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dailyindisb@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Islamabad

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# Elections can't be postponed, **ECP tells Senate on polls** delay resolution

Electoral body says it made commitment before the Supreme Court to hold elections on Feb 8, 2024; Okays 250 million watermarked ballot papers for the February 8 polls

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has dismissed the proposal to postpone the general elections, emphasizing that the elections. established polling date of February 8 was mutually determined with the President of Pakistan.

In a letter addressed to the Joint Secretary (Legislation) of the Senate, the ECP conveyed that it would not be prudent to postpone the general elections at this stage. Additionally, the resolution of the upper house of Parliament cannot be currently implemented.

The Election Commisalready directed the carethe maintenance of law and order during elections. This ary 5, which proposed the tion.

curity framework to create peaceful and credible conduct of the 2024 general

ary 8, 2024.

Similarly, it is worth noting that previous general the ECP sanctioned the elections and local government elections have taken place during the winter sea-

a letter to the Senate Chairthat the ECP has not taken resolution passed on Janu-

LAHROE: President National Party Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch meeting with

PML(Q) Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and President Muhammad Shahbaz

fifth Para of the Ouran

which says that you should

not hate your enemies so

much that you can't do

a setback for the oppo-

nents in the upcoming days

and announced that there

could be no electoral alli-

that Nawaz Sharif bought

a Mercedes car for six lac,

and his daughter Maryam

Nawaz bought a BMW car

from Toshakhana but all

their cases are closed, and

on the other hand when-

ever one of our cases ends.

Imran Khan said 'they

About the elections.

another one starts.

The PTI founder don't know the anger of the

chairman said he wants to public which will be seen

ask Chief Justice of Su- on polling day on Febru-

ance with Bilawal.

Imran Khan predicted

He said it is on record

SC is operating under

London Plan, alleges

**Imran Khan** 

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pa- to read the 8th verse of the

kistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

(PTI) Founder Chairman

Imran Khan said that ev-

erything is happening un-

der the London Plan and

he was being punished for

exposing Donald Lu and

General Bajwa. Holding

informal talks with the

media on Monday, former

Prime Minister Imran

Khan said the Supreme

Court (SC) is implement-

Khan said his imprison-

ment, tearing down of the

PTI and the pardoning of

Nawaz Sharif's case are also

part of the London plan. He

said that everything is be-

ing done to show that

'they' are above the law.

preme Court Qazi Faez Isa ary 8.

The former PM Imran

ing the London Plan.

ISLAMABAD (APP): includes enhancing the se-postponement of elections. The resolution received a favorable environment for majority support with 14 votes from senators.

Meanwhile the Election Commission (ECP) The letter stated that tasked the Printing Corpothe ECP has made a com- ration of Pakistan on Monmitment before the Su- day with producing 250 preme Court to conduct the million watermarked ballot general elections on Febru- papers for the February 8

> printing of ballot papers for the upcoming general elections during its meeting.

Distinctive watermarks It's worth noting that will adorn the ballot papers, Independent Senator which are set to be printed Dilawar Khan has written using three different mawhich are set to be printed chines. Rigorous security sion of Pakistan (ECP) has man, expressing concern protocols have been ensured for the Printing Cortaker government to ensure any steps to implement his poration premises during the ballot paper produc-

Pakistan,

Kyrgyz agree

to strengthen

health ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): A

bilateral meeting was held

between the caretaker

Minister for Health Dr.

Nadeem Jan and the

Health Minister of

Alymkadyr Beishenaliev

on the sidelines of the

Global Health Security

Summit. Dr. Nadeem Jan

welcomed the Kyrgyz

dignitary and expressed

gratitude on behalf of the

Government of Pakistan

for the participation of the

Kyrgyz delegation in the

Global forum hosted by

Pakistan. The Kyrgyz

Minister appreciated the

initiative of Pakistan's

Health Minister in orga-

nizing the first-ever Glo-

bal Health Security

Summit.He appreciated

the befitting arrangements

Kyrgyz

Republic



eral Sahir Shamshad Mirza exchanging views with Ali Bin Mubarak Al Khater, Ambassador of the State of Qatar to Pakistan during meeting held in Rawalpindi.

#### 'Thank you very much'; PTI withdraws SC petition for level playing field

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pa-kistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has wither sum its (PTI) has wither sum its petition from the Supreme Court (SC) seeking a level playing field in the upcoming general elections.

As the hearing of the PTI's appeal began in the Supreme Court on Monday, Counsel Latif Khosa said the party would like to go to the people's court for the survival of democracy. "We want to go to the court of 250 million people," he asserted, and told the chief justice of Pakistan (CJP): "Thank you very much.

CJP Qazi Faez Isa asked: "Do you want to pursue the case or not?" Khosa replied that he

had been instructed to withdraw the application. "We came to you for a level playing field been allotted symbols like tary politics.

glass, bowl etc. "We have been humiliated," the law-

In response, CJP Isa said whether they wanted to accept the court's decision or not was their choice, adding that the judges should not be blamed for the court's ver-

CJP Qazi Faez Isa asked: "Do you want to pursue the case or not?" The PTI lawyer replied that he had been instructed to withdraw the application. "We came to you for a level playing field for fair and transparent elections," he remarked, adding that people had been allotted symbols like glass, eggplant, bowl etc.

We have been humiliated," the lawyer said and added ECP can only take back the electoral symbol for fair and transparent elections," he remarked, adding that people had hear allotted arm hele like the state of the party, but here, a political party is being kept out from Parliamen-



ISLAMABAD: Iran's Special Representative for Afghanistan Affairs, Hassan Kazmi Qomi called on caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani.

#### Maryam Nawaz says

#### Character involved in excesses against Nawaz facing ultimate justice

OKARA (INP): Senior symbol for them to share Vice President of Pakistan

Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Maryam Nawaz while referring to the recent resignations tendered by two SC judges has said that every individual involved in committing excesses to Nawaz Sharif was facing ultimate iustice. Speaking after formally launching her election campaign at Iqbal Stadium in Okara on Monday, she appreciated the people who remained loyal to Nawaz Sharif and his party despite the tough period they had gone through. Despite fog and intense cold weather a large number of people at-

tended the rally. Maryam Nawaz said, They were acting like pharaohs, but are now running away like rats. A person standing for truth like Nawaz never back down. Nawaz had left the office with grace, they are escaping while trying to hide their faces.

