

Independent

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Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XIX No. 233, Rajab 19, 1445 AH Wednesday January 31, 2024, Pages 04, Price Rs.15

Imran, Qureshi sentenced to 10 years in jail in cipher case

PTI top brass vehemently rejects verdict; urges supporters to stay calm

RAWALPINDI (INP): A special court established under the Official Secrets Act on Tuesday handed both former prime minister Imran Khan and ex-foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi 10 years in jail in the cipher case.

The cipher case pertains to a diplomatic document that the Federal Investigation Agency's charge sheet alleges was never returned by Imran. The PTI has long held that the document contained a threat from the United States to oust Imran as prime minister.

The short verbal verdict was announced soon after recording the statements of the two accused under Section 342 during the hearing on Tuesday, as the court held a swift hearing of the matter despite the delaying tactics used by the defence.

Earlier, questionnaires were prepared to record their statements as the court resumed the hearing of the cipher case. On the other hand, the PTI had moved the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday morning to challenge the appointment of state defence counsel for the two accused in the cipher case, requesting it to declare the special court's Jan 26 orders.

Earlier on Monday, a lengthy hearing of the cipher case was held by the special court in Adiala jail during which cross-examination of 11 witnesses was completed. Also on Monday, a lengthy hearing of the cipher case was held by the special court established under the Official Secrets Act in Adiala jail during which cross-examination of 11 witnesses was completed.



View of site after blast occurred at a rally of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) at Sibi

Four dead, six injured in Sibi bomb explosion

Independent Report QUETTA: Four people were killed and six others injured—three of them seriously—when a powerful explosion occurred on the main Jinnah road in Sibi city on Tuesday.

According to the reports reaching here, the explosive device went off with a big bang, which was planted on the Jinnah road.

The reports suggested that the device exploded when rally of a political party just passed through there.

As a result, four persons died while six others were injured, the reports said.

Soon after the explosion, police, local administration and rescue teams reached the spot.

The bodies of deceased and injured persons were shifted to the district headquarter hospital Sibi where an emergency was already declared.

The Medical Superintendent of Civil Hospital Sibi Dr Shahid told that all the injured persons are being provided medical treatment.

However, condition of three injured persons of blast is stated to be serious. The bomb disposal squad and other investigative agencies have started investigations into the bomb blast.



DALBANDIN: President of Balochistan National Party Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal addressing a public meeting

BNP announces 32-point election manifesto: Education, health, agriculture, law and order, livelihood opportunities part of Party's election manifesto

Independent Report QUETTA: The Balochistan National Party (BNP) has unveiled the 32-point manifesto of the party for General Elections 2024 here on Tuesday.

The senior Vice President of BNP, Sajid Tareen Advocate shared the party's Election manifesto at a press conference here at the Quetta Press Club on Tuesday noon.

The senior leaders of BNP including central Secretary Information, Agha Hasan Baloch and others were also present on the occasion.

Sajid Tareen said that the BNP's manifesto has been prepared in view of the problems and hardships faced by the people of Balochistan.

He said that the party has rejected the unjustified distribution of resources and demands due share for the province in national divisible pool of resources.

He said that the manifesto includes provision of health, and education and livelihood opportunities besides paying attention on the agriculture, law and order.

Similarly, the special laws about Gwadar and facilities for fishermen are also part of the party's manifesto announced for the upcoming general elections, Sajid Tareen mentioned adding that every child would be provided free books, teachers besides the education system in the province under the Article 25-A.



QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki presiding over a level meeting regarding law and order situation

PTI founder put national security on the line, alleges Nawaz Sharif

HAROONABAD (INP) - Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz supremo Nawaz Sharif said on Tuesday the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder did not shy from going against the interest of the country while seeing his government in peril.

The PML-N leader made this remark while addressing an election rally in Haroonabad. He said he came here for the first time in 1992, adding that the people of this area had always supported his vision.

Lauding people who gathered at the rally, he said the records of all the previous rallies had been broken. He said the massive crowd showed a sense of elation among people.

While counting his past achievements, he said when he was the PM, basic commodities like sugar and flour were available at affordable rates to people.

Harnai-Sibi Passenger suspended too: Jaffar Express, Bolan Mail cancelled from Quetta

Independent Report QUETTA: The trains heading for Peshawar and Karachi were cancelled from Quetta while the Passenger running between Harnai and Sibi was also suspended due to the tense situation in Mach area of Bolan on Tuesday.

According to the Pakistan Railways high ups, the Jaffar Express which was scheduled to leave for Peshawar cant from Quetta railway station at 09:00 AM on Tuesday was cancelled and so the Bolan Mail, which was to proceed for Karachi from Quetta at 10:00 AM the same day.

Similarly, the Passenger, which was scheduled to leave Sibi Railway station for Harnai on Tuesday morning, didn't allow to proceed for the destination.

The PR high ups the train service has been suspended due to the situation emerged in Mach since late night Monday.

Domki chairs high level meeting on law and order: Investigations of terrorism activities from all aspects necessary, emphasizes CM

Independent Report QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has emphasized upon making investigations into the terrorism activities from all aspects.

The caretaker Chief Minister said that fear of keeping the people away from election process can't be ignored seeing the terrorism incidents near the elections.

The caretaker Chief Minister was addressing a high level meeting on law and order at the CM Secretariat on Tuesday.

Mr. Domki participated and chaired the meeting through video link from Islamabad. It may be mentioned here that the Chief Minister was in the federal capital due to participation in CCI meeting.

Those who were present in the meeting were included the caretaker Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Zubair Jamali, Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan, Additional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem, Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh and other concerned high ups.

The IGP briefed the meeting about the incident occurred in Mach in detail. Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister stressed the need to make investigations of the terrorism from all aspects.

He also stressed to improve the security measures reviewing the security profiling after the recent incidents of terrorism.

In addition to this, we have to provide the opportunities of casting vote in peaceful environment.

He commended that the jaws of security forces combatted the terrorists bravely despite they were in limited number.

He said that to us there is equal importance for a sepoy, any officer or tribal elder.

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5 terrorists neutralized ensuring safety of citizens: Jan Achakzai commends swift action taken by Army, FC in thwarting terrorist attack

Says elections to proceed as planned regardless of terrorists actions

Independent Report QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has commended the swift action taken by the Pak Army and Frontier Corps (FC) in thwarting a terrorist attack in Mach area of Balochistan.

In a tweet on his social media account X on Tuesday, the caretaker Provincial Minister said that five terrorists have been neutralized ensuring the safety of our citizens.

He said that the courage and dedication displayed by our armed forces in protecting lives of the people is truly commendable.

Earlier, in another tweet, Jan Achakzai said that in Mach, the security forces have successfully thwarted three coordinated attacks carried out by the terrorists affiliated with the Aslam Acho group.

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Pak-KSA agree to increase bilateral economic, trade ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on Tuesday agreed for increasing bilateral economic and trade relations to enhance the business integration between the two countries.

Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Malki met with Caretaker Minister for Interior and Commerce Dr. Gohar Ejaz here to negotiate bilateral economic cooperation, said a press release issued here.

In the meeting, the interior secretary, commerce secretary and other high officials were also present.

In the meeting, it was agreed to further develop Pak-Saudi business-to-business relations and start negotiations for searching new business avenues.

Meanwhile on the occasion, Dr. Gohar Ejaz said that Saudi industrialists could get benefit from investment opportunities in the steel and petrochemical industry in Pakistan.

He said that the government was taking steps to increase cooperation between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in the Information Technology (IT) sector. The minister said the northern regions of Pakistan were rich in natural beauty.

Caretaker PM underlines need for effective criminal justice system

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday said that under the constitution, only parliament was mandated to legislate and stressed further reforms in the criminal justice system.

Expressing his views on a private TV (Aik) news morning show, he opined that the conviction rate under the contemporary criminal justice system was very low, reflecting deficiencies and efforts to be made to plug the loopholes through effective legislation.

To a question about terrorist groups in Balochistan province, the prime minister said that non-state actors had no right to unleash violence and the State had the responsibility to counter such terrorist acts.

“Whose responsibility was to improve it? Carrying out legislative business under the constitution is the onus of parliament,” he reiterated.

Elaborating his viewpoint, he said that Baloch, Pashtuns and different settlers had been living in Balochistan for decades.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs meeting of the Federal Cabinet.

Federal cabinet gives nod to restructuring, digitisation of FBR

Customs, Inland Revenue DGs to be given full administrative, financial and operational powers

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Cabinet, in a meeting, on Tuesday approved restructuring and digitization of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) on the recommendations of the Revenue Division.

The approval was accorded in a meeting chaired by Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

The meeting was apprised of the recommendations of an inter-ministerial committee that held its meeting on 23rd January under the caretaker finance minister.

During its previous meeting, effective amendments were made in the summary after a comprehensive debate which was submitted in the cabinet's meeting today, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Under these reforms, a Federal Tax Policy Board would be constituted in the Revenue Division that would be tasked to formulate tax policy, fixation of revenue targets and work for coordination among the stakeholders.

The federal minister for finance would head the Federal Policy Board.

Under the new scheme, Customs and Inland Revenue departments would be separated and work under specific director generals in the relevant cadres who would also enjoy complete authority over the administrative, financial and operational matters.



DERA ISMAIL KHAN: 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

Imran statement in cipher case One of my ADCs stole cipher at behest of Gen (Retd) Bajwa

RAWALPINDI (Online): PTI founder Imran Khan has said one of his Aides de Camp (ADC) stole the cipher at behest of former army chief Gen (Retd) Qamar Javed Bajwa.

He said this in his statement recorded under 342 during the hearing of cipher case in Adiala jail Tuesday.

While recording his statement Imran Khan said “cipher was in Prime Minister (PM) House. The responsibility of security rests with military secretary, principal secretary and secretary protocol who sees the security of PM house.

He further said during my tenure of three and half years this is the only document which went missing from PM house. After cipher went missing I asked military secretary to hold inquiry. That was the only occasion when I got off-ended with military secretary.

He stated one of his ADCs stole cipher at the behest of Gen (Retd) Bajwa. Military secretary told after inquiry that no evidence has been found with reference to cipher. He said elected PM was removed through conspiracy. Gen (Retd) Bajwa and US Secretary of state Donald Lu were involved in the conspiracy. Conspiracy was hatched in 2021 to pull down my government when Gen (Retd) Bajwa changed the then ISI Chief Gen (Retd) Faiz.



QUETTA: Caretaker Home Minister Captain (retd) Mir Muhammad Zubair Khan Jamali being briefed about overall situation of the province. Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan and Inspector General of Police Balochistan Abdul Khaliq Sheikh are also present

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Mending fences

From exchanging missile strikes two weeks ago to trading compliments, Pakistan and Iran have managed to handle a potentially explosive crisis in a mature fashion.

On Jan 16, Iran had bizarrely launched strikes on Panjgur hitting, what it said, were terrorists affiliated with the Jaish al-Adl outfit. Pakistan said two children died in the incident. Two days later, Pakistan replied to the violation of its sovereignty by striking targets in the Iranian town of Saravan neutralising, as per the state, several Baloch separatists.

But the acrimony seemed a thing of the past as caretaker Foreign Minister Jilani met his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir-Abdollahian in Islamabad on Monday, indicating that the crisis was now behind both states. It is also hoped that as relations improve, the brutal murder of nine Pakistani workers in Saravan on Saturday is fully probed.

Mr Amir-Abdollahian said both countries were "one nation" while observing that "third countries" were aiding militants in the common border area. Meanwhile, Mr Jilani said that a "high-level mechanism" was being established to oversee bilateral cooperation, while adding that liaison officers would be stationed in Turbat and Zahedan.

Indeed, this display of cooperation is a welcome change from the acrimonious exchanges that had threatened to scuttle bilateral ties. Both sides chose to handle the crisis with wisdom, as opposed to jingoistic nationalism. This should serve as a template to manage all future bilateral ties.

While the exchange of pleasantries makes for good optics, both Islamabad and Tehran need to get down to business and address the single biggest irritant that stands in the way of better ties: border security. Both sides have pledged to work for collective security, and these promises should be followed by action to secure their common border.

Whether it is religiously motivated militants working against Iran that allegedly find refuge in Pakistan, or Baloch separatists plotting against Pakistan on Iranian soil, both sides need to address the threats these non-state actors pose through mutual cooperation; under no circumstances should unilateral action be taken, as Iran did a few weeks ago. The crisis was defused this time, but there is no guarantee that similar rational behaviour will prevail in the future. With regard to the killing of Pakistani workers, those involved in this heinous crime need to be identified and brought to justice, while Tehran should ensure security for all Pakistanis living in or visiting Iran. A few weeks from now a new administration will take over in Islamabad, and it will be up to the new rulers to build on the points agreed to during the foreign ministers' meeting. Both sides should also be wary of inimical foreign actors working to destabilise the border areas in the hopes of souring the Pakistan-Iran relationship.

'Climate aid'

Umar Farooq

Post-COP28, it is imperative to examine Pakistan's unique stance in the climate change dialogue. Pakistan now faces a new kind of challenge — one that is environmental in nature but deeply rooted in its sociopolitical fabric.

Pakistan, despite its minimal contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions, is at the forefront of climate change impacts. The country's vulnerability to environmental disasters is not solely due to global climatic changes; it is also profoundly exacerbated by local factors. Rapid urbanisation, characterised by subpar housing societies and an obsession with cars and expansive urban highways, along with rampant deforestation and excessive reliance on fossil fuels, have collectively precipitated a series of environmental crises.

