

# Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

www.dailyindependent.com.pk Hub

Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XVIII No. 355, Jamadi-us-Sani 22, 1445 AH Friday January 05, 2024, Pages 04, Price Rs.15

## Lifetime disqualification is against Islam: CJP

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa made significant remarks on Thursday during a Supreme Court hearing regarding the lifetime disqualification of lawmakers under Article 62(1)(F) of the Constitution. He highlighted that banning anyone for life from parliament goes against the principles of Islam.

A seven-member Supreme Court bench resumed hearing of the lifetime disqualification case.

The hearing pertains to a case concerning the lifetime disqualification of Sardar Meer Badshah Qaisrani – a former member of Punjab Assembly – before the 2018 elections. And interestingly, even Saqib Jilani, the counsel leading the original plea against Qaisrani, told the court that he was against the original Supreme Court verdict.

Chief Justice Faez Isa heads the bench which also comprises Justice

Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Aminuddin, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hilali. As the hearing started, Advocate Khurram Raza, favouring lifetime disqualification, came to the rostrum and raised questions about maintainability of the proceedings.

He asked under which provisions of law the proceedings were being conducted. However, the bench asked Raza to stick to his petition.

Resuming his arguments, the counsel said it was only the election tribunal's prerogative to grant a declaration and the right could not be exercised by the high court or apex court directly. However, he maintained, cases against orders passed by the tribunal could be heard by the apex court under the scope of appeal.

The CJP said this debate won't resolve the problem before the court.

Justice Isa remarked the court would not discuss the powers of the election tribunal as it was not the question of an election tribunal or election commission exercising a power but it was about the power exercised by a constitutional court.

Raza said any declaration in the election tribunal or by the SC in the appellate jurisdiction was covered under Article 62(1)(f). Justice Isa remarked that election tribunal would exercise powers only under the law. Therefore when the SC would exercise such powers it could not have more powers than the election tribunal or the Election Commission of Pakistan.

He then added, "Unless you can show that the ECP and the election tribunal can also disqualify for life, then that power will also be with the SC, otherwise it will be an additional power given to the Supreme Court under Article 62(1)(f)."



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar addresses the Envoys' Conference.

## Pakistan to always champion Jammu & Kashmir cause: PM

Emphasizes progressive foreign policy for socio-economic well-being of people

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Thursday said that Pakistan would always champion the Jammu and Kashmir cause and the resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute as per the United Nations Security Council resolutions and the wishes of its people.

He was speaking at the ongoing Envoys' Conference being held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 4-6 January 2024.

Pakistan's envoys from important capitals are participating in the conference and are deliberating on various facets of Pakistan's foreign policy.

Welcoming the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister

Jalil Abbas Jilani outlined the framework of discussions at the Envoys' Conference and its importance as a deliberative forum on diplomatic challenges and opportunities for Pakistan in view of the global and regional developments.

He underscored the need for strengthening the anchoring role of the Foreign Office in foreign policy formulation and implementation. In his key-note address, the Prime Minister shared his perspective about the pressing demands on the conduct of Pakistan's foreign policy to align it with present-day imperatives.

He said that Pakistan's foreign policy should be

guided by a vision of Pakistan as a progressive, economically ascendant state that prioritizes the socio-economic well-being of its people. Pakistan's foreign policy should continue to aim for peace and mutually beneficial relations across the globe. The Prime Minister said that Pakistan will continue to stand for international law and purposes and principles of the UN Charter, mainstreaming economic diplomacy and support the Palestinian cause. Prime Minister Kakar termed the conference as timely and relevant against the backdrop of profound transformations taking place in the region and around the globe.

He reaffirmed his trust in Pakistan's diplomacy and diplomats in their capability to fully deliver despite pressing odds and expressed the hope that the deliberations of this year's conference would lead to practical suggestions to navigate Pakistan's foreign policy through present day challenges.

The prime minister extended his best wishes to the Foreign Office and Pakistani diplomats in safeguarding Pakistan's interests and advancing Pakistan's global stature.

Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani has underlined the importance of regular debate on Pakistan's foreign policy

and global and regional developments.

He made this statement while speaking as an opening speaker at a three-day Envoys Conference that commenced at the Foreign Office in Islamabad today.

Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar will deliver a keynote address.

The conference aims to deliberate and finalize recommendations on a range of bilateral, regional, and global dimensions of Pakistan's foreign policy.

The Envoys Conference is a regular feature for in-depth discussions on various facets of Pakistan's foreign policy, considering regional and global developments.



ISLAMABAD: Murtaza Solangi, Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting addressing an event organized by Pakistan Disabled Foundation for special persons at National Press Club.

## Solangi hopes political parties will work for welfare of differently-abled persons

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Thursday expressed the optimism that political parties would take into account special steps and initiatives for the welfare of special people in their manifestos.

"Political parties should come up with the programmes for special people in their election manifestos and programmes," Murtaza Solangi said while delivering the speech at a function, organized by Pakistan Disabled Foundation for differently-abled persons.

He said that legislation for the welfare of special persons was also the responsibility of the elected representatives.

He said special persons or differently-abled persons also had the right to vote. He said that they should present their justified demands to the leadership of political parties and vote for those parties which would fulfill their demands.

"No one was disabled in the real sense as nature had blessed humans with unlimited abilities", he said, adding those who could not see with eyes, might adjust a lot with their hearts.

In the developed countries of the world, the requirements of special people were taken care of as all people enjoyed equal rights, he added.

The minister said that unfortunately in Pakistan, building codes did not take into account the facilities of special people.

Faizabad commission: Faiz Hamid rejects allegations of 'conspiracy' against govt

"Held negotiations with Tehreek-e-Labaik on directions of government," Hamid tells commission

ISLAMABAD (Online): Former Chief ISI Gen (Retd) Faiz Hameed has recorded his statement before Faizabad Dharna Commission.

He gave reply to all the questions. He said talks were held with Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan under the directives of government.

He refuted the charges of hatching conspiracy against government.

It is pertinent to mention here Dharna Commission is operating under Dr Akhtar Ali Shah.

Former IG Tahid Alam and Khushhal Khan are also included in commission.

Commissioner directs to improve monitoring of anti-polio campaign

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat has directed Deputy Commissioners of all the districts to improve monitoring of the anti-polio campaign in their respective districts so as to make it a great success.

He also directed to take action against those involved in fake fingers marking and missing children during the immunization campaign.

The Commissioner was chairing meeting of Divisional Task Force for preparations of the upcoming anti-polio campaign here on Thursday.

The meeting was attended by the representatives of different departments and organizations including Health, Police, UNICEF, WHO besides others.

Deputy Commissioner Quetta, Saad bin Asad, Deputy Commissioners of Chaman, Pishin and Killa Abdullah participated in the meeting through video link.

## Governor Balochistan calls for electing real public servants through correct use of vote

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that it is high time for the general public to elect their real servants through correct use of vote in the upcoming general elections.

He said that the constructive political activity and conscience struggle take the human being to the broader perspective from the limited and narrow approach.

He said that the political consciousness make us part of the global village in real manner taking out from the limitations of colour, race and creed. The Governor was speaking to different delegations from various segments of the society who called on him

here at the Governor's House on Thursday.

The Governor maintained that politics is a very complex but is an essential social practice.

He was of strong view that the constructive political activities and conscience struggle broader the thinking and political consciousness of the public.

The Governor exhorted the political workers to follow the discipline in their lives.

The workers should also try to develop collective wisdom and leadership qualities among them, adding he stressed further.

