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PM vows befitting response in case of 2019-like aggression from India

Says no one should be delusional about Pakistan's response as it had an entire defence mechanism in place to protect its people; Reiterates government's resolve to respond to any threat, regardless of whether there were elections in the country or not

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday warned that with a renewed determination and defence capability, Pakistan would befittingly respond if India resorted to any 2019-like aggression, ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. "Pakistan will exactly do the same as it did in 2019. We will hit their planes. We will respond in the same coin... Neither our bullets nor determination are old. Our bullets are new and our determination is quite renewed and fresh," the prime minister said in the podcast with a digital media channel.

He said that no one should be delusional about Pakistan's response as it had an entire defence mechanism in place to protect its people. He viewed that till the resolution of the Kashmir dispute, the potential for conflict would continue to exist and anything could trigger any sort of exchange. Coming to the upcoming general elections in Pakistan, he said the threat of terrorism existed especially in the southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and certain areas of Balochistan, posing significant vulnerabilities to candidates and their campaigns. However, the situation had not reached a level to question the legitimacy of the entire electoral process. He reiterated the

government's resolve to respond to any threat, regardless of whether there were elections in the country or not. Asked about the Senate resolution passed recently calling for the postponement of the elections, the prime minister said, "I do not see any legal implications as the Senate resolution is not mandatory." He said the government had opposed the resolution in the House, though, as per requirement, it would submit a report on the matter. To a question, he said the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was the right forum to decide on delaying the polls in certain constituencies considering the security situation.

Regarding grievances and concerns of some candidates and political parties, Prime Minister Kakar said the relevant forums of ECP and judiciary were there to address the situation. "Our role is not to act as a judiciary or ROs (returning officers), obstructing or constructing opportunities for someone. If someone feels there is unfairness, the appropriate forums are available," he remarked. Discussing the situation in Balochistan, he mentioned the role of militant groups such as BLA, BRA, and BLF which were considered terrorists even outside Pakistan. He opposed some segments of the society attributing their actions to underdevelopment and lack of state investment.

Asked about the precondition for dialogue, the prime minister referred to the abandonment of violence by militant groups and reiterated that being a nation of 240 million, Pakistan could not surrender to a few thousand individuals. Discussing the terrorist activities of TTP (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan) and the Afghan government's response to Pakistan's reaction following the recent terrorist attack in D I Khan, he said communication with them was going on and some behavioral changes had been observed on the other side.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar meets a group of Envoys from African and Asian Countries.

Pakistan, KSA & Turkiye vow to achieve shared objectives in defence domain

Pakistan, KSA reaffirm desire to enhance defence cooperation in all domains

RAWALPINDI (APP): Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye have reaffirmed the importance of combining their intellectual, technical, financial and human resource to achieve shared objectives and attainment of self-sufficiency in the defence domain.

This resolve was expressed at the second meeting of Pakistan, KSA and Turkiye Trilateral Defence Collaboration in Rawalpindi on Tuesday. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss prospective collaboration in defence equipment technologies including research and development.

Acknowledging the historical brotherly relations, the three sides reiterated the strategic intent to increase the scope of trilateral cooperation and the need to enhance the pace of collaboration in pursuit of common goals. Three sides agreed to convene next meeting on Trilateral Defence In-

ustrial Collaboration during World Defence Show at Riyadh next month. The agreement reached at the third meeting of Pakistan-KSA Defence Collaboration at GHQ in Rawalpindi, said an Inter Services Public Relations statement Tuesday. The forum reiterated the need to explore further avenues for defence cooperation and enhancing the pace of collaboration. The meeting underscored the significance of historical relations between the two brotherly states. The participants discussed issues of bilateral interest and evolving security environment. The two sides deliberated upon rapid advancements in military technologies and the need for defence industrial cooperation between the two states.



RAWALPINDI: A view of meeting of Trilateral Defence Collaboration between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye.

Pakistan seeks \$2bn loan rollover from UAE

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan has requested the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to roll over a loan of \$2 billion.

According to sources in the Ministry of Finance, caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar wrote a letter to the UAE president stating that the loan of \$2 billion from the UAE was maturing in January. Sources said a total of \$3 billion were deposited with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) by the UAE, of which \$1 billion were going to mature on Jan 17 and another \$1 billion on Jan 23. They said the interest rate was 3 per cent on first amount and 6.5 per cent on the remaining \$1 billion.

The deposit of \$2 billion from the UAE was likely to be rolled over soon, the sources said. **190m pounds case: Court orders to freeze assets, bank accounts of Shahzad, Farah Gogi**

RAWALPINDI (Online): Accountability Court (AC) has ordered to freeze assets and bank accounts of 6 accused persons including PTI leader Shahzad Akbar and Zulfi Bukhari in 190 million pounds case. Order has been issued to freeze the bank accounts of Farah Gogi who is friend of Bushra Bibi wife of PTI founder and other accused persons. The court has ordered to confiscate the vehicles registered in the names of the accused persons.

Pak, Lebanon sign accord for media regulatory bodies' cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Lebanon have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote cooperation between the regulatory bodies of their media which would eventually further

strengthen the bilateral relations. The MoU was signed between the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) and the Audiovisual Council of Lebanon (CNA) in Beirut.

Ambassador of Pakistan to Lebanon Salman Athar signed the MoU with President of the National Audiovisual Council of Lebanon Abdul Hadi Mahfouz on behalf of PEMRA. The issue of seat adjustment in the NA-242 constituency of Keamari district is pending and it will be decided in next 48 hours, sources said. PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif and MQM leader Mustafa Kamal are the candidates from NA-242.

Both parties decided that the PML-N will field its candidate in national assembly constituency of NA-239 in Karachi South district. The issue of seat adjustment on the NA-242 constituency of Keamari district is pending and it will be decided in next 48 hours, sources said. PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif and MQM leader Mustafa Kamal are the candidates from NA-242.

MQM, PML-N agree over seat-adjustment in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): The MQM-Pakistan and the PML-N have agreed over seat adjustment on Karachi's seats for the general election next month. The sources sharing details of the meeting between the committees of two parties said that the PML-N will field its candidates on the national and provincial assemblies' seats of Karachi in NA-229 and NA-230.

The MQM-P will field its candidates on NA-231 and its provincial constitu-



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi chairing a meeting on implementing employment quota for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

PM underscores need to enhance trade, economic linkages with African countries

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday, while acknowledging that Pakistan and Africa had enjoyed excellent political relations over the years, stressed the need to enhance trade and economic linkages which were yet to realize their full potential. He also highlighted the importance Pakistan attached to Africa and expressed the desire to strengthen ties with African countries, at the bilateral as well as regional level.