These developments, while possibly benefiting the bureaucracy and enabling politicians to exploit taxpayer funds, have led the country towards a situation that is nearly irreparable. These local issues, often eclipsed by the broader narrative of global climate politics, are the actual catalysts for Pakistan's escalating environmental degradation.

At the heart of these challenges lies Pakistan's persistent dependence on inefficient and hazardous fossil fuels. Additionally, environmental protection regulators, run by an ad hoc bureaucracy that is adept at nothing except staging price control ops against street vendors, have failed to establish procedures to control emissions effectively.

The problem with

Pakistan's approach to environmental issues is a deeply ingrained dependency mindset. Traditionally, the country has sought external aid to address its problems. While bureaucracy and NGOs continue to receive aid, these funds often merely suffice to support the lifestyles of a few profiteers, offering negligible benefits to the community or the environment. However, in a world increasingly focused on environmental integrity and sustainable development, this dependent approach poses a significant threat to Pakistan's future.

Triggered by the greenwashing controversy, there is focus on a more stringent approach that prioritises substantial emission reductions before considering the trading of carbon credits. This global trend towards "green conditionalities" poses a new challenge for countries like Pakistan. With the carbon credit market more competitive and stringent, without regulations we are out of the park.

Another emerging dimension in the global environmental paradigm is the focus on natural capital credits. European and UK policymakers are currently developing new codes that place greater emphasis on ecosystem services, such as tokens and credits derived from river catchment areas and the blue economy. For countries like Pakistan, this presents an opportunity and a challenge. The opportunity lies in harnessing its rich biodiversity and aquatic resources for ecological restoration and economic benefit. The challenge, however, is in developing the necessary frameworks and capabilities to participate effectively in these emerging markets.

The implications of this global shift are profound for nations like Pakistan. Despite promises of famous 'climate aid' cheered by a few toadies, the reality is that funds often fail to materialise. Furthermore, controversies surrounding 'junk' carbon credits have led to a significant focus shift towards high-integrity environmental codes. The future is likely to see a discouragement of secondary market trading of these credits. Even if Pakistan embarks on extensive reforestation for carbon sequestration, the absence of a robust mechanism to validate and trade these credits renders them virtually valueless in the global market. This scenario mirrors the plight of Pakistan's textile industry, which suffered when the world moved towards more water-efficient textile production methods, rendering Pakistan's traditional, water-intensive methods obsolete.

For Pakistan, a country where human rights issues and displacement concerns are significant and where the human rights index ranks low, the global shift towards environmental justice presents a profound challenge. Future climate aid and environmental investments are likely to come with stringent green conditionalities that demand not just local initiatives but also adherence to the principles of environmental justice. As Pakistan stands at this environmental crossroads, the message is clear: the time for meaningful action is now. The country must break free from the shackles of dependency and chart a new course towards environmental sustainability. -- Courtesy Dawn

Prioritising youth

Arooj Waheed Dar

For the last decade or so, development economists have been sounding the alarm about Pakistan's youth demographic, saying that if not leveraged as an opportunity, it could turn into a ticking time bomb. Ominously, the ticking time bomb appears set to explode, pumped with ammunition in the form of propaganda and action against, arguably, the only politician in recent times that the youth have resonated with.

Banning the PTI founder's mention on the media, confiscating the party's electoral sign, imprisoning its leadership, and obstructing its election campaign are measures that have turned a major party into a victim in the eyes of a large part of the electorate. Those responsible for these actions perhaps forget the power of sympathy votes. Had the PTI been allowed to complete its term, its poor economic performance would have been enough to keep it from returning to power. But that was not an option for its powerful detractors.

There are concerns that in this situation the party's youth following will have few qualms about resorting to violence, propaganda, or other extreme measures if encouraged in this direction by the politicians they support. This is the rotten fruit that years of not investing in the youth has borne. Unfortunately, the youth demographic has yet to realise the impact of the controversial economic policies implemented by the PTI when it was in power.

To counter the negativity propagated by the PTI government, a well-thought-out strategy is needed. This is not the 20th century where censorship, media

crackdowns, arrests, and other intimidatory tactics are going to silence people. Stifling and suffocating the voice of the youth is only going to make them more rebellious. In fact, it is for this very reason that they have come to see the PTI as a symbol of resistance against injustices and the absence of equal opportunities over the years.

With elections coming up, there is a serious need for policymaking circles to reconsider the direction they want to take the country in, especially with regard to the youth. Addressing the youth at conferences to emphasise the importance of democratic governments simply doesn't cut it. What is needed is a strategic policy to address the issues of growing intolerance in society by focusing on the three E's: education, employment, and entrepreneurship.

Poor educational outcomes and dearth of employment opportunities have adversely impacted the employability of the youth, becoming the root cause of intolerance in society. With youth unemployment on the rise, there is a need to develop vocational training programmes that establish direct connections with employment opportunities within key industries, and abroad in countries that require trained workers. The content of these courses should meet international standards, and must be offered both in person and online to ensure inclusivity.

Schemes that incentivise students to study harder, such as merit-based scholarships, tuition reimbursement programmes, and technology and gadget incentives should be expanded. In this regard,

the laptop scheme was a good initiative which needs to be reintroduced. Educational travel grants should be provided to students who do well in academics. These grants can be offered with a view to facilitating participation in workshops, short courses, and conferences, and thus encouraging an environment that promotes re-search and innovation.

To help create employment opportunities, a series of reforms that facilitate financial inclusion and innovation need to be undertaken to cultivate a conducive atmosphere for the growth of a start-up culture. Viable and innovative business proposals from young minds at the grassroots level should have equal and unrestricted access to capital, enabling them to launch their own entrepreneurial ventures. Programmes and digital applications can be launched to link budding entrepreneurs with potential investors and mentors for guidance and financial assistance.

Most importantly, equitable digitalisation must be ensured so that youth across Pakistan can have access to online education, employment, and e-commerce opportunities. This is a crucial concern that demands the collective effort of the politicians in the country, regardless of the issues that create divisions among them. They must agree on the core concept of the three Es in order to chalk a way forward for the youth of Pakistan. They must realise that channelising the youth's energy in the right direction is both a moral obligation, and a socioeconomic imperative. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

PM for concerted efforts to explore oil & gas reserves

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday, while pointing to the abundant natural resources in the country, underlined the need for concerted efforts to explore onshore and offshore oil and gas reserves.

He was addressing the Petroleum Conference 2024 as the chief guest. Chief of the Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir was the guest of honour.

The prime minister affirmed the government's readiness to contribute in infrastructure development, logistics, and security to bolster

exploration and production efforts.

He further stated that the conference reflected a collective commitment to fully utilise the immense mineral potential so as to ensure energy self-sufficiency and transform Pakistan into a regional exporter of energy.

He appreciated the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and the Federal Ministry of Energy for fostering an investor-friendly environment by streamlining regulations and procedures.