The Governor said that politics is a social responsibility and as such the political workers seem good while having close rapport with the masses.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf Barrister Gohar Ali Khan speaks during a press conference at party secretariat.

## Sea phase of Int'l Marine Oil Spill Exercise BARRACUDA-XII held

KARACHI (APP): The sea phase of International Exercise Barracuda-XII was held at North Arabian Sea on Thursday which was participated by Interim Chief Minister Sindh Maqbool Baqar as chief guest who witnessed the sea phase of the exercise on board Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) Ship KASHMIR.

According to the Pakistan Navy news release, the air and surface assets of Pakistan Navy, PMSA, Pakistan Air Force (PAF) and other national stakeholders participated in the sea phase of exercise.

Exercises on containment of oil spill, Search and Rescue operations and anti piracy were demonstrated by Pakistan Navy and PMSA aircrafts, PN & PAF helicopters and

PMSA ships. The drills were witnessed by fifteen foreign observers and representatives of various National stakeholders.

The foreign observers applauded the efforts being put in by all the stakeholders specially the efforts of Pakistan Navy and PMSA to fight any disaster at sea. Earlier, the opening brief of the exercise was held at Karachi. Foreign Observers and delegations from relevant stake holders also attended the brief wherein the aims and objectives of Exercise BARRACUDA-XII were highlighted.

Moreover, scholarly papers on response of Oil Spill and Search and Rescue at sea were presented by both National and International speakers.



QUETTA: A delegation of Balochistan Private Schools Association Alliance meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

## ECP takes action against election code violation

QUETTA (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), Baluchistan chapter has taken action on violation of the election code of conduct in Quetta.

Illegal banners and posters displayed by party workers in PB-38 and PB-43, have been removed due to violation of code of conduct, the ECP spokesman said on Thursday.

## Eight injured in Mastung highway accident

QUETTA (APP): At least eight people were injured when a passenger van overturned near Mastung Quetta to Karachi highway early Thursday morning.

According to rescue sources, the accident happened when a passenger bus overturned due to fog on the National Highway near Mastung, as a result, eight passengers were injured, a private news channel reported. Following the incident, rescuers, police, and local people rushed to the site and shifted the injured to a nearby hospital.

## Appellate Tribunal allows Akhtar Mengal, Manzoor Kakar, Khushhal Kakar to contest elections

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Appellate Tribunal comprising judges of Balochistan High Court (BHC) continued hearing of the appeals of candidates against rejection of their nomination papers for the general elections from different election constituencies in Quetta on Thursday.

The Judges of Tribunals including Mr. Justice Muhammad Hashim Kakar and Mr. Justice Aamir Nawaz Rana heard the appeals filed by different candidates against rejection of their papers.

The Tribunal heard the appeal of BNP President Sardar Akhtar Mengal against rejection of his nomination papers. The tribunal asked about the appeal filed by Sardar Akhtar Mengal that he may appear in the court and explain the matter about "Iqama".

The Tribunal consisting of Mr. Justice Hashim Kakar issued notices to the parties on an appeal filed against acceptance of papers of PML-N leader and former Chief Minister, Jam Kamal Khan.

Meanwhile, the Tribunal heard the appeals of leader of Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) Senator Manzoor Ahmed Kakar and Pashtoonkhaw National Awami Party leader, Khushhal Khan Kakar and allowed them to contest the polls.



QUETTA: Candidates for General Election 2024, Syed Ahsaan Shah, Akhtar Langove, Malik Naseer Shahwani, Basit Lehari, Gulam Bani Mari and others in a group photo after submitting their nomination papers, at Election Tribunal in Quetta.



KARACHI: A view of marine oil spill exercise BARRACUDA-XII conducted in Arabian Sea held under auspices of Pakistan Navy and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency.

## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Pak's commitment to continued ties with Afghanistan

The Interim Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani had a crucial meeting with the Afghanistan province Kandahar's Governor Mullah Shirin in Islamabad the other day. During the course of meeting, the Interim Foreign Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to continued engagement and mutually beneficial ties with Afghanistan. Meeting with the Kandahar's Governor Mullah Shirin on Wednesday last, the Foreign Minister reiterated the country's resolve to ensure mutually beneficial ties with the neighbouring country. During the huddle, Jilani stressed the significance of addressing all issues to harness the full potential for trade and connectivity between the two countries. Needless to mention here is that Jilani's meeting with the senior Afghan official—who also serves as the country's deputy of strategic intelligence of defence ministry—comes in the backdrop of an alarming increase in terror incidents in Pakistan, which, as per the Annual Security Report released by the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), saw more than 1,500 Pakistanis being killed in 789 terror attacks and counter-terrorism operations in 2023. Meanwhile, Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS)—an Islamabad-based think tank—data shows that 974 people lost their lives in 641 militant attacks last year—an 81% increase in terror-related casualties compared to the numbers in 2022.

The surge in terror attacks reflects a changing trend when compared to the frequency of terror incidents that had persisted since 2015, an alarming reversal occurred in 2021, which was coincidentally the year when the Afghan Taliban had regained control in Afghanistan. Pakistan has time again called on the Taliban-led Afghan administration to prevent its soil from being used against Pakistan and take effective measures against the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other banned militant organisations that are involved in heinous attacks on civilians and security forces inside Pakistan—an allegation vehemently denied by the Afghan side. Earlier in the day, the Afghan embassy in Islamabad had said that the sixth round of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) was to include discussions pertaining to "resolution of potential conflicts along the Durand Line and the establishment of essential facilities for people on both sides." It is pertinent to know that the two neighbouring countries have been witnessing strained relations owing to increased terror attacks in Pakistan, which the country blames on safe havens inside Afghanistan, resulting in the caretaker government's decision to expel millions of Afghan refugees living in Pakistan—a decision which hasn't sit well with the Taliban administration. Worthwhile to mention is also that the caretaker Minister for Information Balochistan, Jan Achakzai has also made demands on several occasions from Afghan government to hand over the terrorists involved in terrorism acts in Pakistan. Rather, during an interaction with media in Quetta, Achakzai had also blamed that Afghanistan is exporting terrorism to the world, which is a dangerous trend. One can hope that the crucial meeting of Interim Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani with the Kandahar's Governor Mullah Shirin would be fruitful and beneficial for promotion of mutual trade and connectivity between the two countries in time to come. Undoubtedly, the ongoing move of repatriation of the illegal immigrants to their homeland would also go a long way to bring peace in Pakistan, as it is generally believed.

### RIP Sartaj Aziz



Khurram Husain

One by one, those with a memory, and those who played a critical role navigating this country through the many crises it has passed through, are leaving us. The last few days have seen Sartaj Aziz and Riaz Khokhar pass away, taking with them a treasure of memories, reflections and much more, from so many critical episodes in our history.

I never knew Riaz Khokhar sahib, and it is my loss for not having familiarised myself with him. But I met Sartaj Aziz sahib on a few occasions, followed his work, attended an event in which he was a featured speaker in Washington, D.C. when he was national security adviser back in 2013, and recorded a long detailed, probing interview with him back in 2007 and again in 2013 shortly after the elections.

Sartaj sahib was solid, serious and wore an austere countenance. The closest to a smile I saw on his face was a brief, short smirk. But far more than his personal characteristics, it is the life trajectory that he carved out which tells a remarkable story.

He was an outsider in economic management circles when he landed as minister of state for agriculture in the Junejo government. Economic management in Pakistan was in the grip of a small cabal of civil servants in those days, a tightly knit network of handpicked men around Ghulam Ishaq Khan. These men circulated between all key positions involved in managing the country's economy: finance minister, deputy chairman Plan-

ning Commission, chairman Wapda, governor State Bank of Pakistan.