The prime minister met a group of resident envoys representing African countries as well as select Asian countries over lunch, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The meeting was attended by the Ambassadors

of Algeria and Sudan as well as High Commissioners of Bangladesh, Brunei, Malaysia, Mauritius, and South Africa. Other participants included the Charges d' Affaires of Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe. The caretaker prime minister mentioned that the 4th Pakistan-Africa Trade Conference was underway in Cairo, Egypt from January 9-11 where Pakistan was represented by a large business delegation led by the commerce minister. PM Kakar also expressed deep appreciation for Pakistan's historic ties with the Southeast Asian countries, particularly Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia.

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi and Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan addressing a press conference at PID Media Center.

Zardari vows to provide sui gas to Dera Bugti if elected

DERA BUGTI (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Co-Chairman and former president Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday vowed that his party after coming to power would lay a pipeline in Dera Bugti to provide Sui gas to the local people. If voted to power, the PPP would also ensure the share of local people in gas fields and ample employment opportunities for them, he said while addressing a public meeting here through video link. Zardari, who was unable to travel to Dera Bugti due to bad weather, promised that he would soon visit the area and meet the workers. He said that he was well aware of the problems of the people of Dera Bugti in general and Balochistan in particular, and would take concrete steps to resolve

them. The provision of jobs and the establishment of a best hospital in Dera Bugti were part of the PPP's election, he reiterated. Zardari appreciated Sarfraz Bugti, who joined the PPP recently and the party workers for organizing such a successful gathering in the cold weather conditions. Meanwhile Pakistan Peoples Party leader and former caretaker interior minister Sarfraz Bugti on Tuesday said that no one could hamper the Balochistan province - the land of martyrs, to develop and prosper under the leadership of PPP. His party was fully determined to bring about concrete changes in the country if voted to power, he said while addressing a public gathering in Dera Bugti.

His party was fully determined to bring about concrete changes in the country if voted to power, he said while addressing a public gathering in Dera Bugti.

Pakistan to host 2-day global health security summit today

ISLAMABAD (INP): A two-day global health security summit is commencing in Islamabad on Tuesday with the aim to ensure pandemic preparedness and response on equity basis. This was stated by caretaker Minister for National Health Services Dr Nadeem Jan and caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi at a news conference in Islamabad today.

Nadeem Jan said Prime Minister Anwaar ul Haq Kakar will inaugurate the moot and more than seventy national and international delegates will attend it. The Minister for National Health Services said we are pursuing a big goal through this conference, stressing it is aimed at ensuring that all the countries have equal access to facilities, human resource, vaccine and financing to cope with any outbreak and pandemic. In his remarks, the Information Minister said it is a matter of great distinction for Pakistan to host the summit.

SC rejects request to stay proceeding of SJC against Justice Naqvi

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Tuesday rejected the request to stay the proceeding of Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) against Justice Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi. A three-member bench of the top court, headed by Justice Amin ud Din Khan and comprising Justice Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail and Justice Musarrat Hilali, heard the petition of Justice Naqvi.

Justice Naqvi was present in the court from Adiala jail through video link. The respective SHOs appeared in the court along with record of 12 cases. RA Bazaar police told the court PTI founder was informed about his arrest in GHQ attack case. RA Bazar police requested the court to grant physical remand of PTI founder in GHQ attack case. The court directed police to investigate PTI founder in jail.

President for implementing job quota for persons with disabilities

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday underscored the need to implement employment quota for persons with disabilities (PWDs) at all levels of the government for their financial empowerment. Highlighting the need to make PWDs productive members of society, the president said that they made up almost 12% of Pakistan's population and affirmative actions like job quotas could help overcome existing barriers to their employment.

He underscored the need to equip PWDs with employable skills and link them with potential employers to provide jobs to them as per the nature and severity of their disability.

He suggested that the government departments should identify jobs for PWDs and provide them employment as per their skill sets to increase their inclusion in the workforce, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release. The president expressed these views while chairing a meeting on implementing employment quota for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Secretary Ministry of Human Rights Allah Dino

Imran Khan admitted article published by foreign journal was AI generated: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi said on Tuesday that former Chairman PTI had admitted that he didn't write the article published by The Economist and it was an artificial intelligence-generated write-up.

Using his social media platform X account, the minister said that the current Chairman of PTI did not endorse its anti-establishment and anti-American content but the PTI overseas, some semi-literate anchors and The Economist were jubilant over AI-generated shenanigans. INP adds: Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi says caretaker government has no authority to postpone the elections. Speaking in a PTV programme, he said according to Article 218(3) of the Constitution, it is constitutional prerogative of the Election Commission to give or change the date of elections. The Minister said, however, government will fully support to Election Commission of Pakistan to hold free, fair and transparent elections in the country.

PTI founder Imran arrested in GHQ attack case

RAWALPINDI (Online): Founder PTI Imran Khan has been arrested in GHQ attack case as well. Rawalpindi police have arrested PTI founder in GHQ attack case.

The hearing of 12 cases related to May 9 incidents took place against PTI founder in Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Rawalpindi. Judge Malik Ijaz Asif heard the cases. PTI founder was present in the court from Adiala jail through video

link. The respective SHOs appeared in the court along with record of 12 cases. RA Bazaar police told the court PTI founder was informed about his arrest in GHQ attack case. RA Bazar police requested the court to grant physical remand of PTI founder in GHQ attack case. The court directed police to investigate PTI founder in jail.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Mr. Madad Ali Sindhvi met with Federal Minister for National Health and Culture, Jamal Shah and Secretary Information Ms Shahera Shahid to discuss the arrangements of celebration of 100 years of Shaikh Ayaz.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Moving forward

Yesterday, Article 62 was, hopefully permanently, de-envenomed of its most lethal effect: lifetime disqualification of a lawmaker from holding public office.

Though several problematic 'morality' requirements in Articles 62 and 63 had been inserted in the Constitution during the Zia era, the 'lifetime disqualification' aspect under 62(1)(f) was a more recent innovation — one that happened five years ago, when the Supreme Court interpreted the clause to deem anyone legally determined to have failed the 'sadiq' and 'ameen' test to have lost forever the right to lead the people of Pakistan as an elected representative.

The verdict had been met with immediate outrage, and it was seen widely as the state hammering the final nails in the coffin meant for Nawaz Sharif's political career.

Yesterday, the Supreme Court finally undid its earlier mistake. A new set of judges agreed, by a majority of 6-1, that the old bench had overreached by 'reading into' the Constitution while taking a rather expansive view of how the clause ought to be interpreted.