She said a terrorist party couldn't get an election symbol and proposed 'petrol bomb" as election their reality.
The PTI chairman was

in habit of favouritism when the judges used to greet him by saying "good to see you", she said and added that he had lost the facilitators and patronage.

'The facility of issuing decisions on basis of phone [calls] made by the motherin-law [of former chief justice Umar Ata Bandial] isn't available now," she said. "You and your facilitators have been caught redhanded while cheating."

Nawaz was removed from the office again and again, but brought back each time by these umpires, Maryam said while pointing to the crowd and asked the people to give a heavy mandate to the three-time prime minister for an effective government and swift

decision making.
The PML-N chief organizer said that Nawaz was already busy in devising plans to ensure cheaper services and goods to the masses and promised that she would work for extending their basic rights to women, including employment opportunities.

# Petrol price slashed by

Rs8 per litre LAHORE (INP): The federal government on Monday slashed petrol price by up to Rs8 per litre for the fortnight starting January 16. However, the government decided to maintain the price of high-speed diesel. According to a notification issued by the Ministry of Finance, the price of petrol has been reduced by Rs8 per litre, bringing the new price to Rs259.34 per litre. The price of high-speed diesel will remain unchanged, i.e., Rs276.21 per litre.

#### FM Jilani reiterates Pak commitment to a peaceful, stable Afghanistan

ISLAMABĂD (APP): Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani on Monday underscored Pakistan's commitment to a peaceful and stable Afghanistan and emphasized the need for enhanced coordination for regional stability. He received Iran's Special Representative for Afghanistan Affairs Hassan Kazmi Qomi, Foreign Office Spokesperson posted on X account. The foreign minister also underlined the critical role of the neighbouring countries of Afghanistan to achieve the vision of a peaceful and stable region.

Earlier, Ambassador Qomi held extensive talks with Pakistan's Special Representative on Afghanistan Asif Durrani over the situation in Afghanistan and regional processes for peace and dialogue.

#### Senator Dilawar writes letter to Senate chairman for polls delay

ISLAMABAD (Online) Independent Senator Dilawar Khan, who submitted the resolution for the postponement of election in the senate, has written a letter to Chairman Senate.

It has been said in the letter written by Senator Dilawar Khan that Senate had passed the resolution to postpone the election on January 5.

This is a matter of concern that Election Commission has not yet taken any steps to postpone the February 8 elections.

It has been said in the letter that attention should have been paid to the concerns identified in the reso lution. Senator Dilawar Khan said that it should be ensured that elections in February 8 are postponed so that people from all over the country can participate in the election activities.

It is pertinent to say that Senator Dilawar Khan presented the resolution in the senate to postpone the general elections and said in this that it is very cold in majority areas so for this reason, it is difficult for these areas to participate in the election process

# **PPP accuses PML-N** of attempting to rig elections

Bilawal blames Nawaz-led party for gradually sidelining its political opponents

QAMBAR SHAHDAKOT (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Piles Platty Tankaran Peoples led party. Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has accused the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) of resorting to rigging tactics ahead of the Febru-

ary 8 general elections.
As both political bigwigs eyeing the office of the prime minister, the PPP chairman blamed the Nawaz Sharif-led party for gradually sidelining its political opponents in a bid to come into power without having any electoral com-

petition.
"Nawaz-league doesn't want to do fair politics but it wants to play alone by ousting all political opponents from the pitch," Bilawal said while addressing a press conference in Qambar Shahdadkot on Monday.

He alleged that some been allotted 'arrow' electoral sign by the returning N

The politico, who served as foreign minister in the former PML-N-led coalition government, announced to approach the election commission and courts to challenge the de-

"In Punjab, PML-N is trying to take benefit of recent developments against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)," Bilawal said, while referring to the Supreme Court's verdict that cost the Imran-led party 'bat' sym-

He said that there is now a contest between 'lion' and 'arrow', the electoral signs of PML-N and PPP respectively, in upcoming elections.

Prior to his media talk, Bilawal asked PPP workers to strongly re-PPP candidates had not sist and thwart conspiracies being hatched by PML-



OAMBAR SHAHDADKOT: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari talking to media persons during his visit to Qambar Shahdadkot.

#### Political parties bound to hold intra-party polls: Solangi cal parties," he said. Every

ISLAMABAD (ÂPP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Monday said that every political party was bound to hold intra-party elections under their constitu-

The apex court's decision about the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's elections had set a precedent which would further promote democracy within the parties, the minister said while speaking in a talk show of the Pakistan Television.

He said the Election Commission did not take notice of the irregularities in the PTI's intra-party elections, rather a complaint to the effect was filed with it.

"Democracy is not only necessary in the country but also within the politione in democracy had the right to criticise and the caretaker government could not usurp that fundamental right, the minister added. The basic role of the

caretaker government was to act as a bridge between two elected governments, and the incumbents were its responsibilities amicably, he remarked.

Solangi said under Article 218(3) of the Constitution, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was responsible for holding free, fair and transparent elections and the caretaker government was committed to assist it in that regard.

He said that every citizen should exercise their right to vote a per con-



changing views with High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to Pakistan Admiral (Retd) Ravindra C Wijegunarathne at Naval Headquarters Islamabad

#### Courts not to compromise in dispensing justice to masses: AJK CJ

(APP):Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Chief Justice (CJ) Justice Raja Saeed Akram Khan on Monday said that the superior courts will never compromise on their dignity in dispensing justice to the masses. Addressing the 11th

Judicial Conference under the auspices of the High Court of Azad Jammu and Kashmir here on Monday as chief guest, he pointed out that administrative injustice was the biggest reason behind increasing litigations in the courts that have to intervene to provide remedy to the sufferers and also stressed the lawyers participating in the conference to ensure implementations of the courts' orders rather defying in the interest of clients. The conference was presided over by Chief Jus-

MUZAFFARABAD tice High Court of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Justice Raja Sadaqat Hussain Khan and was participated by Judges of the higher judiciary, subordinate courts, Minister Law and Parliamentary Affairs Mian Abdul Waheed, Secretary Law Idress Abbasi, Law officers and a large number of lawyers including senior lawyers of Supreme court.