Country Manager, Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration

Company Ali Taha Al-Temimi appreciated unrelenting efforts of the Government of Pakistan in bringing the stakeholders together for formulating policy recommendations and boosting investment in the petroleum sector.

Provincial chief ministers, minister for energy, secretary petroleum, government representatives, policy makers, foreign and domestic investors from the energy and petroleum (E&P) sector and international delegates also attended the conference.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar addresses the participants of Petroleum Conference.

PTA making collaborative measures for ease of doing business

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Chairman Major General Hafeez ur Rehman on Tuesday said that the PTA was taking many collaborative efforts to promote ease of doing business and attract foreign investment. Talking to a delegation of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) led by its President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari which called on him, Hafeez said that such collaborations would help address industry challenges and facilitate more favourable business environment.

He said that Pakistan's telecommunications and digital technology sectors were undergoing transformative changes,

driven by the development of comprehensive regulatory frameworks.

"The PTA is working to provide customers with affordable and high quality services and ensure reasonable returns to investors," he said, adding that the mobile phone sector had achieved a remarkable growth of 29% during the last five years due to which mobile services were available to 90% of the country's population while the broadband subscribers had soared to over 130 million.

He assured that the PTA would continue to focus on improving coverage, access and quality of services to promote ease of doing business and attract more investment.



SARGODHA: Vendors displaying orange to attract the customers in front of market.

Fertilizer industry urges nationwide dealers to ensure Urea sales at announced MRPs

LAHORE: In a groundbreaking move, leading fertilizer manufacturing companies in Pakistan, including Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited (FFC), Fauji

the fertilizer dealers in a constructive dialogue and formulate immediate strategies aimed at reducing nationwide urea prices to benefit the farmers.

Attended by major fertilizer dealers from

urea and other fertilizers at manufacturer-recommended prices.

Representatives from the fertilizer industry, including Mr. Ather Javed, Group General Manager Marketing, Fauji Fertilizer



Fertilizer Bin-Qasim Limited (FFBL), Engro Fertilizers Limited, Fatima Fertilizer Company Limited, and Agritech Limited, jointly hosted a convention with nationwide dealers on January 29, 2024, at Faletts Hotel, Lahore. The primary objective of this convention was to engage

across the country, the convention facilitated a strategic discourse on vital topics such as fertilizer demand and supply situation, urea imports by the Government of Pakistan to fill the demand-supply gap, and the development of effective strategies to ensure the availability of

Company Ltd; Mr. Shakeel Ahmad, Advisor Fauji Fertilizer Bin-Qasim Limited, Ms. Rabel Sadozai, Director Marketing & Sales, Fatima Fertilizer Company Limited; Mr. Atif Muhammad Ali, Vice President Marketing, Engro Fertilizers Limited; Mr. Tanweer Raza.

Adoption of aeroponic technology to ensure virus free seed potato production: Dr. Kausar

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for the National Food Security and Research Dr Kausar Abdullah Malik Tuesday said that adoption of Aeroponic technology will not only boost potato production but also ensure the availability of virus-free seeds.

The technology will contribute significantly to the agricultural sector's improvement, he said while addressing a ceremony held at National Agriculture Research Center in which

he also highlighted the achievements of Korean-funded Technical Cooperation Projects (TCP), that focusing on seed potato production by using aeroponic technology.

The caretaker minister lauded the remarkable growth in potato cultivation and production during past two decades.

Only 2 percent of potato seed requirement is being fulfilled locally and the country relied on

importing 98% of its seed demand, he said adding that with the implementation of this cutting-edge technology, Pakistan is poised to achieve self-sufficiency in potato seed production.

Dr Kausar reiterated the government's commitment to prioritizing the agricultural sector, expressing gratitude to the Korean government for its invaluable support in driving agricultural development initiatives in Pakistan.

Six development schemes approved

LAHORE (APP): The 45th meeting of Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP) chaired by Planning and Development Board's (P&D Board) Punjab, Chairman Iftikhar Ali Sahoo here Tuesday, approved six developmental schemes of the SHC&ME (Specialized Health Care and Medical Education) and FW&F (Forest, Wildlife and Fisheries) sector with an estimated cost of Rs 8895.681 million. The approved schemes are as follows: Program for

Strategic Transformation/ Revamping of Tertiary Care Hospitals in Punjab (Bahawalpur Victoria Hospital, (Revised) at the cost of the Rs 2005.698 million; Program for Revamping OPD Blocks in Tertiary Care Hospitals in Punjab (Nawaz Sharif Hospital Yakkhi Gate, Lahore) at the cost of the Rs 632.742 million; Program for Revamping OPD Blocks in Tertiary Care Hospitals in Punjab (Lady Aitchison Hospital, Lahore) (Revised) at the cost of the Rs 510.668.

Shipping Activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Port activities reported at Port Qasim where five ships namely, MSC Mumbai-VIII, Maersk Atlanta, MSC Yukta-X, Encore and Tromso scheduled to load/offload Containers, Rice and Palm oil, berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal and Liquid Terminal respectively during last 24 hours. Meanwhile a bulk cargo carrier 'Sea Bird' to load 41,900 tonnes of Rice also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim during the same period.

SCCI, PHDEC to collaborate for uplift of horticulture sector in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) and Pakistan Horticulture Development and Export Company (PHDEC) on Tuesday agreed to collaborate for development of the horticulture sector in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to details, an important meeting between SCCI president Fuad Ishaq and Manager of Pakistan Horticulture Development and Export

Company (PHDEC) Raheel Abbas held at the Chamber house, in which agreement reached for joint work for development of horticulture sector, enhancing capacity building of stakeholders, launching coaching programs and joint ventures to efficient tap potentials in horticulture sector.

The meeting thoroughly discussed framing of a holistic plan for development and promotion of horticulture sector, technical information.

CM initiates divisional meetings to ensure secure, fair elections

Independent Report
LAHORE: Initiating a series of divisional meetings, Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi chaired a crucial session at the Commissioner's Office in DG Khan, focusing on ensuring fair and free elections within a peaceful environment.

The meeting extensively reviewed the arrangements for the upcoming general elections and the security plan, with the Provincial Election Commission participating via video link, said a handout issued here on Tuesday.

Chief Minister Naqvi, emphasizing the need for foolproof security arrangements across Punjab, affirmed the citizens' right to vote in a

tranquil environment. He called for meticulous planning to ensure the secure delivery of election materials, directing Inspector General of Police Dr. Usman Anwar to promptly finalize comprehensive Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Underlining the adherence to the Election Commission's code of conduct, Naqvi stated that all political parties and independent candidates have the right to conduct election campaigns. The chief minister stressed the importance of maintaining a conducive atmosphere for political activities.

Chief Secretary, Commissioner of Dera Ghazi Khan, RPO, Deputy Commissioner, secretaries

concerned, and senior officials attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday inaugurated 133 bedded DG Khan Institute of Cardiology besides multi-million road projects to facilitate the people of the area.