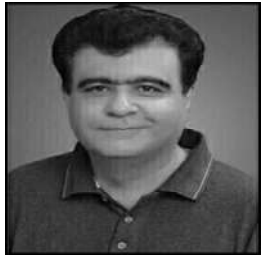
The new bench noted that there is no "law that provides for the procedure, process and the identification of the court of law for making the declaration mentioned in Article 62(1)(f) of the Constitution and the duration of such a declaration, for the purpose of disqualification thereunder, to meet the requirements of the fundamental right to a fair trial and due process guaranteed by Article 10A of the Constitution."

It declared that till the law is updated to address these deficiencies, disqualification under Article 62(1)(f) cannot hold for life. Positive as the news is, it should be pointed out that the clause remains very much intact.

It remains up to an elected government to, either with consensus or two-thirds majority, undo it. All the work has done is ensure it won't be used as Damocles' sword over a condemned politician's neck. It has long been argued, and by better legal minds, that the eligibility requirements for holding public office as currently laid out in the Constitution contain several provisions that are patently unrealistic or impossible to attain and must, therefore, be reconsidered.

This publication has long agreed with this view. There is nothing wrong with expecting national leaders to adhere to a high standard of conduct; however, when 'requirements' for qualification start demanding personality traits based on ideas of morality that will be interpreted very differently by different people, they lose their purpose altogether. It cannot be up to the law to choose, based on such arbitrary conditions, who is and who isn't 'morally deserving' of leadership and who, therefore, is to be allowed to participate in the electoral process. Such decisions should be left to the judgment of the voting citizenry.

Decaying politics



Dr Niaz Murtaza

Politics is to acquire and use power to achieve one's aims and is often autocratic (won via force to favour elites). However, its best form is democratic, where rulers present pro-poor policies to win and implement them. But elites have created many perverse political forms to prevail even in democracy: patronage, populist, fascist and religious politics.

Our politics is clearly elitist. Sadly, it has shown a huge drift to perverse political forms over time. Our mother political form was Muslim League's freedom one. Unlike Congress and Awami League's pro-poor left ideology, its politics were rightwing ethno-religious populism based on fear of Hindu rule sans a pro-poor vision. Yet this national politics hid many regional forms.

Muslim League co-opted feudal Unionists in Punjab and patronage politics ruled there for long, with elites winning by offering crumbs to familial voter blocs rather than pro-poor agendas. Yet Punjab voted for PPP's leftist agenda in 1970 but later adopted aberrant rightwing forms again like PML-N's patronage and PTT's populism (anti-elitist sans clear pro-poor agenda). So, which one will prevail in Punjab is unclear. A distinct Seraiki identity has emerged in its poorer southern region but is yet to spawn ethno-ideological politics there. After 1947, Pakhtuns stuck to Ghaffar Khan's leftist ethno-ideology for long. Religious parties as-

cended slowly in isolated areas like Dir, Kohistan and the south but PTT's religio-populist nationalism now holds sway despite the crackdown. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Hindko region, better off than many Pakhtun areas, has always stuck to patronage politics, like Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir.

Sindh and Baloch too started with leftist ethno-ideology led by G.M. Syed and Bizenjo. Among the Baloch, establishment ploys have stoked religious and feudal ethno-ideological parties face extinction. Sindh's leftist ideology, but then adopted patronage politics. Ethno-ideological Sindh parties now get few votes. Mohajirs supported Muslim League's rightwing politics initially, swung to religious parties in 1970, then turned to MQM's ethno-populist quasi-fascism after 1980 and PTT in 2018. With both PTI and MQM facing state oppression, religious parties (JI and TLP) are rising again. But like Punjab, the future of Mohajir politics remains unclear though it too may remain rightwing. Mohajir politics is the oddest nationally as despite their high education, income, global links and exposure, urban location (which makes mobilisation easy) and big intellectual pockets, they keep moving from one perverse political form to another.

So nationally, there is no ethnicity or region where ideological politics prevails. Even those who had it have embraced perverse politics. Stagnant patronage is now our main political form, vacuous populism its main challenger, religious extremist politics the main wild card, and terrorist politics the main spoiler, cutting a bleak view of our politics. This state is mainly due to the

establishment's autocratic politics that serves as the bedrock of our politics. It has ruled directly for 30 years and runs politics covertly, and even otherwise, by furthering various forms of political patronage. Our huge economic, security, social and foreign policy failures stem from our political failures. Our political failures exist because powerful forces have blocked our natural political evolution for six decades.

The view is not entirely bleak as small pro-poor forces are rising. Strangely, these are mainly in the two poorest and most violent areas: ex-Fata and Balochistan. The misery from poverty is magnified by terrorism — religion in ex-Fata to conquer the state and ethnic in Balochistan. PTM won two national seats in 2018 in ex-Fata.

Baloch forces are still loose as seen in Gwadar protests and Baloch march. So, politics in these areas now has three forms: patronage politics, militant politics, and mass politics, which rejects both.

The state is unwisely crushing it, not seeing its value in ending both forms of terrorism. The huge political energy of Baloch protests must crystallise into durable political forms like PTM. In my solidarity visits to the Baloch protest camp in Islamabad, I requested Mahrang Baloch and others to think on these lines.

Our political decay reflects a larger Saarc proclivity: Bangladesh embraces one-party autocracy, India has illiberal extremism and Sri Lanka stagnant politics. Yet nowhere are multiple crises and the need for mass politics bigger than in Pakistan. — Courtesy Dawn

Health security



Arif Azad

The greatly anticipated Global Health Security Summit, one of the major calendar events on the global health security agenda, gets underway in Islamabad on January 10.

The two-day event draws delegates from over 40 countries and is the personal initiative of the current caretaker Health Minister, Dr Nadeem Jan, who worked hard to bring it to Pakistan since taking over as the third technocrat at the health ministry after Dr Zafar Mirza and Dr Faisal Sultan. This clearly shows that a technocrat with command over the brief can lead from the front on key health challenges facing the country. And herein lie many rays of hope for the health sector.

As a rule of thumb, global health security means the presence and development of robust and resilient public health systems that can help prevent, detect and respond to infectious disease threats. This assumes particular importance in our globalised world, where a disease threat anywhere is a disease threat everywhere.

Remember the oft-repeated line during the Covid-19 pandemic: no one is safe until everybody is safe? The Covid pandemic underscored the necessity of global solidarity and working across borders and governments in a whole-of-the-world approach to infectious diseases. In this context, the global health security agenda represents global efforts to strengthen the world's ability to prevent, detect and respond to infec-

tious disease threats.

Global health security gained policy salience after the Ebola outbreak. It led to the adoption of the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) in 2014, with the initial involvement of 40 countries. With more than 70 countries now signing up for the GHSA 2024, it is expanding its footprint and reach to the rest of the globe. The key elements of the GHSA involve developing sustainable financing mechanisms, promoting multisector collaboration, improving information sharing across countries and strengthening the accountability of member states to their country commitments.