The conference titled

'Responsibility of Judiciary, Government, Lawyers and Litigants in the Dispensation of Justice was told by the additional registrar of the high court in his presentation that all the cases of 2018 and earlier had been disposed of by the High Court and subordinate district courts due to the specific administrative measures taken by the Chief Justice of High Court dur-

# ICCPO holds meeting with foreign diplomats and regional security officers

#### **Independent Report** ISLAMABAD: According

to the details, the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan chaired a meeting with foreign diplomats and re-gional security officers of embassies at Diplomatic Enclave, a public relations officer said.

He said that, CPO Security Division, SSP Security Division and officials from other law enforcement departments were also present during the occasion. During the meeting, the

ICCPO wished a Happy New Year to the meeting participants and briefed the foreign diplomats and embassies regional security officers about the steps taken by Islamabad Capital Police to ensure foolproof security arrangements around the diplomatic enclave.

This meeting was arranged every year. Emphasizing the utmost priority of ensuring the security of foreign missions, embassies, and offices, ICCPO highlighted the continuous en-



sures at the diplomatic enclave through modern tech-

of these efforts the protective barrier of the diplomatic enclave is reconstructed, while modern cameras equipped with advanced technology are being installed along the internal and external roads, perimeter walls, and surrounding

Effective measures are being taken for the surveillance and monitoring of vepedestrians, with increased

emphasis on mobile and foot patrols within the dipomatic enclave, he added.

nology.

ICCPO Dr. Akbar
Nasir Khan said that, as part
plications and a panic alert system has been created for prompt response in case of any untoward incidents Additionally, a WhatsApp group has been operational to facilitate better communication among stakeholders. During the meeting, participants raised questions regarding the current challenges within the diplomatic enclave, to which ICCPO provided directives hicles, motorcyclists, and to the officers for prompt



# Daily soice of Masse, Independent

# Missing empathy

In recent days, the missing persons' issue has attracted much back and forth between a group of determined protesters seeking the whereabouts of their disappeared loved ones, and a caretaker government that simply refuses to recognise their anguish as legitimate.

Amidst repeated attempts to gaslight the protesters and paint them as troublemakers, a fresh report submitted by the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances gives the lie to the state's position that it has been unfairly criticised.

In the report, requisitioned by the Supreme Court, the commission has conceded that merely seven per cent of the production orders issued by it have ever been complied with.

Considering that production orders are issued for individuals believed to be in state custody, it is no wonder that the vast majority of victims' families see the authorities as complicit in the disappearance of their loved ones.

Last week, an Islamabad High Court justice underlined once again that the higher authorities, including the prime minister and his cabinet, are responsible for ensuring the right to liberty of all Pakistani citizens.

He also expressed the hope that the officials directly responsible for disappearing citizens will one day be prosecuted. He made these remarks as protests were roiling Balochistan, where more people have reportedly been disappeared despite the massive spotlight shining on this issue.

Meanwhile in Islamabad, the Baloch Yakjehti Committee, led by Mahrang Baloch, continues to wait on the government in Islamabad, hoping it would make some attempt at rapprochement. Along with other BYC leaders, she remains camped outside the National Press Club, still knocking on the state's door, still hoping the Baloch will be welcomed in. One hopes it won't be long. From the 'welcome' given to these protesters by the Islamabad police, the hurtful remarks made about their 'duplicity' by the caretaker prime minister, and a fresh insult from the Balochistan caretaker information minister, who on Wednesday accused the protesters of using their grief to get visas for other countries, the state has made a mess of the situation.

There has recently been a global outcry against the subjugation of historically disadvantaged people, and this seems like a particularly bad time for Pakistan to be presenting itself as a case study. One wonders what the state believes it stands to gain from such tactics.

The country is in turmoil: internal security is weakening, the political arena remains gripped in chaos, the economy is on the ventilator, and too many social groups seem unhappy about the state's

oppressive policies towards them. Given the breadth of challenges facing the country, those who have assumed responsibility for it must start putting out fires, not stirring up more trouble for future generations

# Empowering local governance



**Abdullah Khalid** 

As the promise of elections looms, manifestos take centre stage, promising reform and progress. In our volatile context, empowering local governments is a crucial, yet often overlooked pathway towards a more responsive and resilient democracy. Despite constitutional provisions for devolution, Pakistan's local governance system re- need for a constitutional mains hobbled by a Over-centra-lisation, inadequate financial retional capacities and limited citizen parti--cipation have plagued this tier of government. Though varying in detail, existing Local Gov-ernment Acts share the common flaw of inadequate devolution and excessive provincial control.

approach, parties are driven by political considerations, which shape may not be of this opintheir approaches to local governance. A review of some manifestos reveals inconsistent approaches to local governance. The PML-N, while promising devolution and financial autonomy, focuses on party-aligned initiatives. The PTI manifesto touches upon citizen participation and local development but lacks concrete transferring significant fimechanisms for imple- nancial and administramentation. The PPP emphasises that rural development aligns with local governance potential, but the required details remain vague. The PML-Q focuses on administrative reforms and overlooks the need for structural changes like fiscal devolution. The ANP

As general elections

Pakhtunkhwa's specific health, and sanitation, to needs but merely offers insights into a broader vision for local governance. representatives can be The JUI focuses on religious values and social conservatism but doesn't adequately address the progress in diverse areas systemic issues hindering such as ESG (Environlocal governments. The mental, Social, and Gov-

proach highlights the

need for tailored solutions

for diverse local contexts

but lacks comprehensive-The pathway to democratic empowerment is linked to genuine empowerment of local governments. This demands action on multiple fronts. particularly on the legislative side. There is a dire amendment to dedicate a plethora of challenges. chapter to local government, outlining its autonomy, functions, and fisources, weak institu- nancial resources. Another important factor is an independent election commission. Establishing an independent body to oversee local elections, prevent manipulation, and ensure transparency is crucial and pivotal for the empowerment and strengthening of local governments. Grants also need to

be tied to service delivery

indicators. Most experts

ion, but by extending RTI

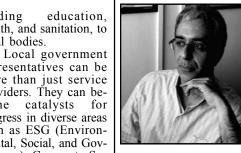
laws to local governments, transparency and citizen oversight can be ensured. The policy landscape presents a curious paradox. On one hand, the Finance National Commis-sion Award and the 18th Amendment stand as cornerstones of devolution, tive responsibilities to local governments. The NFC Award, in particular, mandates a minimum of distributed among the provinces, with a further 10pc earmarked for local governments. The 18th

Khyber cluding local bodies.

more than just service providers. They can become catalysts for MQM's urban-centric ap- ernance), Corporate Social Responsibility, and Disaster Risk Management. Local governments can promote environmental sustainability through waste management, renewable energy projects, and green infrastructure development. Additionally, they can champion social causes like women's empowerment, youth development, and minority inclusion. Local governments can foster partnerships with businesses and civil society organisations to address pressing issues like povilliteracy, and healthcare access. This can create a collaborative ecosystem for social good and shared responsibility. Local governments can also be pivotal in disaster preparedness and response, leading community-based initiatives for early warning systems, evacuation plans, and post-disaster rebuilding efforts.