After inaugurating health facilities, he inspected 'Accident & Emergency' and other wards.

All wards and departments of state-of-the-art hospitals are fully functional for medical facilities.

During a briefing, the caretaker CM was told that Angiography, CTscan and other facilities are being conducted at the hospital.



GILGIT: Provincial Ministers Gilgit-Baltistan addressing a press conference regarding wheat subsidy.

KPCTA arranges "Grand Peace Fair" to promote positive image of province

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority (KPCTA) in collaboration with Department of International Relations Peshawar University and International Relations Students Association (IRSA) organized a two-day "Grand Peace Fair" on Tuesday to orient youth of the province about peace, harmony and project positive image of the province and merged areas.

Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged Districts (NMDs), Amir Abdullah and Brigadier Tashfeen attended the event as Chief Guests.

Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Muhammad Saleem, President (IRSA) Ahmad Ali Khan and Incharge (IRSA) Dr. Khurshaid were also present on the occasion.

On the first day, a panel discussion on peace was arranged that was moderated by Dr. Saima Raza. The panel comprised Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged Districts (NMDs) Amir Abdullah, Professor Dr. Hussain Shaheed, Senior Journalist Saleem Safi, Senior Journalist Mushtaq Yousufzai, Dr. Amir Raza, and Senior Journalist Shams Mohammad.

PHC extends interim bail of PTI candidates

PESHAWAR (APP): A single-member bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Tuesday extended the interim bail of eight candidates of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI), including the former provincial law minister, Imtiaz Shahid Qureshi till February 12, 2024.

During the hearing conducted by Justice Sahibzada Asadullah, the defendants' lawyer Sikandar Hayat Shah told the court that former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Law Minister, Imtiaz Shahid Qureshi, Aftab Alam Advocate, Daud Shah, Naseem Afridi, Abdur Rehman, Shafi Jan, Khurram Zeeshan Advocate and Salman Shinwari.

Governor KP meets with winning team of Lacrosse Championship

PESHAWAR (APP): The winning team of women lacrosse championship and officer bearers of Pakistan Lacrosse Federation called on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali here on Tuesday.

The team and officer bearer of the Federation expressed gratitude to the Governor for his invitation and support to teams during the championship. They also presented a shield to governor as a token of appreciation.

Speaking on the occasion, the Governor highlighted the potential of KP youngsters in sports and congratulated the KP team for his

extraordinary performance in the championship.

I am proud of these girls who continued studies and proved their mettle in playing field, the Governor said and added that these girls would be provided support and financial assistance.

He said that the caretaker government and concerned authorities would be contacted to facilitate these girls who are gifted with talent and persistence to pursue their passion.

Haji Ghulam Ali said these girls are capable to bring fame for the country if provided help and proper platforms to present their talent.



BADIN: Bibi Aseefa Bhutto Zardari, the daughter of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto addressing to Party workers rally at DC Chowk during Election Campaign.



KARACHI: Policemen detain activists of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party outside high court who arrived their case hearing in the Provincial Capital.

Canal Road to be closed to traffic on Feb 4-6: WASA

FAISALABAD (APP): Water & Sanitation Agency (WASA) Managing Director (MD) Amir Aziz said that the Canal Road would remain closed for traffic from February 4 to 6 due to canal crossing of water supply pipelines.

During a meeting here on Tuesday, he said that WASA was executing the mega water supply project with the financial assistance of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to facilitate the residents of Faisalabad with potable drinking water in ample quantity.

In this connection, WASA would lay water supply pipelines in the city which would also cross the Rakh Branch Canal near FESCO Headquarters. Hence, the WASA had decided to close the Canal Road for vehicular traffic, he added.

FAISALABAD (APP): Deeply entrenched in caste system, the industrial hub of Pakistan is once again witnessing the old faces contesting 2024 elections embracing more or less the same slogans of economic revival, jobs and ameliorating the lot of people.

Although social media has revolutionized the society in the awareness regime, yet the old doctrine of caste and incentives based politics still persists in most parts of the country and Faisalabad is not an exception.

Known as Manchester of Pakistan -

Faisalabad district is generally dominated by Jutt, Rajpoot, Gujjar, Arain, Ansari, Baloch bradaris with some other clans settled here even prior to the Independence of Pakistan.

Besides having their strong caste base, these candidates also own the tickets of key national political parties like Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and Pakistan Peoples' Party with some candidates contesting as independents and claiming to be supported by PTI whose symbol of 'Bat' was suspended by the ECP due to faulty intra party

elections. Daily life interactions, participation in funerals and weddings, disputes resolution at courts and police stations as well as local development work once again surfaces as mainstay in keeping the vote bank intact.

Future promises and hopes like always are also in the heart of election campaign with PML-N ensuring to putting the country on strong economic footing and PPP promising employments, salaries increase, BISP expansion and grassroots development. Electioneering gained

momentum in Faisalabad - the third biggest metropolis of the country with a recent public meeting by PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. But, political pundits foresee a major impetus in the campaign after PML-N supreme Muhammad Nawaz Sharif's public gathering on February 02.

With the February 08 elections zeroing in, the candidates from main political parties and the independents are diligently wooing voters by arranging public meetings and serving voters at election camps (Deras) with food, tea and even providing them

logistics for personal use. Housing over eight million populace, 5,297,899 Faisalabad voters including 2,841,085 male and 2,456,814 female - would be voting to elect 10 MNAs and 21 MPs out of 277 and 574 candidates contesting elections respectively for National and Provincial Assembly seats.

Political figures like Rana Sanaulah Khan, Abid Sher Ali, Haji Akram Ansari, Rana Farooq Saeed Khan, Hafiz Mumtaz Ahmad, Hamayun Akhtar Khan, Ali Afzal Sahi, Mina Irfan Mannan, Shahbaz Babar, Arif Gill.

International News

US doesn't want wider war with Iran, says White House

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The United States does not want a wider war with Iran or the region, the White House said on Monday, adding that the administration believes a single drone strike on its forces in the Middle East since the Gaza war began.

National security spokesman John Kirby also told MSNBC in an interview that talks to release prisoners in Gaza have been constructive and that then US sees a framework for another deal.

Gazans said the renewed violence made a mockery of a ruling by the World Court calling on Israel to do more to help civilians. Health officials say 26,637 Palestinians have been killed in the conflict with thousands more bodies likely under the rubble

of destroyed buildings across the coastal territory. On the other hand, Israel relaunched an assault overnight on Gaza's main northern city, weeks after retreat, residents said, while Washington considered its response to the first deadly strike on its forces in the Middle East since the Gaza war began.

Three US servicemen were killed and at least 34 wounded in a drone attack in Jordan near the Syrian border for which US Central Command immediately blamed Iran. US President Joe Biden said the attacks were carried out by Iran-backed groups operating in Syria and Iraq.