While global health security had long been a concern, the Covid pandemic helped a further shift towards it. This was manifested in the interest of the media, the general public and health policy officials in cross-border infections. Not only this, the Covid pandemic also kick-started discussions on the need for pandemic preparedness and response treaties, as well as revision of existing International Health Regulations (IHR). In parallel, the GHSA also acquired its present shape, intersecting and feeding into debates about new pandemic treaties and revisions to the IHR.

Pakistan has signed onto GHSA 24, and the National Institute of Health (NIH) has been leading on both GHSA and IHR. GHSA 24 requires member countries to develop leadership and technical knowledge and initiate collaborative efforts to sustain health security in the long term. The GHSA requires countries to show demonstrable progress in health security-related technical areas, as well as complete a joint external evaluation and reach a level of demonstrated capacity in at

least five technical areas.

Pakistan participated in a joint external evaluation in 2023. Based on the assessment, an action plan for health security is now being formulated. The summit offers an opportunity to not only review the progress Pakistan has made but also to benefit from the best global practices on show. Pakistan faces many challenges when it comes to infectious diseases. Tuberculosis and anti-microbial diseases remain issues of significant concern. Anti-microbial resistance in Pakistan is mounting, and what has been called a silent pandemic may balloon into a grand pandemic if not collectively addressed.

The work on building up a resilient public health system is of vital importance with respect to the global health security agenda. Yet, there is a long way to go when it comes to strengthening public health systems in Pakistan. The examples of Korea and Japan, where robust public health systems proved crucial in beating back the Covid pandemic, are illustrative in this regard.

Pakistan will obviously be looking to invest more in health systems, especially where laboratory and surveillance capacities are concerned. Funding for pandemic preparedness is also a long-standing issue, which is being negotiated in the new pandemic preparedness treaty. One funding window for pandemic preparedness and response has been opened up by the World Bank. Pakistan needs to be alive to such new funding streams. The global health summit offers an ideal opportunity to seize on these and other emerging opportunities and make use of them. More importantly, political ownership of GHSA is also a must. — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

ECC approves mechanism for weighted average price of urea

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet on Tuesday approved a mechanism for the weighted average price of urea, directing the National Fertilizer Marketing Limited (NFML) to ensure a reasonable price for the commodity and the Ministry of Industries and Production to provide oversight to the whole process.

The ECC meeting presided over by Minister for Finance, Revenue, and Economic Affairs Dr Shamshad Akhtar, took

this decision after discussing a summary of the Ministry of Industries and Production seeking approval of a mechanism for the sale of imported urea at a 'basket price' along with locally manufactured urea at length.

Among others, the meeting was also attended by Minister for Privatization and Inter-Provincial Coordination Fawad Hasan Fawad, Minister of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Sami Saeed, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Dr Muhammad Jehanzaeb

Khan, Minister for Law and Justice, Water Resources and Climate Change Ahmed Irfan Aslam, Advisor to PM on Finance Dr Waqar Masood, Federal Secretaries, and other senior government officers of the relevant ministries, a news release said.

On another agenda item, the ECC deliberated on a summary of the Intelligence Bureau (IB) for the provision of additional funds of Rs. 250 million during the current financial year 2023-24.

The IB representatives briefed the

committee about the recent surge of terrorism which needed effective countermeasures to thwart the nefarious designs of terrorists.

The ECC approved the funds as a Technical Supplementary Grant (TSG) for up-gradation, technical enhancement and field activities of the Intelligence Bureau with releases on a need basis. The committee considered and approved the summary of National Health Services Regulation and Coordination for the provision of Technical Supplementary Grant (TSG).



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar chairing a meeting of Economic Coordination Committee of the Cabinet.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for IT & Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif Launch Pakistan Startup Fund during ceremony organized by Ignite and Ministry of IT & Telecommunication.

CM announces 26,000 interest free electric motorbikes, rickshaws for public

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi unveiled a groundbreaking initiative, announcing the distribution of 26,000 electric motorbikes and rickshaws to the public on interest-free basis — a groundbreaking milestone in Pakistan's history.

The announcement took place at a special function organized by the

Punjab Transport Department at a local hotel on Tuesday, where the chief minister also inaugurated the Qingqi Rickshaw Registration Program across Punjab.

CM Naqvi presented the first license for electric rickshaw manufacturing to the CEO of Sazgar Company, marking the formal commencement of the electric rickshaw

industry in Punjab.

At the event, he disclosed plans to provide 10,000 electric bikes to students, facilitated by the Bank of Punjab, while another 10,000 electric rickshaws would be supported by Punjab Bank.

Notably, 2,000 electric three-wheeler bikes would be granted to special individuals free of interest.

Saif launches Startup Fund to catalyze investments for Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information Technology Dr Umar Saif on Tuesday launched the Pakistan Startup Fund, aimed at catalyzing investments in Pakistani startups.

The launching ceremony was attended by local and international venture capitalists, diplomats, and renowned technology companies. Dr Saif, while

addressing the event, said that the government had allocated Rs 2 billion for the Pakistan Startup Fund to accelerate venture capital investment in the country.

He said the Fund would provide financial assistance to the startups, with each receiving 30% support, while venture capitalists would contribute the remaining 70% of the capital.

Pakistan's exports to Afghanistan increase by 9.10% in 5 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's export of goods and services to Afghanistan witnessed an increase of 9.10 per cent during the first five months of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported.

The overall exports to Afghanistan were recorded at US \$232.697 million during July-November (2023-24) against exports of US \$213.282 million during

July-November (2022-23), SBP data revealed.

On a year-to-year basis, the exports to Afghanistan also surged by 39.30 per cent from \$37.263 million in November 2022, against the exports of \$51.911 million in November 2023.

Meanwhile, on a month-on-month basis, the exports to Afghanistan however witnessed a nominal decline of 0.50 per cent during November 2023 as compared to the exports of \$52.177 million.

Pakistan, Egypt agrees to focus on collaboration in key economic sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Egypt on Tuesday agreed to focus on fostering collaboration in key economic sectors, including agriculture, textiles, engineering, and services.

Dr. Gohar Ejaz, Federal Minister for Commerce, Industries and Investments, engaged in discussions with Ahmed Samir, the Minister of Commerce of Egypt and Chief Guest of the 4th Pakistan-Africa Trade

Development Conference (PATDC) and Single Country Exhibition (SCE), said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

Both parties recognized the mutual benefits that can arise from expanding economic and trade ties between Pakistan and Egypt.

The meeting, held in the presence of policymakers and business leaders from various countries, facilitated a convergence of diverse

ideas and opinions, creating an enriching environment for meaningful discussions.