Pakistan's political manifestos must transcend rhetoric and translate into genuine commitment to local government empowerment. A comprehensive vision is needed, encompassing legislative reforms, capacity building, financial independence, and citizen participation. Only then can local governments become the engines of development, democracy, and social justice Pakistan desperately needs. The upcoming elections present a critical 57.5 per cent of divisible opportunity for parties to federal resources to be break free from political expediency and embrace a transformative vision for local governance. The future of Pakistan's democ-Amendment, for its part, racy hangs in the balance. manifesto primarily ad- devolved 26 subjects, in- -- Courtesy Dawn

# **Southern promises**



Zarrar Khuhro

Why South Africa? Of all the 195 countries that make up this world, why was it this nation that took Israel to court for its genocide of the Palestin-

ian people? and Arab countries, South Africa has no real ethnic, cultural or religious affinity with Palestine and — unlike the Arab states — is located over 7.000km from Gaza. Why then did South Africa take on the Zionist state when those much closer — in all senses — to Palestine have chosen to remain silent spectators to mass murder?

The answer lies in history and in the shared experience of brutalisation by a white supremacist itself on apartheid and bloody repression. Israel was created in 1948, the same year that the apartheid regime came into force in South Africa.

This coincidence aside, both states soon recognised that their status as white settler colonies established at the expense of local populations made them brothers in arms. This unholy dalliance officially began in nuclear bombs, all of 1953 when Daniel Malan, the prime minister of apartheid South Africa, conducted an official tour of Israel, which marked the beginning of a very close alliance.

In years to come, the with both apartheid narepressing their respec-

each other in much the same way as South Africa created 'Bantustans', powerless black African statelets meant to ensure the exclusion of blacks from the South African political system.

The similarity was ac-

knowledged and cel-

ebrated at the highest levels, with South African PM Hendrick Verwoerd, known as the architect of the Bantustan project, himself saying "The Jews took Israel from the Arabs after the Arabs had lived there for a thousand years. Israel, like South Africa, is Unlike the Muslim an apartheid state." And while Israel would loudly condemn apartheid on international forums the reality was that it considered South Africa a kindred nation, with Israeli general Rafael Eitan saying that South African blacks "want to gain control over the white minority just like the Arabs here want to gain control over us... And we, like the white minority in South Africa, must act

Keeping these populations in check was also settler regime that prides a shared priority and Israel would provide antiriot vehicles, weapons and training for the forces of white South Africa; in the '80s hundreds of Israeli military advisors were stationed in South Africa while Pretoria's troops

to prevent them from tak-

were training in Israel. Israel also helped their ideological cousins develop a nuclear programme, with Pretoria finishing at least six which were later dismantled when South African president F.W. De nuclear programme in an effort to rehabilitate South Africa's global image.

Speaking of image, alliance grew stronger Israel often ran interference for South Africa in tions learning from and an effort to insulate their supporting each other in ally from foreign presrepressing their respective native populations. sure, setting up a 'Joint Secretariat for Political Palestinian population and Psychological Warcentres were cut off from fare' in 1975 to conduct Courtesy Dawn

"propaganda and psychological warfare," as part of a well-funded bilateral campaign to rehabilitate South Africa's international image.

But every action has a reaction, and as Israel cosied up to apartheid South Africa, the Palestine Liberation Organisation deepened its ties with Nelson Mandela's African Na-

tional Congress. Just as Africa's white supremacist PM was one of the first major heads of state to visit Israel, one of the first leaders Mandela met on his release from jail in 1990 was none other than Yasser Arafat, who also asked Mandela's advice prior to the Oslo Accords. Mandela him-self remained a lifelong supporter of the Palestinian cause and famously remar-ked that "Our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Pales-tinians.

s a result, the powerful Israeli lobby sp--a--red no effort when it came to demonising Mandela and the ANC with the Israeli-ba-c-k--ed Anti-Defamation League condemning the ANC as "totalitarian, anti-humane, anti-democratic, anti-Israel and anti-American.

Israel's greatest ally and partner in crime, the US, played a malign role as well, with strong evidence indicating that the CIA played a part in tracking Mandela's movements and leaking that information to the apartheid regime, leading to his 27year-long incarceration. Mandela himself re-Klerk abandoned the mained on the USA's terrorist watchlist till 2008.

Today, we see history come full circle, with the sons and daughters of those who struggled against oppression and injustice in South Africa seeking to free their Palestinian brothers and sisters from the shackles of a murderous regime. --

# Commerce News

# **ADB's food security forum** scheduled in April to tackle escalating food crisis

The Asia and the Pacific Food Security Forum 2024 is set to take center stage from April 8 to 12, 2024, in Manila, Philippines to discuss actions for easing a worsening food crisis in

This pivotal event, announced by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), aims to facilitate discussions on immediate actions to alleviate the worsening food crisis and strategize for long-term food security against the adverse impacts of climate change and biodiversity

The forum would serve as an opportunity to evaluate the interim performance of ADB's support food security between 2022 and 2025.

Additionally, it will outline ADB's forward program on food security, forging partnerships with a diverse array of stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region.

ADB announcement, the and climate change experts, Asia and the Pacific Food Security Forum 2024 will act as a platform for both partners to showcase innovative

Participants will delve into discussions focused on

minimum of \$14 billion of food systems, essential for its own resources to navigating the challenges of climate, food, and nature in

the region.