While Iran has denied any involvement, Biden ordered "retaliatory" attacks on Iranian-backed groups. At the same time, the US president stopped short

of hitting Iran directly for fear of igniting a broader war amid violence that has already hampered global trade through attacks on ships in the Red Sea. "Have no doubt, we will hold all those responsible to account at a time and in a manner of our choosing," Biden said.

Inside Gaza, residents said Israeli air strikes on neighbourhoods across Gaza City killed and wounded many people. While tanks shelled the eastern areas of the city, naval boats fired shells and gun rounds at the beachfront areas in the west, they said.

Among those killed were two Palestinian journalists, Essam El-lulu and Hussein Attalah, along with several members of their families, health officials and the journalist union said.



US National Security Council spokesmans John Kirby speaks during the daily briefing in the Brady Briefing Room of the White House in Washington, DC.

Ukraine hails constructive talks with Hungary

Monitoring Desk
UZHGOROD: Ukraine's foreign minister on Monday thanked Hungary for "constructive" talks, ahead of a European summit where Kyiv hopes Hungary's Viktor Orban will lift a veto on a multi-billion-euro EU aid package.

Relations between the two neighbours have been strained over the past few years and were further aggravated when Prime Minister Orban in December vetoed 50 billion euros (\$54 billion) in EU aid for Kyiv. In an effort to mend ties

and "find solutions" to their differences, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky suggested a direct meeting with Orban. Monday's talks between Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto and Ukraine's top diplomat Dmytro Kuleba around the city of Uzhhorod in western Ukraine were intended to lay the groundwork.

Szjijarto has not visited Ukraine since Russia launched its offensive against Kyiv in February 2022, although he has been to Moscow on several occasions.

Ukraine says two killed in overnight Russian attacks

KYIV (INP): Ukraine said Tuesday that two people had been killed and at least five more wounded in the latest overnight Russian attacks across the country targeting military and energy infrastructure. Moscow's army, meanwhile, said its air defences downed 21 Ukrainian drones over Russian territory and the annexed Crimean peninsula, as Kyiv steps up cross border aerial attacks.

Kyiv said Russian forces had launched two missiles and 35 attack drones across Ukraine and that 20 of the unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) had bypassed air defence systems. "The enemy directed some of the attack UAVs along front line territories, trying to hit fuel and energy infrastructure, and civilian and military facilities near the front line and the state border with the Russia," the air force said in a statement.

Officials in Kyiv have urged Western allies to bolster its air defence capabilities and said gaining control of the country's air space is a priority for this year.



Hong Kong's Secretary for Justice Paul Lam, Chief Executive John Lee and Secretary for Security Chris Tang Ping-keung attend a press conference regarding the legislation of Article 23 national security laws, in Hong Kong.

North Korea fires cruise missiles into sea

SEOUL (INP): North Korea fired multiple unidentified cruise missiles on Tuesday into the sea off its west coast, South Korea's military said, the third time Pyongyang has tested cruise missiles in less than a week. The missiles were launched at around 7 a.m. (2200 GMT on Monday), Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement. South Korean and US intelligence authorities were closely monitoring the situation and analysing the details of the launch, it said.

The launch comes amid a rise in tension on the Korean peninsula and follows a barrage of cruise missiles fired by Pyongyang off its east coast on Sunday. Sunday's launch was a test of the new submarine-launched cruise missiles (SLCM) dubbed "Pulhwasal-3-31" and leader Kim Jong Un supervised the test, North Korean state media KCNA reported on Monday.

Last week's missiles were also Pulhwasal-3-31, KCNA said, adding that they were the "strategic", which typically refers to nuclear-capable weapons.

Israeli troops to 'go into action' soon at Lebanon border, says Israeli minister

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Israeli troops will "very soon go into action" near the country's northern border with Lebanon, Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said on Monday, as tensions surge amid the crisis in Gaza.

Gallant told troops near the border with the besieged Gaza Strip that others were being deployed to Israel's north. "They will very soon go into action [...] so the forces in the north are reinforced," Gallant said, according to video released by

Saudi project clears 733 Houthi mines in Yemen in a week

RIYADH (Internews): Project Masam, a Saudi initiative to clear land mines in Yemen, in the last week of January dismantled 733 mines planted by the Iran-backed Houthi militia.

Overseen by the Saudi aid agency KSrelief, the project's special teams destroyed 602 pieces of unexploded ordnance, 126 anti-tank mines, three improvised explosive devices, and two anti-personnel mines.

Saudi Arabia to launch 'Dream of the Desert' train

RIYADH (INP): Saudi Arabia has unveiled the plan to launch the 'Dream of the Desert' train service.

A first-of-its-kind in the Middle East and North Africa region, the 40-cabin luxury train will add extra quality services and options to the kingdom's means of transportation, as per SPA. Saudi Arabia Railways (SAR) partnered with the Italian Arsenale Group, a specialist in administrating luxurious train trips, to launch the 'Dream of the Desert' service.

Hamis leader Ismail Haniyeh to discuss Gaza ceasefire proposal in Cairo

GAZA (Online): The Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh says the group has received a ceasefire proposal put forward after talks in Paris and that he will visit Cairo to discuss it.

Haniyeh said the group's aim remained to end Israel's military offensive in Gaza and secure a full pull-out of Israeli forces from the territory.

Israel would struggle to accept such terms, but Qatar, the US and Egypt are hoping to see if the two sides can be persuaded to accept a ceasefire lasting at least a month, during which thousands of Palestinian prisoners would be released in return for the release of a large group of hostages.

New Hong Kong national security law to add five crimes

Monitoring Desk
HONG KONG: Hong Kong will create its own national security law "as soon as possible", city leader John Lee said on Tuesday, adding insurrection and other crimes not covered by existing legislation imposed by Beijing four years ago.

Massive pro-democracy protests rocked the finance hub in 2019, bringing hundreds of thousands of people to the streets to call for greater freedoms.

In response, Beijing imposed a national security law to punish four major crimes - secession, subversion, terrorism, and collusion with foreign forces - with sentences ranging up to life in prison.

Officials on Tuesday said Hong Kong's security law - mandated by Article 23 of the city's mini-constitution - will cover five offences: treason, insurrection, espionage, destructive activities endangering national security, and external

interference. "While we society as a whole looks calm and very safe, we still have to watch out for potential sabotage and undercurrents that try to create troubles, particularly some of the independent Hong Kong ideas that are still embedded in some people's minds," Lee told a press conference.

"The threats to national security are real, we have experienced them and suffered from them badly [...] we don't want to go through that painful experience again," he said, adding that "some foreign agents may still be active in Hong Kong".

"I must stress that the Basic Law Article 23 legislation must be done [...] as soon as possible," Lee said, noting the city had waited 26 years to make it a reality.

Lee said the consultation process for the law - which runs until the end of February.



KARACHI: President Dr. Arif Alvi and the First Lady Begum Samina Arif Alvi in a group photo with organizers and staff at Society for Children in Need Of Special Attention (SCINOSA).