This event serves as a crucial platform aimed at fostering economic ties and exploring investment opportunities between Pakistan and Egypt.

The discussions underscored the commitment of both nations to deepening economic cooperation and leveraging each other's strengths in key sectors.

DC for ensuring sale of fertilizers at fixed prices

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bahawalpur Zaheer Anwar Jappa on Tuesday said that the sale of fertilizer should be ensured at fixed rates. Fertilizer supply should be improved at the tehsil level. He expressed these views in the meeting held in his office. He directed that legal action to be taken against the dealers who sell fertilizer at more than the fixed rates.

E-bikes, rickshaws to revolutionize transport sector: Minister

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Provincial Transport Minister Ibrahim Hassan Murad said that provision of 10,000 electric bikes to students will be an important milestone in Punjab.

Speaking at opening ceremony of electric bikes registration here Tuesday, he said that 2.5 million three-wheelers were running illegally across Punjab, which are being registered. He said that today is a historic day for the transport department as e-vehicles will bring revolution in the transport sector. The Caretaker Provincial Transport Minister said that the license for e-rickshaws has been issued to Sazgar while 10,000 electric bikes will prove to be an important milestone in Punjab.

CM inaugurates desilting drive after 10 years gap

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi inaugurated the desilting campaign from the Lahore canal near Muslim Town Morr for removing silt from 17000 km long canals across the province. Provincial ministers SM Tanveer, Amir Mir, Azfar Ali Nasir, commissioner Lahore, secretary irrigation, CCPO and others were also present. The CM removed silt through crane, stating that the first phase would continue till January 31, while embankments of 5000 km long canals would

be repaired in the second phase, spanning over two months. Water would be available to 3 to 4 lakh acres of land after the desilting of canals; he added and further stated that the desilting drive has been launched after a long gap. Talking to the media, he said that the silt would be removed from 17000 km long canals in the first phase as services of LIMS (Laboratory Information Management System) have been acquired for round-the-clock monitoring. For this purpose, concerned staff, DCs and commissioners have also

been trained through LIMS as this drive would be continuously monitored through satellite images and NESPAK would also monitor it as a third party, he added. CM Naqvi mentioned that complaints have been received about the mixing of drainage water in the Lahore canal at some points, adding that a committee comprising MD WASA and DC would probe the matter, as it could not be allowed. He appealed to the citizens to avoid polluting the canal as the government could not do everything all alone.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi along with provincial ministers and others high ups formerly inaugurates de-silting of Canals across Punjab.

Governor stresses to maintain financial discipline in varsities

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali chairing a senate meeting of the University of Swabi (UoS) here Tuesday directed universities of the province to maintain financial discipline keeping in resources of the province. The senate meeting was also attended by Vice Chancellor UoS, Nasir Jamal and concerned officials of education, establishment, finance and higher education commission. KP Governor said that the provincial government is paying Rs. 56 billion annually in lieu of salaries stressing that universities should explore new ways to overcome financial difficulties. He desired that varsities devise new plans to improve administrative, educational and financial affairs. The governor highlighted the need for research-based education and said that it would help improve capacity building of students and prepare them to meet challenges of emerging world.

Nation commends heroic sacrifices of police: Feroze

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Information and Public Relations Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel on Tuesday paid tribute and expressed the nation's profound gratitude for the unwavering sacrifices made by the Police. Along with Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry and Inspector General of Police Akhtar Hayat Khan, Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel visited Lady Reading Hospital to personally extend support to the injured policemen following the tragic Bajaur

bomb blast. Visiting the surgical emergency ward, he met each injured official and officer individually, inquiring about their well-being and assessing the treatment facilities. During this occasion, Barrister Kakakhel commended the resilient spirit and high morale displayed by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police men. He prayed for the swift recovery of the injured, acknowledging their selfless dedication for protecting the nation. Barrister Kakakhel emphasized the nation's collective admiration for the sacrifices made by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police.

May-9 violence: ATC extends interim bail of Asad till Feb 10

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Tuesday extended the interim bail of former federal minister Asad Umar till February 10 in 7 cases related to May-9 violence. Judge Muhammad Arshad Javed conducted proceedings on the bail applications of the former minister. Asad Umar's counsel submitted an exemption application on behalf of his client, in the course of proceedings, and requested the court to exempt his client from personal appearance for one-day. At this, the court allowed the request and extended the interim bail of the former minister till February 10.

Minister urges prompt activation of Nowshera Aviation Training Center

PESHAWAR (APP): Minister for Technical Education and Industries, Dr. Amir Abdullah has directed the swift activation of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa School of Aviation Training and Services setup in Nowshera. During the visit, the officials informed the minister that the school had received new machinery for training purposes in 2019. On this occasion, the minister expressed regret over the non-utilization of the state-of-the-art training centre and its machinery.

Security official dies, six injured in Tank road mishap

PESHAWAR (APP): A security personnel were died while six others injured when a vehicle carrying them, skidded off the road and met with an accident in Manji khel area of Tank district on Tuesday. Local police informed a vehicle was on its way to Dera Ismail Khan from Asman Manza area of South Waziristan when it met with an accident. As a result, security officials embraced martyrdom while six others were injured. The injured were shifted to CMH Dera Ismail Khan.



LAHORE: Political Councillor of the United Kingdom in Pakistan, Ms Zoe Weir, meeting with President Istehkaam Pakistan Party Abdul Aleem Khan.

PHOTA organizes awareness seminar

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Health Minister Prof. Dr. Javed Akram participated as special guest in the awareness seminar organized by Punjab Human Organ Transplantation Authority (PHOTA) at a local hotel on Tuesday. Secretary Auqaf Syed Tahir Raza Bukhari, King Edward Medical University (KEMU) Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof Dr Mehmod Ayaz, Fatima Jinnah Medical University (FJMU) VC Prof. Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal, Amirud Din Medical College's Principal Prof. Dr. Sardar Al-Farid Zafar, PHOTA Director General Prof. Dr. Shehzad Anwar, Punjab Institute of Neuro Sciences (PINS) MS Prof. Dr. Jodai Saleem, Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute (PKLI) Dean Professor Dr. Faisal Saud Dar and a number of other scholars attended the seminar. Caretaker Provincial Health Minister Prof. Dr. Javed Akram said that Pakistan is facing many problems in the health sector. "We have to adopt a better lifestyle to lead a better life. We are currently paying a heavy price for the habit of eating fast food." He added that PKLI is an exemplary institution. Recently, three human lives have been saved at the Institute. Indiscipline action is being taken against the elements involved in the heinous business of illegal transplantation of human.