These were also serious men, of very high calibre, including people such as V.A. Jaffery, A.G.N. Kazi and H.U. Beg. It was quite the norm for civil servants to run with their initials and surname in those days. Ranged against them in virtually an adversarial role were the 'outsiders', or those who had served in international agencies and were returning to Pakistan with new, and different ideas of how to run a country. Among them was Mahbub ul Haq. Another, younger one, was Sartaj Aziz.

The GIK clique believed in a centralised economy, where the state would preside over all economic activity, sometimes as a direct owner of productive assets, at other times administering the prices or setting the terms of entry into any given field. They were mistrustful of private capital, but not hostile to it. They loathed bankers, at least the private variety, and had strong views favouring import substitution, protection of the domestic market and its producers who needed a strong, paternalistic power watching over them in their view.

Sartaj sahib was among the newcomers who believed the country needed to change. It needed to embrace markets, not smother them. It needed to open up foreign trade, move away from import substitution towards exports, and lose its fear of imports. Mahbub ul Haq and Mohammad Yaqub at the State Bank were among these individuals too, although the former was not exactly a newcomer.

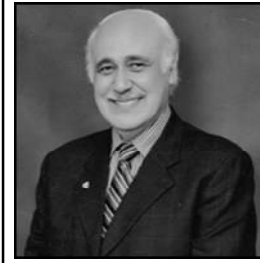
He got his chance to start making a difference in 1985 as a junior minister in the Junejo government, but the limited space that the government had is well known.

He finally got his chance when he was tipped to be finance minister in the first Nawaz Sharif government of 1990.

Pakistan's first reform-minded budget was passed in that year. Import tariffs were slashed massively, and a domestic general sales tax was introduced to replace the revenues that previously had come from the high customs duties on all imports. Those years saw the first privatisation (of Muslim Commercial Bank that we now know as MCB), the inauguration of treasury bill auctions as the way to raise government debt, and the first serious advancement in private power generation projects (Hubco), lessons from which were later incorporated into the Private Power Policy in 1996. Those years also saw the beginning of the Foreign Currency Deposit scheme, which eventually grew so large it would cast a shadow on the viability of Pakistan's external sector.

Sartaj sahib was finance minister when the nuclear detonations happened in 1998. He was blamed for the decision to freeze foreign currency deposits and departed from the position shortly thereafter to take charge at the foreign ministry. Much later, he would argue in his book that there was no other option. He initiated massive changes in the life of the country. But how the country fared after that, lurching from one balance-of-payments crisis to another, was also part of the changes ushered in by him. During his years in service, he was right to point out that Pakistan could not afford to ignore the market realities engulfing the world. But Pakistan has yet to learn how to make these market forces work to its own advantage. Perhaps that is one lesson to draw from Sartaj sahib's departure, though I fear it might be too late now. -- Courtesy Dawn

### A cultural distaff



F.S. Aijazuddin

When grand homes outgrow their owners, they have no option but to become museums. Notable are the Louvre in Paris, Tsarskoye Selo outside St Petersburg, the Kremlin in Moscow, and the Hofburg in Vienna. In the UK, the royal residences of Hampton Court and Windsor Castle have become quasi-museums. If King Charles III has his way, the state and royal rooms in Buckingham Palace too will become available to the public as a full-time museum. (Its former Royal Chapel is already a mini Royal Gallery.)

Smaller benefactions associated with their donors are the Wallace Collection in London, assembled in the 19th century by Sir Richard Wallace. In its 25 galleries are displayed Old Masters, French 18th-century paintings, furniture, and armour. Further afield is Powis Castle in Wales. There, on shameless display, are the ill-gotten gains of the 18th-century kleptomaniac Robert Clive acquired during his stay in India. "These include Tipu Sultan's magnificent state tent, made of painted chintz; gold and bejewelled tiger's head finials from Tipu's throne [.] precious objects in jade and ivory".

Many royal residences in India have undergone a similar conversion: in Jaipur, the City Palace houses the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum and its prime treasure—the illustrated Razmnama (a translation into Persian of the Hindu epic Mahabha-rata), commissioned by Emperor Akbar

in 1574. The Maharaja Jaipur's Delhi residence is now the National Gallery of Modern Art.

Many Indian stately homes have become hotels. Pre-eminent among them is Udaipur's shimmering white Jag Niwas (now the Taj Lake Palace hotel), seemingly afloat in Pichola lake.

Less grandiose and more specialised is the privately managed Calico Museum of Textiles, founded by textile magnate Gautam Sarabhai in Ahmedabad. Expanded over the years by his family, its magnificent collection is a homage to the versatility of Indian art.

Within the old family home called The Retreat is a haven, housing "religious textiles, as well as south Indian bronzes, Jain art, and Mughal miniature paintings". In an adjacent 'Chauk' are displayed "royal tents, carpets, furnishings and costumes of the Mughal and regional courts; textiles for India's export trade, as well as a wide range of ethnographic textiles".

Ingenuously, the remodelled family swimming pool's walls are used as a gallery and a huge antique Mughal tent covers the whole pool as a decorative ceiling.

Such application of patrician wealth to plebeian benefit has no parallel in Pakistan. For one thing, former princely states like Bahawalpur, Khairpur and Swat were comparatively modest in their means and provincial in their reach.

The closest Pakistan has to a 'royal collection' is that of the Talpur family in Hyderabad. Select objects from this tantalising hoard amassed by the mirdoms of Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas and Khairpur were shown to the public (many items for the first time) at the Mohatta Palace Museum in September 1999. Titled Treasures of the Talpurs, the objects on display included "rare

jewellery, ceremonial textiles, historical manuscripts, decorative objects, furniture, paintings, arms and armour". Even these remnants were enough to re-call the wealth of the Talpur amirs, which had so excited Charles Napier's avarice in 1843.

Rather like the Sarabhai's Calico Museum in Ahmedabad, the Mohatta Palace Museum in Karachi is a laudable example of private sector initiative filling the void of public sector inertia.

The beige sandstone Mohatta Palace was built in 1927 by Shiv Rattan Mohatta, a successful Marwari entrepreneur. After 1947, it served as Pakistan's first foreign affairs ministry when Karachi was still the capital. In 1964, the palace was given to Mo---h-tarma Fatima Jinnah. It remained with her family until 1980.

Substantially remodelled, it opened as a museum in September 1999. Since then, its Board of Trustees has expanded the display area from the original three to 44 galleries, using them to present thematic displays of textiles, tiles, Buddhist sculptures, antique maps, copies of the Holy Quran and modernist works by, amongst others, Sadequain. The museum has been heavily supported by private collectors. To mark its silver jubilee, the museum is presenting an ambitious programme of events, including on Jan 5 a session on the bar-d-ic tradition, featuring the Tilism-i-Hoshuba, to be recited by NAPA-trained dastangos. As the year 2024 stares at us stark and barren, such cultural endeavours are not occasional distractions. They are the distaffs around which are spun the precious skeins of our national culture. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News

### Pak-Afghan border committee agrees to expedite crossover of vehicles on daily basis

PESHAWAR (APP): A meeting of Pak-Afghan border management committee at Custom Station Torkham agreed to expedite the crossover of vehicles from both sides to 900 trucks daily to clear the long queues of goods-laden vehicles waiting for clearance. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Additional Collector Customs

(Appraisal), Muhammad Rizwan. Other officials present in the meeting were Deputy Collector Enforcement, Saqia Abbas, Assistant Director FIA, Yasir Arafat, Assistant Director Anti Narcotics, Salman, Maj Murad from Frontier Corps, DC Appraisal Customs, Hammad, Assistant Collector, Farya Abbas Naqvi, Deputy

Collector, Fahad Ahmad, Transit Superintendent, Sadiq Akbar. Those who represented the business community included the Coordinator Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi, Vice Chairman of All Pakistan Customs Agents Association, Vice President of PAJCCI, Shujah Muhammad, Farooq

Ahmad, President of Torkham Custom Agents Association, Haji Aimal Khan, Ex. President Custom Agents Association, Nasir Shinwari and others. The meeting held a threadbare discussion on the slow clearance process of trucks, causing delays in the transportation of consignments besides the return of empty containers.



Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif chairing 47th meeting of USAF Policy Committee in Islamabad.



ISLAMABAD: The CDWP meeting presided over by Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan, approved 1 development project with a cost of Rs.45.69 million & recommended 3 projects worth Rs. 358.810 billion to the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) for further consideration.

### European, US stocks creep higher

LONDON (AFP/APP): Europe's major stock indices edged higher Thursday, while Wall Street opened mixed, following a series of losses at the beginning of the year.

Frankfurt, London and Paris stocks rose slightly from heavy falls Wednesday, when deadly blasts in Iran rattled markets and fanned fears of a broadening conflict in the Middle East.

Most Asian stocks dipped Thursday in line with Wall Street on Wednesday, after minutes from the US Federal Reserve's December meeting dampened hopes for an early interest-rate cut. The Dow rose 0.2 percent at the start trading on Thursday, while the

S&P 500 and tech-heavy Nasdaq both slid. Oil prices rallied further on supplies worries.

"With Western nations threatening more forceful actions to defend shipping in the Red Sea, the situation was looking tense even before yesterday's explosions in Iran," noted Steve Clayton, head of equity funds at UK stockbroker Hargreaves Lansdown. "The Israeli/Hamas conflict rages on, leaving oil traders increasingly wary of the security of supplies from the region." A global rally for equities that characterised the last months of 2023 has petered out on concerns that the buying may have run ahead of itself.

### PSX loses 7.69 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a nominal negative change of 0.01 percent by losing 7.69 percent, closing at 64,639.16 points against 64,646.85 points the previous trading day. A total of 548,989,972 shares valuing Rs.15.395 billion were traded during the day as compared to 639,616,328 shares valuing Rs. 20.282 billion the last day.

Some 360 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 155 of them recorded gains and 184 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 21 remained unchanged. The three top-trading companies were K-Electric Ltd with 154,661,017 shares at Rs.5.65 per share, WorldCall Telecom with 37,141,119 shares.

### Telecom Tribunal to handle telecom sector disputes, cases: Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif has said that telecom sector disputes and cases will now be handled by a specialised Telecom Tribunal, instead of High Courts.

Dr. Saif while sharing the information on his official social media account, said that the move was aimed at expediting the resolution of legal issues and facilitating rapid progress in the telecom sector.

The Telecom

Tribunal, according to the minister, will consist of technical experts who will be responsible for deciding all appeals filed by aggrieved parties comprehensively and swiftly.

The establishment of this tribunal is expected to alleviate the burden on High Courts concerning the adjudication of technical matters related to the telecom sector.

The minister believes that this specialized approach will lead to faster and more efficient resolution of disputes, contributing to the overall

### CDNS secures Rs 50b in Islamic finance bonds

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has secured Rs 50 billion in Islamic finance bonds at the end of the second quarter of the current fiscal year 2023-24.

"The National Savings has issued Islamic bonds for the promotion of the Islamic finance system, which will help the development of the Islamic economy in the country," a senior official of the Directorate of National Savings told APP here on Thursday. Replying to another query, he said the CDNS had collected an investment of

Rs 16 billion in July 2023-24 through Islamic investment bonds.

He added that the directorate had set a target of Rs 75 billion for the new financial year 2023-24 for Islamic finance bonds.

Replying to another question, he said the CDNS aimed to introduce new dimensions in the Islamic finance sector.

He informed that CDNS had achieved the set target of Rs 60 billion in the fiscal year (2022-23) for Islamic investment to introduce the new products to the market. "Islamic finance has

a very important role in the global financial sector at this time, and a large part of the economy of many major countries currently includes Islamic finance," he added.

The senior official of CDNS said that work was being done on institutional reforms in CDNS and that new reforms and innovations were being introduced.

"Islamic finance has a very important role in the global financial sector at this time, and a large part of the economy of many major countries currently includes Islamic finance," he added.

### Winter brings boom to fish trade in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

PESHAWAR (APP): The increased chill and dense foggy conditions have amplified the demands of mouth-watering fish varieties including trout fish and delicious chappli kabab in KP especially Peshawar where all eateries outlets packed with customers enjoying its delectable bites till late night.

Known for hospitality, Peshawar is a unique ancient city for being frequently visited by tourists and food lovers to relish on its delectable traditional foods varieties including mouth-watering

chappli kabab. Peshawari rice-polao and fish varieties mostly brought from Malakand, Hazara divisions, Punjab and Karachi as special winter food recipes.

While travelling on historic Qissa Khawani and Namak Mandi bazaars in the bustling city of Peshawar, a visitor can't resist the aroma of grilled fish and chappli kabab being served with traditional Qehwa and spicy sauces in harsh winter.

"The tantalizing aroma of trout and carp fish besides other varieties

and chappli kabab has always attracted me to enjoy its delectable taste at Qissa Khawani bazaar. It is my third visit to Qissa Khawani of the ongoing winter season with my family. My visit to Peshawar remained incomplete without enjoying the mouthwatering chappli kabab and grilled fish with green qehwa," said Riaz Khan, a resident of Nowshera while talking to APP. Besides food outlets, many visitors take parcels for their loved one at home to keep themselves warm in harsh winter.

Ganta Ghar, a famous fish trade hub in Peshawar drew a substantial number of sea food lovers on Thursday where trade of fish varieties including mushka, raho, simon, pomfret, mahsher, and lobsters were significantly increased after the cold wave gripped Peshawar valley for the last three days.

The hotel's owners and even vendors received a deluge of orders for eating at shops and home delivery from residents and visitors enjoying its delicious bites along with loved ones during peak of winter

season

Sajid Ali, a trader of fish outlet at Ghanta Ghar said trout stock has been brought from Swat and Mansehra districts as a special winter offer to fulfill Peshawarites' pressing demands. "The recipe of trout fish is very simple and time-efficient. We prepare trout in oil after its proper water wash and cutting. Later, varieties of spicy sauces, pomegranate seed powder, salt and other species ingredients are properly mixed."

Before making it on medium flame.

## K-P caretaker cabinet approves draft ordinance of amendments to PPC, CrPC

PESHAWAR (APP): A meeting of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa caretaker cabinet was held at Civil Secretariat Peshawar presided by Chief Minister Justice @ Syed Arshad Hussain Shah on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by ministers, advisors, special assistants, the Chief Secretary, Additional Chief Secretaries, and relevant administrative secretaries.

The Caretaker Cabinet approved the draft of an Ordinance amending various Sections of the Pakistan Panel Code (PPC) and Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) enhancing punishments and penalties for all those organizing

unlawful assembly, rioting and disobeying an order lawfully promulgated and/or causing obstructions, or injury to persons lawfully employed. Specifically, these amendments relate to the violation of sections 147, 148 and 188 of PPC.