Mass awareness, life skills, vital for integration of special children into society: President

KARACHI (APP): President Dr. Arif Alvi on Tuesday underscored the significance of mass awareness about special requirements of persons with different abilities and equipping them with education and living skills for their meaningful integration into society.

He was speaking during the visit of the Society for Children in Need of Special Assistance (SCINOSA) Day Home - an institute for individuals

with Down syndrome and other mental challenges - along with the First Lady Samina Arif Alvi.

The president emphasized that children with different abilities, were part of the society and equipping them with living skills could enable them to lead a meaningful life and perform daily chores at their own.

He also stressed the need for creating special employment opportunities for differently-abled persons

in accordance with their capabilities and teaching them the specific skills, required for those jobs.

"Approach towards children with different abilities has been changing across the globe with the emphasis on their enrolling in routine schools and we in Pakistan as well need to step forward and work together for breaking the taboos and social stigma, attached to mental and physical challenges," he noted.

Federal and Sindh governments have made laudable progress in that regard by reserving special quota for differently-abled persons in public sector jobs while the banking sector was also inducting special persons. Dr. Alvi said adding that Governor SBP and heads of different banks had also assured of additional steps in that regard in a recent meeting on inclusion and empowerment of special persons and women.

Pak-US sign agreement to protect Pakistan's cultural heritage

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan and the United States signed an agreement here on Tuesday with an aim to protect the cultural heritage of Pakistan.

The agreement was signed by Pakistan Secretary of National Heritage and Culture Humaira Ahmed and Ambassador of US to Pakistan Donald Blome, said a press release issued by US embassy.

According to details, the agreement establishes import restrictions on certain types of archaeological and ethnological materials originating from Pakistan and entering the United States.

The agreement facilitates the return of these cultural objects to the people of Pakistan. The cultural property agreement demonstrates the strong US and Pakistani commitment to protect the theft and trafficking of cultural objects and our shared goal of protecting Pakistan's rich and diverse cultural heritage.

The Pak-US agreement commits both parties to work together to counter looting and trafficking of objects, promote a clean market for Pakistani art and antiquities in the United



States, and increase opportunities for the US museums and the American public to learn about and experience Pakistan's history and culture.

"This agreement protects unique and historically significant artifacts for future generations. It also demonstrates US support for the principles of tolerance

and respect for diversity - principles by which the people of this region have lived for centuries," said Ambassador Blome.

The signing of agreement underscores the

United States' global commitment to cultural heritage protection and preservation. The United States has been unwavering in its commitment to protect and preserve cultural heritage around the world and to restrict trafficking in cultural property, which may be used to fund terrorist and criminal networks.

At regional moot, Pakistan reiterates commitment to Afghan peace, prosperity

KABUL (APP): As the representatives from 10 regional countries gathered here for a Regional Countries Conference on Afghanistan, Pakistan reiterated its commitment to peace and prosperity in the war-torn country.

The conference titled "Afghanistan's Regional Cooperation Initiative" was hosted by the Afghan caretaker government.

The international event was attended by diplomats from Pakistan, Russia, China, Iran, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Turkey and Indonesia.

Ambassador of Pakistan in Kabul Ubaid Nizamani, who represented Pakistan in the moot, wrote on X that he reiterated his country's commitment to a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan.

He emphasized that the region must work together to harness mutually beneficial connectivity potential and address shared concerns.

"Represented Pakistan in Regional Countries conference on Afghanistan in Kabul. Reiterated our commitment to a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan."

Meeting reviews Post Flood Recovery activities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives, Muhammad Sami Saeed on Tuesday formally inaugurated the 4RF dashboard, oversight meeting to review Post-Flood Recovery activities.

The third meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee/Oversight Board for Post-Flood Resilient, Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Framework (4RF) was chaired by the federal minister, said a press release issued here.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Economic Affairs Division (EAD), the Chief Secretary of Gilgit Baltistan, the Country Director of the

World Bank, the Country Director of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Country Director of the European Union Islamabad, the Deputy Resident Director of UNDP and representatives from the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).

Speaking at the occasion, the minister said that this dashboard was a milestone achieved in order to ensure transparency and efficiency in executing the flood related projects. The dashboard will provide real time information on the physical and financial progress of the projects. Besides, it will be accessed by the provincial government, development partners and concerned line ministries, he added.



QUETTA: Balochistan Caretaker Minister for Health Dr Amir Muhammad Khan Jogezeai and Chairperson National Commission on the Status of Women Nilofar Bakhtiar distributing shields among the participants of seminar on Preventing Child Marriages.

NCSW calls for national consensus to end child marriages, says Nilofar

QUETTA: The National Commission on Status of Women (NCSW) called for creating national consensus to end child marriages in the country.

The consultations are being made for making legislation against the child marriages.

Balochistan directly needs national bill for prevention of the child marriages. This was stated by the Chairperson of NCSW, Ms. Nilofar Bakhtiar while addressing the provincial consultation organized at a local hotel on Tuesday.

The NCSW arranged the consultation in collaboration with its partners and stakeholders including UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women in which the Chairperson of Balochistan Commission on Status of Women, Ms. Fauzia Shaheen, senior officials of the Provincial Departments of Social Welfare, Health

and Education, representatives of civil society organizations, media, lawyers and mental health experts participated.

In her introductory remarks, the Chairperson NCSW said that this is 7th meeting of the child marriage advocacy campaign.

The legislation is being considered for prevention of the child marriages during the consultation.

She mentioned that the Child Marriage Restriction Act of 1929 is also enforced in 2024.

She regretfully pointed out that the it is essential to determine the age for casting votes, but the marriages are performed without asking about age of the children. As a result, the girls are deprived of their basic rights.

Under the given circumstances, Balochistan directly needs national bill for prevention of the child marriages, adding she stressed.



QUETTA: PML-N Provincial General Secretary, Jamal Shah Kakar addresses to media persons during press conference, at Quetta press club.



QUETTA: Country Manager Reko Diq Mining Company Ltd Ali Ahsan Rind and Tariq Mian of The Hunar Foundation signing a MoU. Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan is also present.

Reko Diq Mining Company signs MoU with THF

QUETTA (APP): Reko Diq Mining Company (RDMC), a subsidiary of Barrick Gold Corporation on Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with The Hunar Foundation (THF) in Quetta signaling the start of RDMC's first CSR initiative in vocational training and capacity building for local youth in Chagai, its district of operation.

RDMC operates in Pakistan under a Joint Venture agreement with the provincial Government of Balochistan and the federal Government of Pakistan.

According to press release issued here, The Hunar Foundation is a non-profit organization established in 2008 to empower and enable the marginalized

youth of Pakistan with vocational and technical skills.

THF's objective is to act as a facilitator in the field of education for catalytic action to increase the number of talented young persons engaged in productive work, consequently alleviating poverty and making them contributing members of society.