NCCIA being set up to check cyber crimes: DG FIA

FAISALABAD (APP): The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) is being established to check increasing cyber crimes while stringent measures were being taken to control smuggling, said Rai Ijaz Ahmad, Director Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). Addressing a meeting in the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI), he advised the business community to switch over to transparent transactions through government channels instead of making payments through "Hawala Hundi" to avoid any financial implication. Rai Ijaz said that the Financial Management Unit in State Bank of Pakistan was electronically monitoring available financial data and "red-flag" dubious, irregular and out of proportion transactions. He said that businessmen should take extra care and avoid indulging in illegal traditional practices as the monitoring system was going to be stricter in the coming days.

Corps Commander visits SBBWU, interacts with students

PESHAWAR (APP): Corps Commander Peshawar on Tuesday visited Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University (SBBWU) Peshawar and had an interactive session with its students and faculty members. He applauded the achievements of women from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in all fields of life, including their pivotal role in nation-building, said a news release.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali, Caretaker Provincial Minister from Information Barrister Jamal Shah offering Fataha for Bomb Blast victims of Iranian city Karman during their visit to Iranian Council General.

International News

Blinken carries Arab message to Israel: keep Palestinian state hope alive

Monitoring Desk
GAZA: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, on his latest mission to rein in the Gaza war, told Israeli leaders on Tuesday there was still a chance of winning acceptance from their Arab neighbours, if they create a path to a viable Palestinian state. On his fourth trip to the region since October in a so far largely fruitless quest to tamp down the violence, Blinken said he would share what he had heard in two days of talks with Jordan, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. His talks would include a meeting with the Israeli war cabinet formed in the wake of the Oct. 7

attacks by Palestinian militants from Hamas, which rules Gaza, that Israel says killed 1,200 people. The Israeli offensive has killed more than 23,000 Palestinians, destroyed much of Gaza and displaced most of the population of 2.3 million at least once, creating a dramatic and worsening humanitarian crisis. Blinken had already said he would press Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government on the "absolute imperative" to do more to protect Gaza's civilians and allow humanitarian aid to reach them. His boss, President Joe Biden, said overnight that Washington was quietly pushing Israel to begin

withdrawing some of its forces. Blinken's meetings around the region have focused on trying to chart a longer-term approach to the decades-old Israel-Palestinian conflict, as part of a path toward ending the Gaza war. After his meetings with Arab allies, he said they wanted integration with Israel—a long-term Israeli aim—but only if that included a "practical pathway" to a Palestinian state. "I know of your own efforts, over many years, to build much greater connectivity and integration in the Middle East, and I think there are actually real opportunities there," he told his Israeli counterpart Israel Katz on Tuesday.



The wife of Hamza Wael Dahdouh, a journalist with the Al Jazeera television network, and his father Al Jazeera's bureau chief in Gaza, Wael Al-Dahdouh, mourn over his body during his funeral, after he was killed in a reported Israeli air strike in Rafah in the Gaza Strip.

Ukraine has deficit of anti-aircraft guided missiles - air force

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine has a deficit of anti-aircraft guided missiles nearly two years after Russia's full-scale invasion, Air Force spokesman Yuriy Ihnat said on Tuesday. Ukraine has relied heavily on military and financial aid from its Western allies since the invasion in February 2022, but political wrangling has delayed the disbursement of major aid packages for this year. Ihnat told Ukrainian television that Ukraine had used a "considerable reserve" of missiles defending itself against recent attacks, and added: "It is clear that there is a deficit of anti-aircraft guided missiles." Russia has stepped up missile and drone attacks on Ukraine in the past few weeks, firing hundreds of missiles and drones at Ukrainian cities far behind the frontline, Ukrainian officials have said. In the latest strike this week, Russia fired 51 missiles of various types, killing at least four people and hitting civilian infrastructure, they said.

Taiwan says China launched a satellite

Monitoring Desk
TAIPEI: Taiwan's Defense Ministry issued an alert Tuesday saying China has launched a satellite and urging caution days before the island's elections. Taiwan holds presidential and parliamentary elections on Saturday which China has described as a choice between war and peace. The bilingual alert sent to residents' mobile phones cautioned in English that there was a missile flyover. The Defense Ministry later issued a statement apologizing to the public for the faulty English translation and clarifying that China had launched a rocket carrying a satellite—not a missile.

Russia detains US citizen on drugs charges

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: A US citizen has been detained in Russia on drugs charges which can carry up to 20 years in prison, a Moscow court said on Tuesday. Moscow's Ostankino District Court said that on Jan. 6 Robert Romanov Woodland had been remanded in custody until March 5 on charges relating to the illegal acquisition or possession of drugs. Russian internet news site Mash said that Woodland, 32, was charged with attempted large-scale production and sale of illegal drugs. He was detained on Jan. 5, Mash said. A Facebook account in the name of Robert Woodland indicated that he had been working as an English teacher in Russia, and lived outside Moscow. It was not immediately possible to contact Woodland in Russian custody. In 2020, Woodland, who was known to friends as "Rob", was a Russian newspaper that he was adopted in 1993 by US citizens from an orphanage in Perm, in the Urals.



France's newly appointed Prime Minister Gabriel Attal arrives for the handover ceremony with outgoing Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne at the Hotel Matignon in Paris, France.

Egypt rejects Israeli request to monitor buffer zone with Gaza

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Egypt has rejected a proposal by Israel for greater Israeli oversight over the buffer zone on the Egypt-Gaza border and is prioritising efforts to broker a ceasefire before working on post-war arrangements, three Egyptian security sources said. Egypt shares a 13km (8 mile) border with Gaza which is the only border of the Palestinian coastal enclave not directly controlled by Israel. Along with Qatar, Egypt has also played a leading role in talks to broker a new ceasefire in Gaza and secure a deal for the release of Israeli hostages held by Hamas. The Egyptian sources said that during those talks Israel had approached Egypt about securing the Philadelphi Corridor, a narrow buffer zone along the border, as part of Israeli plans to prevent future attacks.

Gabriel Attal becomes France's youngest prime minister as Macron seeks reset

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron appointed 34-year-old Education Minister Gabriel Attal as his new prime minister on Tuesday, seeking to breathe new life into his second mandate ahead of European parliament elections. The move will not necessarily lead to any major political shift, but signals a desire for Macron to try to move beyond last year's unpopular pension and immigration reforms and improve his centrist party's chances in the June EU ballot. Attal will be France's youngest prime minister and the first to be openly gay. Opinion polls show Macron's camp trailing far-right leader Marine Le Pen's party by around eight to 10 percentage points. Attal, a close Macron ally who became a household name as government spokesman during the Covid-19 pandemic, will replace outgoing Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne.