The significance of the forum extends beyond showcasing initiatives; it is engagement policymakers, government officials, development According to the practitioners, food system

as well as ADB staff. These interactions aim to build robust public and private sector partnerships in the realms of policies, project their thought leadership implementation, and research, ultimately accelerating transformation of food

systems in Asia and the



a ceremony arranged by the city government of Neijiang city, celebrating the arrival of the first batch of 182 tons of Pakistani dry chilies.

### **Huge opportunities of investment** available in AJK: Barrister Sultan

President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry said opportunities investment stood available

in different sectors.

Talking to various Referring to the public representative region's favourable climate delegations at Jammu Kashmir house in the federal metropolis, the President invited the intending entrepreneurs from across the country besides the UK-based Diaspora

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): of the bright opportunities Azad Jammu and Kashmir of the available huge potential for investment in trade and industrial sectors on Monday that huge in AJK especially in the twin industrial districts of Mirpur and Bhimbher in particular.

and investment-friendly environment, president said that the Private sector can invest in various sectors of Azad Kashmir. He said that besides it is natural resources Azad Kashmir community to take benefit has huge human resources. in the region.

people from Azad Kashmir are working in Europe, Middle East and North America", he said that there was no law and order problem in Azad Jammu Kashmir while the literacy rate was higher than the provinces of Pakistan.

He said that the proposed Muzaffarabad, Mansehra and Mirpur motorway and Dry port in the lake view city would further increase the scope of investment

Pak needs extensive information outflow, data governance

#### China, Pakistan to forge strong software cooperation (APP): The 21<sup>st</sup> cybersecurity, AI, gaming, International and animation. He also BEIJING (APP): The 21st

China Conference was successfully held in Chengdu, China. The Cooperation Negotiation on Standardization and Internationalization, a sub forum of the conference, highlighted the significance of the growing software partnership between China and Pakistan.

During the event, Muhammad Zohaib Khan, Chairman of the Pakistan Software Association, provided an insightful overview of Pakistan's software industry, highlighting the country's significant advancements in

Software Corporation emphasized the attractive incentives available through the Special Technology
Authority (STZA). "Pakistani companies

possess expertise in niche areas such as Fintech. Healthcare, E-commerce, and other solutions that are in high demand globally. Collaboration between China and Pakistan can extend beyond services to include joint ventures and co-development initiatives." Mr. Khan stated, he further highlighted the impact of Pakistani IT companies in African markets.



handcart to use as fuel at traditional mud oven at Misri Shah area of the Provincial Capital.

## New cargo route important driver for Pakistan-China trade: Ambassador Hashmi

HYDERABAD: A vendor displaying quilts to attract

the customers at his shop during winter season.

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi said that the new cargo route between Pakistan and China is an important driver for trade between the countries and a significant step forward in bilateral

connectivity spectrum. welcome development and an important driver for trade between Pakistan and China. A significant step forward in bilateral connectivity spectrum," he

said in a statement. Ambassador Hashmi

several weekly commercial flights were already operating between the both The new air cargo

route was launched last week linking Ezhou Huahu Airport in central China's Hubei Province with Lahore. The Ezhou-Lahore cargo route is the first international air cargo route launched by SF Airlines in this year departing from Ezhou Huahu Airport, China's first cargo-focused

#### FPCCI to hold **Round Table** Discussion on **Packaging** Sector on 17th

AHORE ederation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) will hold "Round Table Discussion" on the Packaging Challenges Opportunities" here at its Regional Office on January 7, (Wednesday).

spokesman told media here Monday that the packaging sector's "industry status" and issues will be discussed. All the stakeholders of the packaging sectors will attend the discussion. There will be five sessions in the Round Table Discussion. The first session will be introductory in which FPCCI Regional Chairman and Vice President Zaki Aijaz, Managing Director and CEO of Packages Limited, Syed Hyder Ali, Director & CEO of Century Paper & Board Mills Limited, Aftab Ahmed, CEO of Roshan Packages Limited.

# to revolutionize agrifood system: Experts ISLAMABAD (APP): The experts at a webinar that was participated

on the potential of agricultural food systems and lessening climate impacts have underscored the need to enhance the extensive flow of information to stakeholders including media and manage the data governance for the advanced studies lying on shelves revolutionize the agrifood systems.

This was the gist of the Monday series webinar the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) titled "Potential of Agrifood Systems and Mitigating

Climate Impacts" held here virtually by many online participants including members of academia, media and professionals.

Opening the discussion, the Executive Director, SDPI Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri said food is a necessity and climate change is a reality that threatened its access and availability to the masses due to environmental degradation.

He said the year 2023 was declared the hottest year in our history and La Nina and El Nino impacts were creating havoc in the countries bearing the burden of its effects.

understand their impacts on the agriculture and food sectors Dr Suleri mentioned

that in adverse weather scenarios services and manufacturing sectors can halt their services but the food and agriculture sectors will face irreversible impacts of crops and species loss due to shift in weather patterns.

He said, at the COP-28 moot, the FAO's baby step of producing a report food system sustainability underlined the target of 32 percent CO2 removal from the crop sector through different strategies which

rather a positive one in the right direction.

He mentioned that the SDPI is conducting the dialogue as part of its series of efforts after its hackathon held before its flagship SDC conference in 2023 on food and agriculture with the temperature variability support of the Canadian mission in Pakistan.

The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Representative in Pakistan, Florence Rolle said that climate change is real and could not be denied anymore, either the world recorded the first or second She added that Pakistan

However, it is important to was a starting step but would have to adapt to climate change and extend effective incentives to its farmers in conservation and crop productivity through alternative crops ensuring crop diversification.

She proposed that the country's due to rising could focus on early crop sowing that can help generate more produce with the available water and resources provided the growing shift in pattern. She added that there was much scientific evidence on early crop sowing, however, the issue is that hottest year in its history. more production in the

# LPC, Private Nursing Colleges sign MoU

LAHORE (APP): The very welcome thing for the MoU signing ceremony between Private Nursing Colleges Federation and Lahore Press Club (LPC) was held on Monday in a local hotel.

In the ceremony, Patron-in-Chief of Private Colleges Federation Mehmood Sadiq, President Nadeem Pal, Dr. Sania Khera, Lahore Press Club President Arshad Ansari, Secretary Zahid Abid, Senior Vice President Shiraz Hasnat, Vice President Amjad Usmani and all members of the body governing participated

Arshad Ansari, while thanking the officials of the Federation, said that it is a

children of journalists that they will be able to get nursing education at a low cost. He said that the profession of nursing deserves high respect and it is a field in which there are job opportunities even

today.

