Loralai Circle Engineer Syed Abdull Shah will find out the complaints of consumers on telephone number 0824-400029 and mobile number 0319808024 from 11 am to 1 pm. Executive Engineers, Revenue Officers and Circle SDOs of Loralai and Killa Saifullah Divisions will also be present in the online open court. The QESCO has asked the consumers of Loralai Circle including Loralai, Duki, Ziarat, Mekhtar, Musakheil, Rakhni, Kohlu, Zhob, Killa Saifullah and Muslim Bagh to contact the Superintending Engineer QESCO directly on the above mentioned telephone numbers on Tuesday for registering their grievances through the online office and for their redressal.

# Yousafzai says "Provision of facilities in Balochistan historic achievement of Jam"

Independent Report UTHAL: The former Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan is a progressive Nawab and political leader and provision of the basic facilities to the people in all districts of the province is his historic achievement. This was stated by the leader of Jam Group, Umarzada Khan Yousafzai while speaking on occasion of launch of the election campaign in Revenue Colony, Uthal on Friday. Mr. Yousafzai praised initiatives of the former Chief Minister Jam Kamal and said that he (Jam) had implemented the projects during his three and half years' tenure. These projects are visible on ground. Also present on the occasion were the leaders of Jam Group Akram Khaskhaili, Master Imam Bakhs Seemab, general counselor Habibullah, Sabir Hussain, Jamil Ahmed besides others. Jam Kamal Khan is the farsighted and public friendly political leader, who took practical steps for development of the province and prosperity of the people. Following these initiatives, Jam Kamal Khan has great respect and status in the province and the people value him a lot from the core of their heart, Umarzada Khan Yousafzai added. He further said that no can deny the services rendered by Jam Kamal for the province.



QUETTA: Chief Custom Calculator Abdul Qadir Memon speaks during a ceremony to mark International Customs Day.



HYDERABAD: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Siraj ul Haq rising hands with party leaders to showing solidarity during a public meeting (Jalsa) in the city.