US vows to boost Afghan refugees' relocation

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The US State Department has informed Congress of its commitment to enhancing its capacity to process applications of Afghan refugees stranded in Pakistan. This initiative, which began in July 2023 on a limited scale, aims to address the plight of Afghan refugees seeking asylum in Pakistan.

US, UK say Bangladesh elections were not free, fair

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The US and UK on Monday criticized the Bangladesh general election that saw the ruling Awami League retain power as "not free" nor democratic as the polls held a day earlier were boycotted by the opposition after months of violence. The two Western allies also condemned the incidents of violence and alleged intimidation of opposition members in the months leading up to the election and urged Bangladesh's government to credibly investigate them. The United States shared the view that the weekend's elections in Bangladesh were not free and fair, the US State Department said on Monday, adding that Washington was concerned by reports of vote irregularities and condemned violence that took place. Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina swept to a fourth straight term in power, with her party winning almost 75% of the seats in Sunday's general election. But the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) boycotted the vote and turnout was low. "The United States remains concerned by the arrests of thousands of political opposition members and by reports of irregularities on election day," a US State Department spokesperson said on Monday. "The United States shares the view with other observers that these elections were not free or fair and we regret that not all parties participated." The ruling Awami League party won 222 seats out of 298, according to unofficial results released by the Election Commission. The election was Bangladesh's 12th since independence from Pakistan in 1971.

Gaza cease-fire protests block New York City bridges, and over 300 are arrested

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Hundreds of protesters calling for an immediate cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas war blocked traffic in New York City at crucial bridges and a tunnel, disrupting the Monday morning commute and leading to more than 300 arrests. A steady stream of demonstrations have broken out in cities across the United States and in other countries during the three-month war in the Gaza Strip. Protesters interrupted President Joe Biden's campaign speech Monday at a church in South Carolina with chants of "cease-fire now," and were removed from the building. In Manhattan, people chanting and holding anti-war signs sat in roadways and locked themselves together using zip ties and even cement-filled tires, which at times required officers to use power tools to pry the demonstrators apart. The New York Police Department said 325 people were arrested, with many facing misdemeanor charges. Demonstrators had gathered at City Hall Plaza at around 9 a.m. before marching to the protest sites at the Brooklyn, Manhattan and Williamsburg bridges as well as the Holland Tunnel to New Jersey. Protest organizers included the Palestinian Youth Movement and Jewish-led groups long opposed to Israel's policies toward the Palestinians, such as Jewish Voice for Peace.

Govt to fully support private educational institutions in ensuring their services: Madad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhi on Tuesday said that the government will provide every possible support to private institutions in order to ensure their delivery of service to the public at large.

He said this while chairing a meeting held here with the heads of major private educational institutions of Islamabad Capital Territory, which was also attended by the Chairperson PEIRA, Dr. Sayeda Zia Batool.

Madad Ali Sindhi emphasized on improving equity through fostering a more inclusive educational environment, and to increase the scope of fee concession/scholarships for needy students.

The minister was told that on average all private institutions are giving scholarships between 15-25% to all its students.

The innovative CSR approaches and sustainable practices were discussed by the representatives of the private educational institutions in detail.

The minister appreciated the CSR initiative and activities that private educational institutions have already adopted. This will open the doors of quality education provision to children from the less advantaged segments of society. These initiatives are pivotal in elevating Pakistan's human development and strengthening the nation's social capital.

Madad Ali Sindhi highlighted the importance of teachers' training. He said that not only in the federal territory but in all of the

provinces it should be given the highest importance. The minister was told that CDA has planned to auction plots for schools.

He directed PEIRA and the ministry to support CDA in this process. The minister said that his focus has remained to improve the quality of education of public schools and to control the out-of-school children in Pakistan.

He said that the federal education ministry has planned to make 2 model schools in every province as well.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Mr. Madad Ali Sindhi chaired the meeting held with the Heads of Private Educational Institutions.



ISLAMABAD: Mir Shai Mazar Baloch, Director General (COORD/PDU), Senate in a meeting with team members of the mustehkam Parlmaan/IP5 Project at Parliament House.

BISP adopts transparent mechanism for identifying deserving individuals

ISLAMABAD (APP): Additional Secretary of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Dr. Muhammad Tahir Noor Tuesday said that BISP has adopted a transparent mechanism for identifying deserving individuals.

BISP is currently providing financial assistance to 9.3 million poor families. During a Live E-Katcheri session at BISP headquarters, Dr. Tahir Noor informed callers that information regarding needy families is collected through a computerized mechanism, ensuring transparency at maximum level.

Dr. Tahir Noor further informed the participants that after the enrollment of new beneficiaries, they will also receive benefits of BISP initiatives such as Kafalat, Taleemi Wazaif and Nashouma.

This comprehensive approach aims to address the various needs of vulnerable populations, ensuring their overall well-being.

The live E-Katcheri session, broadcasted through BISP's official Facebook account, aimed to directly engage with BISP beneficiaries and the general public to address their grievances.

During the E-Katcheri session, Dr. Muhammad Tahir Noor personally received live phone calls from BISP beneficiaries and the general public. Callers from all corners of the country actively participated, discussing a range of issues such as problems with their registration process, non-receipt of stipends, inquiries about eligibility status, and various complaints related to payment disbursements.

Dr. Muhammad Tahir Noor, directed the concerned officials to address the issues raised by the public promptly. He emphasized the need to personally contact and assist individuals in need, ensuring a comprehensive resolution to their concerns.

CG COMSTECH proposes holding of Pak-Afghan joint health forum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator General (CG) COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary in a meeting with the Minister for the Ministry of Public Health, Afghanistan, Dr. Qalander Ibaad proposed the holding of Pakistan-Afghanistan joint health forum.

The meeting was held at the COMSTECH Secretariat Islamabad on Tuesday. This pioneering initiative aims to unite experts from the Ministry of Public Health, Kabul, and COMSTECH.

The primary focus of this forum will be on collaborative training and capacity building for healthcare professionals at the primary health level.

Prof. Choudhary said that we believe that by joining forces and sharing expertise, we can significantly uplift the healthcare landscape in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

This collaborative forum will serve as a platform for collective growth and progress," said Dr. Iqbal in the meeting.

Dr. Qalander Ibaad expressed his appreciation for the collaborative spirit, emphasizing the shared commitment to progress in healthcare. "Together, we can overcome challenges and work towards a healthier and more resilient society. This collaborative effort is a testament to our dedication to the well-being of our citizens."

Senior officials from both sides also attended the meeting.

Security personnel briefed for effective duty at High Security Zone

ISLAMABAD: Following the special directives of



ISLAMABAD: Following the special directives of the government, security personnel were briefed for effective duty at the High Security Zone. The briefing was conducted by the District Monitoring Officer (DMO) in Swat, who emphasized the need for vigilance and readiness to deal with any untoward incident in a timely manner.