This partnership between RDMC and THF intends to pave the way for a vocational training and capacity-building project that will facilitate income generation and enterprise amongst local youth.

It is a social investment project that promises sustainable development and seeks to build a harmonious partnership amongst

the communities in and around the project area.

The Hunar Foundation provides semi-educated and skilled young adults with quality vocational training that meets the expectations of the market, leading to employment or small business creation - and eventually economic freedom and empowerment.

The Nokkundi Community Development Committee (CDC) members support this initiative. RDMC feels building capacity of local talent for improved income-generation amongst unemployed youth is a powerful lever for the achievement of the company's sustainability strategy and long-term vision.

Traders demand stern action against terrorists: Two containers set ablaze by armed assailants in Mach

QUETTA: Two containers load of batteries were put on fire by unknown armed assailants on the main national highway in Mach area on late Monday night.

The reports suggested that the containers set ablaze belonged to traders belonging to Chaman namely Akram Khan Achakzai and Ali Achakzai.

According to the reports, the unknown armed assailants resorted to an indiscriminate fire with sophisticated weapons targeting the containers and then

put them on fire. As a result, both the containers were destroyed causing financial loss of millions of rupees.

Meanwhile, the traders community of province have expressed deep concern over the loss of millions of rupees caused due to the subversive act.

They demanded of the high ups to take stern action against the anti-social elements and terrorists. It may be mentioned here that both the containers were on their way to Quetta from Karachi via Sukkur.

No compromise made on security, stability of country: Rahim

QUETTA (APP)- Leader of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), nominated candidate for constituency PB- 40, Maulana Rahimuddin Advocate said that no compromise would be made on the security and stability of the beloved country.

He expressed these views while addressing at public gatherings organized in connection with the election campaign in respective areas including Killi Chiltan Raisani, Hazar Ganji, Killi Khizan, Killi Muslimabad, Akhtar Abad, Hazar Town, Kharot Abad, Pashtun Bagh and Khizi Chowk.

Addressing at the events, he said that under a well-thought-out plan, the situation in Balochistan was being worsened saying that enemy powers were using different tactics against our beloved Pakistan, the security agencies would be taken measures to protect the life and property of the masses.

PML-N reacts to cipher case verdict against Imran

FAISALABAD (INP): PML-N senior leader and former interior minister Rana Sanaullah Khan talking to a private TV Channel said that the cipher case was the clear-cut case as there was no dispute in it that the former prime minister declassified the classified documents of the cipher case.

"PTI has all the forums from the IHC and SC. Not like PML-N wherein its supreme got disqualification sentence from the highest judicial forum Supreme Court of Pakistan," he said. He strongly condemned the violence committed by the people against the state of Pakistan on May 9.

ECP to complete ballot paper printing till February 2

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) will complete the printing of ballot papers till February 2, while the delivery of ballot papers has already continued in all four provinces.

"After the announcement of general elections across the country on February 8 and allocation of election symbols, the ECP has started the printing of ballot papers from January 16," the spokesman told APP. He said the preparations for holding the general polls are rapidly progressing towards completion.

Minister visits to Civil Hospital to inquire after health of injured

QUETTA- (APP)- Balochistan Caretaker Health Minister Dr. Ameer Muhammad Jogezeai on Tuesday visited Trauma Center of Quetta Civil Hospital to inquire after the health of injured victims of Mach Kolpur incident.

MD Trauma Center Dr. Arbab Kamran Kasi, MS Civil Hospital Dr. Ishaq Panizi, RMO Dr. Amna, In-charge Pharmacist Dr. Syed Hazrat

Agha and other assistants were present on this occasion.

He also directed concerned doctors to take all possible steps to provide best treatment facilities to the injured patients in the hospital.

Dr. Ameer Muhammad Jogezeai appreciated the performance of MD Trauma Center and medical staff for provision of medical aid to the injured of Mach Kolpur incident.



KAHUTA: PPPP President, Asif Ali Zardari addresses during public gathering meeting as a part of election campaign in connection of General Election 2024 coming ahead, in Kahuta.

Sardar Ahmed says JUI to take steps for stability of country, Balochistan after winging of elections

QUETTA: (APP)-Quetta Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) Leader nominated candidate for constituency PB-46 Sardar Ahmed Khan Shahwani and others said that the JUI party would come to power after winging of election and take revolutionary steps for stability and integrity of the country and Balochistan.

Muhammad Hashim Khishki Maulana Haji Wazir Muhammad, Barichullah Dost Advocate, Malik Abdul Salam Shahwani, Abdul Wahab Kakar, Maulana Mufti Naseebullah Agha, Maulana Hafiz Sardar Muhammad Hafiz Bilal Khan, and other leaders expressed these views while addressing the gatherings organized in connection with the election campaign at Abad area.

ECP issues notices to political parties, candidates over violations election code

QUETTA (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan's Balochistan Chapter issued notices on Tuesday to various political parties and candidates for violating the code of conduct in the Chaman district. The notices were in response to the unauthorized placement of billboards, hoardings, and panaflex, as confirmed by the spokesperson of the Provincial Election Commissioner in Balochistan.

On the directives of District Monitoring Officer Zohaibullah, election monitoring teams and the district administration took swift action to address the violations. They removed illegal election materials on a large scale in Chaman City. It is

pertinent to mention that the Election Commission of Pakistan has specified guidelines in its code of conduct, prohibiting the placement of election-related materials on government properties such as buildings, walls, poles, and bridges. Additionally, the code strictly prohibits wall chalking, billboards, hoardings, and panaflex in certain areas.

This proactive enforcement by the Election Commission underscores its commitment to ensuring a fair and transparent electoral process by upholding the integrity of the code of conduct. Violations may lead to penalties or other consequences for the political parties and candidates involved.



QUETTA: District Monitoring Officer Quetta, Subhan Dashti addressing a press conference at Commissioner Office.

Only PPP to get country out of many crises, says Hasnain Hashmi

QUETTA- (APP)-Pakistan People's Party (PPP)'s nominated candidate from constituency PB-43 Syed Hasnain Hashmi on Tuesday said that Pakistan was currently suffering from many problems and only PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari could get the country out of these problems.

He said that now it was our duty to secure the hands of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari for national integrity, restoration of international prestige, solutions to public problems and reconstruction of society through votes.

He shared these views while addressing the corner meetings held at Killi Ismail, Lehri Gate, Giant Road and Jogazai Street

here. Shahjahan Gujjar, Akhtar Baloch, Aziz Longo, Harith Muhammad Hosni, Qazi Qahir, Jafar George, Ilyas Bhatti, Akram Gul and others also spoke at the events of election.

Syed Hasnain Hashmi said that the only solution to the public, political and social problems of Pakistan is hidden in the life of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, his principles and the party manifesto he was created.

He urged the people that they should seal the election symbol of Pakistan People's Party's nominees "Arrow" on February 8 and make the PPP's candidates successful in country.