According to details, the Cabinet approved amendments to Sections 147, 148 and 188 of the Pakistan Penal Code 1860 and in Schedule II of the Criminal Procedure Code 1898 by enhancing the punishment of the said sections to create deterrence and to stop unlawful assembly and rioting etc. and to maintain the writ of the state and peace.

While the existing punishment u/s 147 of PPC

was "up to two years or with fine, or both" it was increased to "up to three years and shall also be liable to fine up to two hundred thousand rupees. In default of payment of fine additional imprisonment for three months."

In schedule II, "may be arrested without warrant "non-bailable" has also been added. With regard to Section 148 the existing punishment was "up to three years or with fine, or both" has been replaced by "up to five years and shall also be liable to fine up to five hundred thousand rupees, which shall not be less than one hundred thousand rupees.



PESHAWAR: Vendors sitting around fire to keep them warm during cold weather in the city.

## CM inaugurates new extended emergency of PIC

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi inaugurated on Thursday the new emergency of Punjab Institute of Cardiology (PIC).

In a record period of six weeks, the Punjab Institute of Cardiology's emergency had been completely renovated with a 50 beds extension to the new emergency building. The CM inaugurated the state-of-the-art new emergency department of the PIC, through the latest computerised system.

The patients' records have also been secured forever. The extension and renovation has been materialised due to the continuous monitoring and visits of CM Mohsin Naqvi. The work was completed in record time.

Naqvi made a detailed visit to the upgraded emergency room and reviewed the facilities provided for cardiac patients. The chief minister inspected the ICU, echo room and other facilities and checked the quality of new beds.

## Terror financing cases increase in 2023: CTD KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The number of terror financing cases has increased during the last year, according to a report by the Counter Terrorism Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (CTD KP) released here on Thursday.

According to the report released by CTD KP, "it says that there was an increase in terror financing cases during the past six years, and 90 terror financing cases were registered in KP during 2022 and 298 in 2023."

A total of 960 people were named in terror financing cases, of which 311 were arrested and 44 were killed, reports said.

A sum of Rs 13.46 million was recovered in terror financing, and in the Peshawar region, 46 cases in 2022 and 179 cases in 2023 were registered in that regard. One suspect was convicted in 179 cases of terror financing in the Peshawar region last year, and according to CTD, "Cases have also been registered for providing financial support to terrorists."



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Punjab Governor Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman.

## Ashrafi urges parents to ensure polio vaccination

LAHORE (APP): In a bid to eradicate polio from Pakistan, Prime Minister's Special Representative and Pakistan Ulama Council Chairman Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi emphasised the importance of administering polio drops to children here at the Director General Health office on Thursday.

During the inaugural ceremony of the polio vaccination drive, he addressed concerns surrounding vaccine's safety, referencing an international 'Ulema and Muftian' conference in Egypt, which declared polio drops as Halal and

not harmful to children's health. Dismissing unfounded claims linking vaccine to reproductive system issues, he reassured the public about its safety. Expressing gratitude to the Punjab Health Department for successfully eliminating polio in the province, Ashrafi asserted the government's commitment to eradicating the polio virus nationwide by 2024. He acknowledged the sacrifices made by individuals, including army, police, and health workers, who lost their lives in the mission of polio eradication.

Ashrafi appealed to the public to show respect to health workers administering vaccines and warned of accountability before Allah for parents if their child suffers disability due to the failure of vaccine administration. Open to a debate to address any reservations, he underscored the urgency of collective efforts in achieving a polio-free Pakistan. In a show of solidarity, Ashrafi also condemned the recent terrorist attack in Iran, emphasising Pakistan's shared struggle against terrorism and expressing empathy for the victims.

## Minister stresses bringing accident ratio of mine workers to zero

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Mines and Minerals Ibrahim Hassan Murad said on Thursday that an advisory board of all departments related to mining should be formed and the accident rate should be brought to zero, while ensuring safety of mine workers.

Presiding over a review meeting on welfare of mine workers and other measures at his camp office on Thursday, he said the demand for Pakistani

labour was very high worldwide, and education and skills should be imparted to them. The meeting also discussed establishment of joint helpline for the Mines Labour Welfare Commissioner (MLWC) and Chief Inspectorate of Mines (CIM), steps and strategies to get real-time images of underground mines on monthly basis, amendments to the Mines Act, 1923 to introduce e-challan, list of pending challans.

## PHC issues written verdict in Zartaj case

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar High Court Chief Justice Ibrahim Khan on Thursday issued a two-page written verdict in the Zartaj Gul case.

According to the judgement, Zartaj Gul was wanted to the Punjab Police with regard to the May 9 incidents in Gujranwala. The court granted bail to Zartaj Gul and ordered her to appear before the court concerned by January 13. In case she failed to comply with the order her bail would become ineffective, the PHC observed.

## Governor lauds performance of CM Punjab, his team for speedy completion of projects

**Independent Report**

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab, Mohsin Naqvi, called on Governor Punjab, Muhammad Balighur Rehman here today at Governor House Lahore. In the meeting, public welfare projects in the province, improvement in police stations, facilitation centres, zoos, and in the provincial financial matters were discussed. Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rahman also informed the Chief Minister Punjab about the financial and administrative problems

faced by the public sector universities of the Punjab due to the lack of attention during the previous government's tenure spanned over almost four years.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Balighur Rehman appreciated the performance of Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi and his team for the speedy completion of public welfare projects. He also congratulated the Chief Minister Punjab on the up-gradation of Punjab Institute of Cardiology.



LAHORE: Deputy Commissioner Rafia Haider distributes "Helmet" among the citizen during "Road safety campaign" event at Istanbul Chowk, in Provincial Capital.

## KPK Health Department launches a crackdown against sale of illegal medicines

PESHAWAR (Online): On the direction of Secretary Health Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) Mahmood Aslam Wazir, Drug Control and Pharmacy Services Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has launched a comprehensive crackdown against the sale and stockpiling of illegal drugs in various districts of the province.

The Drug Control and Pharmacy Services Department has acted swiftly in response to reports received from various districts to crack down on illegal drugs including food nutraceuticals, unani, ayurvedic, homeopathic, and herbal products. According to a report submitted by the Director General, Drug Control and Pharmacy Services to the Secretary Health Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Thursday, drug inspectors in different provinces have been specially tasked to launch special campaigns in their respective districts. Abbottabad, Bajaur, Bannu, Buner, Chitral, DI Khan, Karam, Mardan, Haripur, Mansehra, Lucky Marwat, Nowshera, Orakzai, Dir Lower, Dir Upper, Illegal sale, stocking.

# International News

## US, allies warn Huthis as ship attacks rattle global commerce

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: Twelve nations led by the United States on Wednesday jointly warned Yemen's Huthi rebels of unspecified consequences unless they immediately halt sea attacks that are increasingly disrupting global commerce. President Joe Biden's administration described the statement—joined notably by Britain, Germany and Japan—as a final warning as he weighs possible military strikes against the Huthis if attacks persist.

The Iranian-backed rebels, who control much of Yemen including the capital Sanaa and most of the Red Sea coast, have been firing on ships allegedly linked to Israel in avowed

solidarity with Palestinians in the battered, Hamas-run Gaza Strip. "Let our message now be clear: we call for the immediate end of these illegal attacks and release of unlawfully detained vessels and crews," said the joint statement released by the White House.

"The Huthis will bear the responsibility of the consequences should they continue to threaten lives, the global economy and free flow of commerce in the region's critical waterways." A senior Biden administration official, while not specifying the consequences, called the message "very clear."

"I would not anticipate another warning. I

think this statement speaks for itself," the official told reporters.

Biden consulted with his national security team on the morning of New Year's Day while on holiday in the US Virgin Islands to "discuss options" over the Huthi attacks, the official said.