The security personnel were briefed and directed to be ready to deal with any untoward incident in a timely manner. Officials should remain alert during duty and keep a close watch on suspicious vehicles and individuals.

SP High Security Zone has directed the personnel on duty to uphold the highest standards of diligence and professionalism, cultivating a positive rapport with citizens. A fervent appeal is made to the citizens to promptly report any perceived suspicious activity or individuals to the helpline "Pukar-15."

KSrelief distributes 2,895 food baskets in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSrelief) has distributed 2,895 food baskets in Pakistan, benefiting 20,265 needy individuals in flood-affected areas.

The distribution is part of the third phase of the Food Security Support Project in Pakistan, SPA reported. The aid comes as part of relief projects provided by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through its humanitarian arm, KSrelief, to achieve food security and alleviate the suffering of the needy in the Pakistani regions affected by the floods.

Shahera grieved over demise of mother of DG Radio Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Secretary Information and Broadcasting Shahera Shahid on Tuesday expressed grief over the death of the mother of Director General Radio Saeed Ahmed Sheikh.

In a condolence message, she expressed condolences and sympathy to Saeed Ahmed Sheikh and his family.

She said she was deeply saddened to hear the news of Saeed Ahmed Sheikh's mother's death and shared the grief of the grieving family.

She prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.

Last day of registration for AIOU convocation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The convocation of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is scheduled to take place on January 31, 2024, and today (Wednesday 10th January) is the last day for registration.

Meanwhile, according to AIOU, the eligibility criteria for registration has also been amended and the condition of at least 70 percent marks has been removed. Now all the graduates from Semester Autumn 2024 to Spring 2022 can register on <http://convocation.aiou.edu.pk>.

PK-05 candidate fined Rs 20,000 by DMO for code violation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The District Monitoring Officer (DMO) in Swat has imposed a fine of Rs 20,000 on Sanaullah, a candidate participating in the PK-05 elections, of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, for violating clause 41 of the political parties' code of conduct.

According to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) spokesman, monitoring teams deployed nationwide are currently removing hoardings that exceed prescribed limits.

DHO Islamabad assures to support chemists, druggists in promoting businesses

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of Pakistan Chemists and Druggists Association (PCGA) Federal Branch led by Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari on Tuesday met District Health Officer, Islamabad Dr Zaem Zia. The two sides discussed ways and means to promote ease of doing business for the chemists and druggists in the Federal Capital and facilitate the better growth of their

Maritime Security Exercise SEA GUARD-24 commences at Karachi

KARACHI (INP): The opening brief of Exercise SEA GUARD-24 was held at Karachi on Tuesday with Commander Coast Vice Admiral Raja Rab Nawaz as Chief Guest.

Representatives of various ministries, departments and organizations having linkages with maritime sector like Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Ministry of Livestock and Fishing Sindh, Ministry of National Food Security and Research, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Narcotics Control, private entities and NGOs were involved in the exercise to support multifaceted challenges of Maritime arena both from traditional and non-traditional threats.

The session which included Pakistan National Shipping Corporation, Anti-Narcotics Force, Pakistan Coast Guards, PMSA, KPT, Port QASIM, BYCO Petroleum was attended by leadership of various organizations in addition to other prominent figures from private sector and fishing community.

Exercise Sea Guard aims to synergize efforts of stakeholders while remaining within their legal framework through a common pedestal of Joint Maritime Information Coordination Centre (JMICC) to ensure security of Maritime Zones of Pakistan. During the opening brief, participants were briefed about working methodology and contributions of JMICC to ensure maritime safety and security along our Coastline.

Development work of G-14 in final stage: DG

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Director General (DG) of Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) on Tuesday visited the sector G-14 Markaz and reviewed the development work in the sector.

Project Director briefed the Director General on the project and informed the management that the work of G-14 Center is in the final stages.

The Director General Federal Government Employees Housing Authority advised that the work of horticulture and street lights should be completed as soon as possible and on this subject the Director General Housing Authority highlighted the importance of the project, said a press release issued here. Later, the Director General visited Sector F15 and urged for speedy completion of the work. Director General Federal Government Employees Housing Authority appreciated the work of Project Director, Director Land, Director Revenue, Director Planning, Director Security and Director Finance.

Two killed after car plunged into canal

ISLAMABAD (APP): At least two people were killed on Tuesday after their car veered off the road and plunged into a canal in Ahmedpur Chatha of district Hafizabad. According to police, the incident occurred due to poor visibility as fog blanketed the road. Meanwhile, rescue teams swiftly responded to the scene and retrieved the bodies of both individuals from the canal.

PM assures govt's full support to UNICEF on public welfare projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday assured the government's full support to the United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) for launching the projects of public welfare in Pakistan.

"The government will provide all possible facilities to the UNICEF for launching welfare projects in education, health and other sectors," he said while talking to the UNICEF's representative in Pakistan Abdullah Fadil who called on him here.

During the meeting, Abdullah Fadil briefed the prime minister on the steps taken by UNICEF in various areas of Pakistan.

He told the prime minister that during the last five years, around US\$1 billion projects had been established in a range of fields including humanitarian aid, clean drinking water, food supply, education, and health under UNICEF in Pakistan.

The prime minister appreciated UNICEF Pakistan for successfully launching several projects for public welfare. "Termining UNICEF's role in the anti-polio drive in Pakistan as of special importance, he said a positive change in the anti-polio vaccination drive was being seen among the masses due to mutual collaboration of the government of Pakistan and UNICEF."

The prime minister also appreciated UNICEF for taking steps in the education sector in Azad Jammu and Kashmir despite intense Indian criticism.

He asked Abdullah Fadil to constitute a new and effective strategy to provide education to the out of school children in Pakistan.

He also supported the steps taken by UNICEF to introduce modern technology in the education sector in underdeveloped areas of the country.

"The illiteracy rate in the country can be brought down significantly by helping the students of remote areas get access to the state of the art information through tablets," the prime minister added.

Khattak unveils party manifesto for elections

PESHAWAR (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarians (PTIP) Chairman Pervez Khattak unveiled the manifesto for the upcoming elections. Addressing a press conference, Khattak mentioned providing free emergency treatment to 1.8 million people through health cards. He said the recruitment of staff in hospitals and police and reforms were made during his tenure as KP chief minister.

He recounted the feats of his five-year tenure as KP chief minister. Khattak expressed concern over the discontinuation of health cards, highlighting its injustice to the needy.

He outlined plans to engage with the federation for electricity and gas revenue for the province, citing the establishment of 250 small hydro projects during his tenure.

ISLAMABAD: UNICEF's representative in Pakistan Abdullah Fadil called on caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

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