Dr. Sania Khera said that serving humanity is the mission of her federation and under this mission she is here today. He said that he and his team will also organize a medical camp in Lahore Press Club every On this occasion, a

luncheon was also organized in honor of the newly elected body of Lahore Press Club. Shields Private Nursing Colleges were also presented to the newly elected officials



KARACHI: A view of the newly born cubs of African Lioness at Zoo in Provincial Capital.

# Excitement at peak as Gilgit-Baltistan's annual Winter Feast kicks off

ISLAMABAD (APP): The enchanting landscapes of Gilgit-Baltistan are set witness unprecedented celebration of winter sports as the annual seven-day Winter Feast commenced on

mark a historic milestone with the inclusion of the National Ice Hockey Championship, promising a week of exhilarating competitions and cultural events, according to event organizers.

For the first time in the festival's history, they said that the National Ice Hockey Championship takes center stage, drawing teams from various regions, including both male and competitions.

female competitors. The icy battlegrounds are ready host an intense showdown of skill, speed, and teamwork as the players vie for victory.

Beyond the thrill of ice hockey, the festival boasts a lineup of diverse This year's festivities competitions, including Ice Skating and traditional local games such as Basra, Pindok, and Baalbut. Participants from across Gilgit-Baltistan are gearing up to showcase their prowess in these unique and culturally significant

contests. One of the highlights of this year's event is the active participation of female teams in various



Services/Mobile App at Lahore Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education.

# Naqvi inaugurates 37 police stations, 5 projects in Gujranwala

**Independent Report** 

Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi, accompanied by the cabinet, embarked on an extensive 6-hour visit to Gujranwala, inaugurating 37 police stations, 5 projects, and inspecting the Lahore Sialkot Motorway Link Road.

The link road to Gujranwala is slated for traffic opening by January 31, accompanied by the construction of a flyover at 'Chan Da Qila' to connect the Expressway with GT Road, said a handout issued here on Monday.

The CM commended

#### Passenger bus overturns due to fog, 2 people die, 26 injured in Gujranwala

GUJRANWALA (Online): A passenger bus has been overturned due to heavy fog in Gujranwala as a result of which 2 passengers were killed and 26 were seriously injured. There were 50

passengers in the bus. According to details, the bus full of passengers was going from Kohat to when uncontrollably overturned due to heavy fog in Gujranwala while taking a

Punjab Gujranwala's roads, the design of the 'Chan Da Gujranwala University and Minister announcing the formation Qila' Flyover. Updates on hospital upgrades.

# CM inaugurates 'Arfa Teacher Chatbot'in honor of Arfa Karim

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi paid a heartfelt tribute to Arfa Karim, the great daughter of the nation, during his visit to the Arfa Software Technology Park on Ferozepur Road here on Monday.

The CM inaugurated the "Arfa Teacher Chatbot" in honor of the visionary Arfa Karim and, as a symbol of remembrance, lit candles at the technology park. He also visited the Arfa Karim Technology Incubator, commending the Arfa Karim Foundation endeavors in advancing IT initiatives.

Mohsin Naqvi expressed appreciation for the Arfa Karim Foundation team introduced to him, stating that there could be no better homage to Arfa Karim. He emphasized the role of digitalization and IT in aligning educational visions with contemporary requirements. The newly launched "Arfa Teacher Chatbot" is positioned as a tool to enhance Pakistan's positive global image and contribute to skill development.

# 'Women-driven EV 'Pink scooties' to take over streets of Punjab soon, Minister

**Independent Report** AHORE: Provincial

Transport Minister Ibrahim Hasan Murad said on Monday that the Punjab government has initiated a plan to introduce 'Pink EV Pink Scooties' to make women safer, which will provide livelihood to women for economic and domestic needs.

Talking to the PTV news channel, he said that the government of Punjab has initiated a program other transport they can electric vehicles.

scheme to empower Pakistani females by introducing 'Pink Scooties', adding, that the government through a lucky draw will give over 2000 to 3000 scooties in the first phase of this scheme.

He explained that this scheme has various positive impacts on women and girls, adding, that women with Pink EV scooters will not wait at the bus stops for long hours for buses, vans and travel from one place to another with a safe and friendly atmosphere. This ambitious initiative reflects government's commitment to sustainable transportation solutions and

environmental conservation.

Talking about EV motorbikes and Rickshaws, he said that this initiative aims to provide a sustainable and ecofriendly mode of transportation

## LHC wraps up petition seeking disbandment of Punjab care taker set up

Lahore High Court (LHĆ) has wrapped up petitions seeking abolition of care taker set up in Punjab and constitution of new care taker set up declaring them in-fructuous in the light of reply from federation

The petitions filed by Sheikh Rashid and Zaman Virdig came up for hearing before single bench of LHC led by Justice Shahid Karim. Federal government,

election commission and governor Punjab have been made respondents in the petitions. The petitioner took

the plea the sitting government has completed its tenure after Supreme

(Online): Court (SC) order for holding election on May 14 in Punjab. No care taker set up can stay after 90 days. The incumbent care taker government is working illegally and unconstitutionally in Punjab.

The care taker government of Punjab be abolished forthwith and order be issued for establishment of new interim set up in Punjab.

The counsel for federal government argued the said matter is pending hearing in Supreme Court (SC) too. SC has given order to hold election. Election schedule has been issued. The elections are going to be held on



KARACHI: Lady Health Workers and vaccinators of Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at Karachi press club.

# Home Deptt seeks details of focal persons other staff for election duty from DEOs

PESHAWAR (APP): The the polling stations have Home Department of been established. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has sought the details of focal persons and other staff of all districts.

A letter issued here said that the focal persons should be nominated by all the district education officers and their data assigned duties wherever schools.