Britain—a close US ally on security issues—has issued its own warning of "direct action," with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak saying that the Huthis "must end their deadly and destabilizing attacks on vessels."

"The UK will always take action to defend freedom of navigation," Sunak wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter.



Ukrainian prisoners of war (POWs) pose after a swap, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, at an unknown location in Ukraine.

## North Korea moves to redefine relations with South

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: North Korea is shaking up the way it handles relations with South Korea, enacting changes to policy and government organisations that would effectively treat the South as a separate, enemy state.

The moves, which break with decades of policy, could have North Korea's foreign ministry taking over relations with the South, and potentially help justify the use of nuclear weapons against Seoul in a future war, analysts said.

Since the 1950-53 Korean War ended in a stalemate, both nations

have had policies that treat each other differently than other countries.

That has included relying on special agencies and ministries for inter-Korean relations rather than their foreign ministries and embracing policies for future peaceful reunification, usually envisioning a single state with two systems.

But in remarks to a year-end party meeting last week, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said peaceful reunification is impossible, and said the government would make a "decisive policy change" in relations with the "enemy".

## Italy's Meloni urged to discipline lawmaker over New Year's gun incident

**Monitoring Desk**  
ROME: Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni faced calls on Tuesday to punish a lawmaker from her party after a bystander was injured by a shot fired from his gun at a New Year's celebration. Emanuele Pozzolo, who is a member of Meloni's Brothers of Italy party, said the small revolver from which the bullet came belonged to him but has denied discharging the weapon himself.

The shot slightly injured the son-in-law of a member of the security team who were with a jun-

ior justice minister attending the same event to bring in the new year in the northern Italian village of Rosazza.

Local police are investigating the incident. Pozzolo had a licence for the gun but opposition politicians are asking why he decided to take it to a New Year's party.

"These incompetents are a danger to the safety of those who meet them, let alone the interests of the country," said Elly Schlein, leader of the opposition centre-left Democratic Party.

## ICJ slates hearings in Gaza genocide case for Jan 11-12

**Monitoring Desk**  
PARIS: The International Court of Justice (ICJ) will hold public hearings in proceedings launched by South Africa against Israel over the Gaza war on Jan 11 and 12, it said on Wednesday.

South Africa had asked the ICJ on Friday for an urgent order declaring that Israel was in breach of its obligations under the 1948 Genocide Convention in its crackdown against Hamas.

Israel had said it would appear before the court to contest the accusations.

The court usually takes one or two weeks to issue a decision on emergency measures after the hearings. The court's rulings are final but it has no authority to enforce them.

## Three injured in stabbing incident on Tokyo train, woman in custody

**Monitoring Desk**  
TOKYO: Three men were injured on Wednesday in a stabbing incident and taken to hospital after a woman wielded a knife on a train at Akihabara Station in Tokyo, Japanese police said.

The police received an emergency call at just before 11 pm local time (1400 GMT) saying the woman had inflicted injuries with a knife on the Yamanote loop line, one of the busiest transport routes in the city.

## UK leaders kick off electioneering

**Monitoring Desk**

LONDON: Rishi Sunak said Thursday he had pencilled in later this year for a general election, as he and his main political rival to be Britain's next leader effectively kicked off campaigning.

The prime minister and Labour leader Keir Starmer both made their first public appearances of 2024, travelling to Mansfield, in the English Midlands, and Bristol, in the West Country.

Sunak's ruling Conservative party has been in power for 14 years but is widely expected to lose the vote, which must be held before the end of January next year.

He has already ruled out leaving it until the last minute to go to the country, not just to secure a fifth consecutive term of office for the Tories but his own mandate with the electorate.

The former finance minister was elected in an internal party ballot in Oc-

tober 2022, taking over from the short-lived Liz Truss after Boris Johnson quit following a series of scandals.

Speculation has been mounting about when Sunak will decide to hold the vote, as he tries to drive down inflation that peaked at nearly 11 percent and reboot economic growth.

"My working assumption is we'll have a general election in the second half of this year," he told reporters.

Sunak refused to rule out holding the poll on May 2 to coincide with local elections but indicated he wanted more time to get the economy back on an even keel.

"I want to keep going, managing the economy well and cutting people's taxes. But I also want to keep tackling illegal migration," he said, referring to another key pledge.

"So, I've got lots to get on with and I'm determined to keep delivering for the British people."

## Migrant arrivals to Spain nearly doubled in 2023

**Monitoring Desk**

MADRID: The influx has strained resources in the seven-island Atlantic archipelago and pushed migration to the top of the political agenda in Spain, which along with Italy and Greece is a key entry point for migrants seeking a better life in Europe.

A total of 56,852 migrants entered Spain illegally last year, an 82.1 percent jump from 2022 and the most since 2018 when 64,298 migrants entered the country, according to provisional interior ministry figures. The bulk of them, 39,910, arrived by boat in the Canaries after making the perilous crossing from Africa, an increase of 154.5 percent over last year and surpassing the record number set in 2006. With controls tightening in the Mediterranean, the Canaries route has become a favourite for

people fleeing poverty and conflict in Africa, mostly on overcrowded, barely seaworthy vessels. Boats—often long wooden fishing vessels known as pirogues—depart from Morocco, as well as Mauritania, Gambia and Senegal further south.

The journey from Senegal to the Canaries usually takes a week of difficult upwind sailing of around 1,600 kilometres. Newscastrs regularly open with images of Red Cross officials and local doctors attending to newly arrived migrants wrapped in thermal blankets at ports in the Canaries, which has called for more help from Spain's central government and the European Union. Spain's minister for migration, Elma Saiz, said Tuesday during a visit to the Canaries that the central government was working on a law to distribute these minors across Spain.



Doctors hold placards calling for better pay, as they stand on a picket line outside London's St Thomas Hospital on the first day of strike action.

## Record-breaking strike piles pressure on England's health service

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: Junior doctors in England started a six-day walkout over pay on Wednesday, the longest strike in the 75-year history of the state-run National Health Service (NHS), which will hit patient care during a seasonal winter peak in demand.

As in other key sectors over the past year, junior doctors represented by the British Medical Association (BMA) have staged a se-

ries of walkouts to demand better pay in the face of soaring inflation.

Junior doctors in England on Wednesday defied a decision to start their longest consecutive strike in the seven-decade history of Britain's National Health Service (NHS).

They said their wages have gone down by around a quarter in real terms under the current government, which has been in power since 2010.

## Russian hackers were inside Ukraine telecoms giant for months

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: Russian hackers were inside Ukrainian telecoms giant Kyivstar's system from at least May last year in a cyberattack that should serve as a "big warning" to the West, Ukraine's cyber spy chief told Reuters.

The hack, one of the most dramatic since Russia's full-scale invasion nearly two years ago, knocked out services provided by Ukraine's biggest telecoms operator for some 24 million users for days from Dec. 12.

In an interview, Illia Vitiuk, head of the Security Service of Ukraine's (SBU) cybersecurity department, disclosed exclusive details about the hack, which he said caused "disastrous" destruction and aimed to land a psychological blow and gather intelligence.

"This attack is a big message, a big warning, not only to Ukraine, but for the whole Western world to understand that no one is actually untouchable."

## President says: Pakistan supports Kashmiris' right to self determination

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has said that Pakistan remained determined to playing its role in supporting the right to self-determination of Kashmiris through a free and impartial plebiscite as per the United Nations Security Council resolutions. The president, in his message in connection with the Right to Self-Determination Day being observed on January 5, said, "Our strong and steadfast moral, political and diplomatic support for the Kashmiri people will continue till the realisation of this inalienable right."