In pursuance of the letter of the Home Department, the education including watchmen for department has instructed election duty from the all the district education District Education Officers officers to formally nominate focal persons in their respective districts in connection with the general election 2024 and send their names along with related details. It should be sent at the further directed the DEOs earliest, adding that all the to assign responsibilities watchmen should be to the watchmen of the

# International News

# Yemen Houthi rebels fire missile at US warship in Red Sea in first attack after American-led strikes

**Monitoring Desk** JERUSALEM: Yemen's Houthi rebels fired an antiship cruise missile toward an American destroyer in the Red Sea but a U.S. fighter jet shot it down in the latest attack roiling global shipping amid Israel's war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip, officials

The attack on Sunday marks the first U.S.-acknowledged fire by the Houthis since America and allied nations began strikes Friday on the rebels following weeks of assaults on shipping in the Red

The Houthis have

dor linking Asian and Mideast energy and cargo shipments to the Suez Canal onward to Europe over the Israel-Hamas war. attacks that threaten to widen that conflict into a regional conflagration. The Houthis, a Shiite

rebel group allied with Iran that seized Yemen's capital in 2014, did not immediately acknowledge the attack. It wasn't immedi-

ately clear whether the latest attack, though President Joe Biden has said he 'will not hesitate to direct further measures to protect our people and the free flow of international

commerce as necessary. The Houthi fire on Sunday went in the direction of the USS Laboon, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer operating in the southern reaches of the Red Sea, the U.S. military's Central Command said in statement.

The missile came from near Hodeida, a Red Sea port city long held by the Houthis, the U.S. said

"An anti-ship cruise U.S. would retaliate for the missile was fired from Iranian-backed Houthi militant areas of Yemen toward USS Laboon," Central Command said. "There were no injuries or damage reported."

#### China warns against bids to 'split apart' its territory

**Monitoring Desk** 

BEIJING: China's Fore-i-gn Minister Wang Yi has said Taiwan's election, irrespective of its outcome. can never change the mere fact that there is only one China and Taiwan is a part

of it.
"Taiwan has never been a country. It wasn't in the past, and it certainly won't be in the future,' Wang Yi said in a joint press conference with his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shoukry in Cairo. Any effort to that end,

Wang warned, "seriously threatens the well-being of Taiwan compatriots, seriously harms the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation, and seriously jeopardises peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait region". Anyone trying to split apart China's territory would be "harshly punished", he warned, after the island chose Lai Ching-te, seen as a dangerous by ruling Communist Party, as president. Beijing that claims Taiwan as its territory but has never renounced force to bring it under its control responded to Lai's election.



Minister of the Ministry of Commerce shake hands after signing a joint statement of the free trade agreement, next to Swiss President Viola Amherd and Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China, Li Qiang during an official visit in Kehrsatz near Bern, Switzerland.

#### **Pacific nation Nauru** cuts ties to Taiwan, switches to China

**Monitoring Desk** TAIPEI: The South Pacific nation of Nauru announced on Monday it was severing diplomatic ties with Taiwan would instead

recognise China. The announcement came days after Taiwan elected the independenceleaning Lai Ching-te as its next president

In a media release, the Nauru government said it would no longer recognise Taiwan "as a separate coun- with Taiwan".

try" but "rather as an inalienable part of China's

China claims democratic, self-ruled Taiwan as its own territory and has vowed to one day seize it, by force if needed.

Nauru said it would "sever diplomatic relations" with Taiwan immediately, and "no longer develop any official relations or official exchanges

# War on Gazans rages amid calls for ceasefire

**Monitoring Desk** GAZA STRIP: Israeli tanks and aircraft hit areas in central and southern Gaza on Sunday, the 100th day of the ongoing aggression that has claimed a surging civilian death toll and ravaged the besieged Palestinian terri-

The conflict has created a dire humanitarian crisis for the 2.4 million people in Hamas-ruled Gaza, the United Nations and aid groups warn, and reduced much of the coastal strip to rubble. According to the health ministry in Gaza, at least 23,968 people have been killed, the majority of

them women and children. On the other hand China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi in a press conference with his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shoukry called for a ceasefire in Gaza

"It is necessary to insist on the establishment of an independent, fully sovereign state of Palestine on the 1967 borders, with east Jerusalem as its capital."

and the restoration of Pal-

estinian statehood.

A joint statement from the two ministers urged an immediate end "to all acts of violence, killing and targeting of civilians and civilian establishments'

#### 22 miners killed in Tanzania landslide **Monitoring Desk**

DAR SALAAM: Twenty two people have lost their lives following a landslide at a mine in northern Tanzania, officials said on Sun-

The accident occurred in Simuyu region's Bariadi district, more than 500 kilometres north of the capital, Dodoma, burying the miners under heavy debris. "As we close the rescue operations, the death toll remains 22, all men," Faustine Mtitu, acting commander for the region's fire and rescue force, told reporters on Sunday.

#### **Putin and India's** Modi discuss Ukraine, wish each other well in elections -Kremlin **Monitoring Desk**

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin held a phone call on Monday with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, discussing Ukraine and wishing each other well in upcoming elections, the Kremlin said. The two leaders "expressed interest in further intensifying mutually beneficial bilateral ties" and touched upon "the situation in Ukraine"

#### shipments through Red Sea, seeking security advice along its route on Jan. 13 in **Monitoring Desk** DOHA: QatarEnergy, one of the world's largest ex-

**QatarEnergy pauses LNG** 

porters of liquefied natural gas, has stopped sending tankers via the Red Sea although production continues, a source with knowledge of the matter told Reuters on Monday. At least four tankers

used to carry Qatari LNG were held up over the weekend after US and British forces carried out air and sea strikes on Yemen in response to Houthi attacks on ships in the Red Sea, part of a route that accounts for about 15% of the world's shipping traffic.

The Al Ghariya, Al Huwaila and Al Nuaman had loaded LNG at Ras Laffan in Qatar and were supposed to head to the Suez Canal but stopped off the coast of Oman on Jan. 14, according to LSEG shiptracking data. The Al Rekayyat, which was heading back to Qatar, stopped fuel in 2023.

"It is a pause to get

security advice, if passing (through the) Red Sea remains unsafe we will go via the Cape," said a source with direct knowledge of the matter, referring to the considerably longer route round the Cape of Good Hope at Africa's southern The government's International Media Office and QatarEnergy did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Shipowners and managers of the four

vessels including Teekay

Shipping Glasgow, Pronav

Ship Management, Nakilat

Shipping Qatar Ltd and

Shell's shipping and chartering arm STASCO also did

not immediately respond

to requests for comment. Qatar, the world's second largest exporter of LNG, shipped more than 75 million metric tons of the

#### Mexico sent 25,000 troops to Acapulco after Hurricane Otis. But it hasn't stopped the violence

**Monitoring Desk** MEXICO CITY: The

Mexican government sent 25,000 troops to Acapulco after the resort was hit by Hurricane Otis on Oct. 25, but apparently that hasn't stopped the violence this

The main Acapulco business chamber reported that gang threats and attacks have caused about 90% of the city's passenger vans to stop running, affecting the resort's main form of transport. The chamber said the violence was forcing businesses to close early on Thursday and Friday.