"Every year, on the 5th of January, we renew our support for the right to self-determination of the

people of Jammu and Kashmir. On this day in 1949, the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) unanimously adopted a resolution affirming the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people through a free and impartial plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations," he added. "The right to self-determination is a cardinal principle of international law, upheld in numerous core United Nations treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights."

President Alvi said, "For decades, it has been

reaffirmed by the UN General Assembly in its annual resolution on self-determination. However, the last 76 years of India's occupation of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) are a sad story of repression of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"India is trying to consolidate its occupation of IIOJK. The Indian Supreme Court's judgment of 11th December 2023 on the status of this disputed territory is the latest step in this direction. India is striving to subjugate the Kashmiris through such oppressive tactics further. It continues to deny their inalienable right to self-determination and live with freedom and dignity.

## SIFC playing active role to attract investment from Gulf countries: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday said that the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) was playing an active role in attracting investors from Gulf countries, including Qatar, to benefit from opportunities in key sectors of the economy.

The prime minister, in a meeting with Ambassador of Qatar in Islamabad Ali Mubarak Ali Essa Al-Khater, said that Pakistan and Qatar enjoyed strong, fraternal ties.

He expressed Pakistan's desire to expand bilateral cooperation across

all spheres, particularly trade and investment.

He also conveyed warm regards to the Amir of Qatar.

The prime minister encouraged the Qatari ambassador to explore the potential for cooperation in tourism and media sectors.

He said that Pakistan appreciated the role played by Qatar in diplomatic efforts that led to a temporary ceasefire in Gaza.

He stressed the need for concerted efforts by the international community, particularly Muslim Ummah, to bring peace in Palestine.



ISLAMABAD: The 4th meeting of the National Economic Council (NEC) Sub Committee on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was held under the chairmanship of the caretaker Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Mr. Muhammad Sami Saeed.

## Why the charity job policies framed to provide job to children of govt. employees on priority basis: CJP

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa has remarked as to why charity job policies are made to provide jobs to the children of government employees on priority basis.

He further observed such policies should be thrown out. Constitution is above every thing. The constitution has been trampled by making such policies. Be courageous and write to Prime Minister (PM) this policy is wrong.

The CJP gave these remarks while presiding over a 3-member bench of Supreme Court (SC) during the course of hearing of case pertaining to appointments

in Post Office Islamabad Thursday.

The CJP Qazi Faez Isa inquired has PM such powers to change policy on his own. Why the charity job policies are framed to provide jobs to the children of government employees on priority basis.

The CJP remarked the constitution was trampled by working out such policies. Be courageous and write to PM this policy is wrong. Why should job be given to children of only government employees on priority basis.

The CJP remarked are the other children not Pakistanis.

Additional Attorney

General (AAG) told the court this policy was worked out during previous government term.

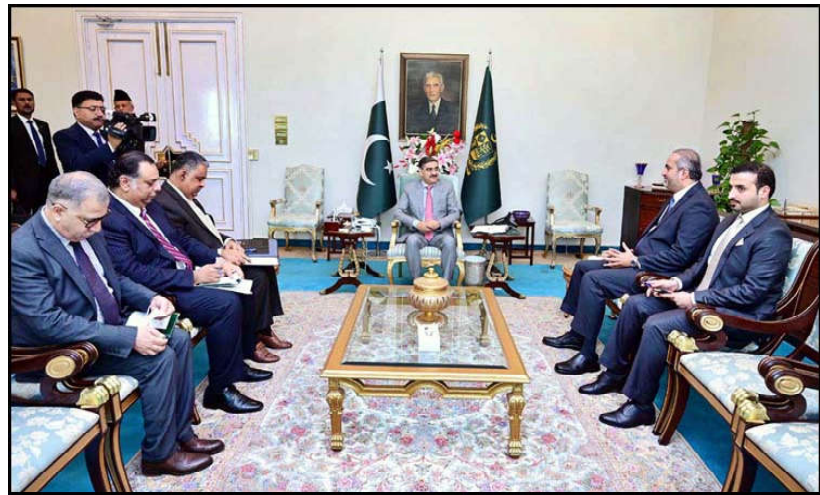
The CJP while moving to him remarked then again say that the former government was above constitution.

The CJP remarked such policy should be thrown out. Constitution is above every thing.

AAG requested the court to allow him to seek directives from government.

The court remarked we summon Attorney General (AG).

The court while issuing notice to AG adjourned the hearing of the case for indefinite period.



ISLAMABAD: Amb. Ali Mubarak Ali Essa Al-Khater, Ambassador of the State of Qatar in Pakistan calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

## LHC dismisses petition against revoking PTI election symbol 'bat'

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday dismissed a petition, challenging the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) order of declaring intra-party elections of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) unconstitutional and revoking the party's election symbol 'bat'.

The court held that the petition was not maintainable at this stage in the light of the Supreme Court judgements and pendency of identical matters before different benches of the Peshawar High Court.

Justice Jawad Hassan announced the reserved verdict on a petition, filed by Chaudhry Umar Afab Dhillu, Sheikhupura Dis-

trict PTI president, and others. The court had reserved the verdict after hearing arguments of the parties a day earlier.

In his arguments, the petitioners' counsel had argued that the PTI intra-party elections were held in accordance with the party constitution, and all required documents were submitted to the ECP as per the Elections Act. However, the ECP declared the appointments of the PTI officials as void and also revoked the party's election symbol 'bat', he added. He submitted that there was no justification to declare the intra-party elections as void and revoking the party's election symbol.

## Solangi deeply grieved over loss of lives in Kerman terrorist attacks

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi while condemning the terrorist attacks in Kerman city in Iran, expressed deep grief over the loss of lives.

In a message, the minister expressed solidarity with the government and the people of Iran on behalf of the government and the people of Pakistan.

This cowardly act of terrorism was highly condemnable, Murtaza Solangi said.

"Most of the countries in the region, including Pakistan, are victims of terrorism.

## Sheikh's nominations from NA-56, NA-57 approved

RAWALPINDI (INP): An appellate tribunal on Thursday granted appeals of Sheikh Rashid against rejection of his nomination papers in two constituencies. Appellate tribunal declared returning officers decisions as void and approved nomination papers of Sheikh Rashid for Rawalpindi's National Assembly constituencies NA-56 and NA-57.

The tribunal on Tuesday approved the former federal minister's appeal

against nomination papers rejection for hearing. Appellate tribunal judge Justice Mirza Waqas Rauf had issued notices to returning officers and fixed the on January 04.

Sardar Abdul Raziq and Sardar Shehbaz appeared before the court on behalf of Sheikh Rashid Ahmed.

Returning officer rejecting nomination papers said that Sheikh Rashid was failed to provide complete details of his assets.



ZHOB: Caretaker Provincial Health Minister Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan Jogezi inaugurating Emergency Trauma Center at District Headquarters Hospital Zhob.

## Elections 2024: PML-N, Q likely to strike seat adjustment deal

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PML-Q) are expected to strike a deal on seat adjustment for the general elections in the coming days.

According to media reports, the sources said the PML-Q wanted seat adjustment on four National Assembly and eight provincial assembly seats.

PML-Q leaders Salik Hussain, Monis Elahi, Hussain Elahi and Tariq Bashir Cheema succeeded in those NA constituencies. On the other hand, the PML-N is also in talks with the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) for seat adjustment.

On Wednesday, the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) announced the names of its

candidates for national and provincial assemblies from Balochistan. Taking to X, the PML-N said the party approved the award of party tickets to Balochistan candidates after conclusion of the interviews by the Central Parliamentary Board for the General Election 2024.

According to the list, Nawabzada Toor Gul Jugzai had been issued the party ticket from NA-251, whereas Sardar Yaqoob Nasir had been awarded the party ticket

from NA-252. Mir Dostain Khan Domki and Abdul Ghafoor had been nominated from NA-253 and NA-254, respectively. The PML-N had awarded the party ticket to former Balochistan chief minister Jam Kamal from NA-257.



ABBOTTABAD: Smoke rising after fire broken out incident in a vehicle as the rescue 1122 workers are busy in extinguishing fire, near Qalandarabad Interchange in Abbottabad.

## ADC takes notice of reports of disease among camels in Lasbela

QUETTA: The Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Lasbela, Syed yasin Akhtar took notice of the reports of disease spread among camels in Lasbela.

According to an official hand out issued here on Thursday, the teams of Livestock were sent to the affected area on directives of the district administration.

The teams are included the veterinary doctors and mobile units of the Livestock department.

The ADC General has also sought report from the concerned department about the disease found among camels in different rural areas of the district.

Meanwhile, necessary vaccination has also been started by the Livestock department in the affected areas for prevention of the disease. It may be mentioned here that the reports had gone viral on the social media about spread of disease among camels in Lasbela.

## 15 units of Tarbela Dam closed

HARIPUR (INP): Power shortages are on the rise due to the closure of 15 production units after the reduction in water release from Tarbela Dam reported on Thursday.

According to the Public Relations Department of Tarbela Dam, it has been reported that only two units are currently operational, producing 271 megawatts of electricity, leading to an increase in load shedding. The closure of the majority of the power plant's production units has sparked concern about increased load shedding in the region.



QUETTA: A delegation of Balochistan Private Schools Association Alliance meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

## Formation of Balochistan Pharmacy Council very essential: Abdullah

QUETTA: The Secretary Health Abdullah Khan has emphasized upon forming Balochistan Pharmacy Council (BPC) in the province. The Secretary Health was chairing a meeting to form BPC here on Thursday.

The Additional Secretary Health, Arif Khan, Chief Drug Inspector, Zahid Salik, Secretary Quality Control Board, Moez Khan, Director Drug Testing Laboratory, Ali Jan, Deputy Secretary Pharmacy Council, Noroz, Dean Pharmacy Department, Dr

Muhammad Shafi besides other concerned.

The participants discussed the matters about formation of the Pharmacy Council besides its supplementary laws.

The participants gave proposals about formation of the Council.

The Secretary Health said that formation of Pharmacy Council is very nec as it is also responsible for registration of the pharmacists.

He mentioned that the Pharmacy Council is a regulatory authority for the pharmacists in Pakistan.

## Step afoot to build women libraries in Suhbatpur: DC

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner Suhbatpur Mir Miran Khan Baloch on Thursday said that our effort was to build three more libraries in which women of the area would get opportunities of education to play their role for betterment of the country and Balochistan. To join the ranks of developed countries, we have to pay special attention to education and research, he added.

He expressed these views while talking to the media on the occasion of the inauguration of the

women's library in Suhbatpur. The DC thanked to the education which enabled women to hold the positions of Assistant Commissioner and other higher slots across the country and said that women were not behind in every field. We also want our next generation to come forward and contribute to the development of the country and Balochistan, he said.

The DC further said that our effort was to construct three more libraries in which women would benefit greatly.



QUETTA: Former Adviser to the Balochistan Chief Minister, Mir Khalid Langove addresses to media persons during press conference.

## PTA intensifies crackdown on illegal issuance of SIMs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Zonal Office Lahore successfully conducted a raid in collaboration with Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Cyber Crime Circle, against a franchisee of a mobile phone company in Sheikhupura aimed to curb the misuse of illegal SIM cards, often linked to criminal activities such as fraud, identity theft and other illicit operations.

During the raid FIA seized 6 active SIMs and 11 BVs devices used in the illegal activation of SIMs, said a news release.

Two individuals have been nominated for FIR. FIA is currently investigating the matter further.

It is pertinent to mention that PTA has established a monitoring and detection system to identify unusual patterns and anomalies associated with SIM card activations.

This technological upgrade has enabled prompt intervention and insight into suspicious SIM activations. Overall, this resolute and unwavering commitment underscores the Authority's dedication to eradicate the illegal issuance of SIMs.

## JUI-F dismisses allegations of seeking election delay

SWAT (INP): Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) leader Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri on Thursday dismissed the allegations about the party's inclination towards a delay in the upcoming elections.

Talking to a private news channel, he asserted that the party has consistently demonstrated its commitment to active participation in electoral processes. Despite the challenges, Haideri highlighted the party's unwavering demand for fair and transparent elections as a core aspect of JUI-F's agenda.

Expressing deep concern over recent violent attacks targeting JUI-F leaders in Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, he emphasized the need to maintain peaceful conditions during the upcoming elections.

He specifically advocated for a secure environment for JUI-F leader Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman, calling for foolproof security measures to mitigate perceived security threats. Haideri urged the authorities to provide bullet-proof vehicles for politicians facing threats. Reiterating the party's manifesto, he claimed that JUI-F primarily aimed to establish an Islamic welfare state, based on principles of justice and social equity.

JUI-F envisions a state that prioritizes peace, eliminating corruption.

## PML-N to make clean sweep in next elections: Lehri

QUETTA (APP): Leader of Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) and candidate of PB-44 constituency Saryab Mir Noorullah Lehri on Thursday said that his party would make a clean sweep in general elections being held on February 8.

He expressed these views while addressing a ceremony held after the resignation of Takri Nasrullah Kurd, Kaleemullah, Kafaitullah, Ali Asghar, Ghulam Haider, Kabir Lala and others. All above mentioned local leaders have announced to join PML-N on the occasion.

Mir Noorullah Lehri said that due to the growing popularity of the Muslim League (N), the opponents have become nervous. The people will reject the negative agenda of opponents by voting Nawaz party in next elections, he said.

## TDAP launches a robust strategy to further bolster sesame seed export

QUETTA: The Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce, has launched a robust strategy to further bolster Pakistan's position in the global sesame seed export market.

The strategy's core component involves conducting targeted awareness

## TDAP launches a robust strategy to further bolster sesame seed export

gained the inaugural seminar on Thursday, in Lasbela, in collaboration with Lasbela University of Agriculture Water and Marine Sciences, Uthal, said a news release received here.

The event drew the participation of growers, farmers, agriculture extension officers from Balochistan, and other stakeholders.

The seminar's overarching objective was to enlighten growers and farmers about international market dynamics, effective value-addition strategies, and pre and post-harvest procedures to optimize sesame seed yields.

Pakistan has witnessed an extraordinary

## TDAP launches a robust strategy to further bolster sesame seed export

278 percent increase in sesame seed exports during the first half of the current fiscal year. From July to December 2023, exports surged to an impressive US\$364 million, showcasing a significant leap compared to the same period in 2022.

Director-General of Agro and Food, Athar Hussain Khokhar highlighted the government's

## TDAP launches a robust strategy to further bolster sesame seed export

efforts to promote sesame seed exports. He assured growers that TDAP and the Ministry of Commerce have developed a special business plan for enhancing sesame export, as the product has the potential to reach \$1 Billion in next few years.

potential opportunities for sesame seed exports to China. In the seminar, representatives from local farmers/growers discussed their challenges, while a leading exporter from Karachi outlined their sesame seed export requirements.