"Organized groups of people who have no conscience or commitment to Acapulco have committed criminal acts in broad daylight, threatening civilians with direct armed attacks, and this caused 90% of public transportation to

shut Martínez Alejandro Sidney, president of the National Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Services in Acapulco.

'If this situation continues, we will be forced to close businesses," he wrote in a statement Thursday. The problem continued into Friday, with few vans or buses seen in the streets.

Martínez Sidney was apparently referring to attacks on the privately-own and operate passenger vans in recent days. Local media reported that at least three vans had been burned, a practice that gangs often use to enforce extortion demands for daily protection

payments from van drivers. The Category 5 hurricane killed 52 people and left 32 missing, and severely damaged almost all of the resort's hotels.

# targeted that crucial corri-Britain's Secretary of State for Defence Grant

Shapps gives a speech at Lancaster House, in Lon-

# Five die trying to cross Channel to UK in freezing cold

CALAIS: Five migrants died and a sixth was in critical condition on Sunday after trying to reach Britain from northern France in freezing temperatures, the French maritime authority More than 30 people were rescued, the maritime prefecture said in a state-

ment. The fatalities were

**Monitoring Desk** 

deaths on the Channel in 2024. Authorities said four migrants died overnight, while a fifth body was found later on the beach. The group was at-

off the resort town of Wimereux when their small boat got into difficulty around two am, the mari time prefecture said. The crew of a French

tow vessel, the Abeille Normandie, went to the rescue and spotted "unconscious and lifeless people in the water, an official said. estimating the water temperature at nine degrees the first reported migrant

Along the Wimereux embankment a journalist saw items of clothing and shoes abandoned by the

**US President Advisor** 

on Arts Shahid calls on

**Minister for Culture** 

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pa- businessman Shahid Ahmed

kistani-American business-

man Shahid Ahmed Khan,

Advisor to the President of

United States on Arts on

Monday called on Interim

Federal Minister for Na-

tional Heritage and Culture

Jamal Shah here at Culture

Division. During the meet-

ing, the Minister highlighted

the important role of cul-

tural exchanges in strength-

ening bilateral relations be-

United States

tween Pakistan and the

such exchanges people of

both countries could better

understand each other's

He said that through

Khan, Advisor to the Presi-

dent of the United States

said that he had frequently

travelled to Pakistan and

was interested in working

on the rich cultural heritage

the Minister also offered

Fateha on the sad demise

of Shahid Ahmed Khan

the President of the United

States on Arts Shahid

Ahmed Khan along with

Minister for National Heri-

tage and Culture Jamal Shah

visited Islamabad Museum

located at Sir Syed Memorial Building.

During the meeting,

Later, the Advisor to

of the region

mother.

# **Country needs smart solutions to combat** current challenges: Education Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindhi Monday emphasized on adopting smart solutions for addressing the current challenges being faced by the country, matching the pace of the developed countries.

Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training in collaboration with UNESCO, EdTech Hub, and ITA.

Madad Ali said that the current challenges being faced by the country require smart solutions and it is high time that Pakistan matches the pace of the developed countries of the world.

Chairing the event, the minister said that it is heartening to see that Pakistan has recently given high importance to the use of technology in imparting education. "Evaluating technology's role in imparting education is need of the hour", he added.

He said that the role of technology in reducing the number of out-of-school children in the country is of great significance, which he termed as his top priority.

He said that quality of education is another challenge that has been given the highest priority under his

He said that he has placed special emphasis in ensuring that the schools in the federal area have the basic necessities available to provide a safe, secure and enabling environment to students.

Madad Ali said that the Ministry of Education was He was speaking at the launching ceremony of "Global Education Monitoring Report 2023" arranged by the passed on to the masses in the COVID 19 era.

He highlighted the development and launch of teleschool and educational radio channels in the COVID era by the education ministry.

Madad Ali highlighted the findings of the report

which pointed out that technology can also leave behind under privileged students. He said that his ministry will ensure that the use of technology is adapted in such a way that no child is left

behind irrespective of his/her background. He said that his ministry will ensure that our learning outcomes and educational programmes will be aligned with technology in such a way that the negative aspects of technology are completely curbed.

Madad Ali said that he hoped that the fundamental right to education of all children of Pakistan would be guaranteed through the smart use of technology.



Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick addressing the second consultative meeting of Kashmir Advisory Committee in Islamabad.



Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training in collaboration with UNESCO, EdTech Hub, and ITA hosted the national launch of the 2023

# Anti-rape crisis cell established at PIMS

**Independent Report** ISLAMABAD : The Min-istry of Law and Justice on Monday inaugurated the model Anti-Rape Crisis Cell (ARCC) at the Pakistan Institute of Medical

Sciences (PIMS). The cell was established in collaboration with UK Aid, United Nations Populations Find (UNFPA) and Legal Aid

Society (LAS). The event was attended by British High Commissioner to Pakistan Ms. Jane Marriot, along with UNFPA Country Director Dr. Luay Shabaneh, Federal Law Secretary Raja Naeem Akbar, Federal Health Secretary Iftikhar Ali Shallwani, Chairperson of the Special Committee on vestigation) Act, 2021 Ms. Ayesha Raza Farooq, PIMS Executive Director

targeted response mecha-

Raja Naeem Akbar thanked the civil society and the British High Commission for collaborating to establish the pilot ARCC in Islamabad.

He mentioned that the establishment of this crisis cell is a testament to the dedication of the state and the collaboration of various stakeholders in our ongoing battle against sexual vio-

Ms Ayesha Raza Farooq said, "In essence, the establishment of the Anti-Rape Crisis Cells is not just a legal initiative, it is a comprehensive and unwavering commitment to creating a society free from the shackles of sexual vio-Anti-Rape (Trial and In- lence where survivors are supported, and justice pre-

Prof. Dr. Rana Imran Prof. Dr. Rana Imran Sikandar committed that



Sikandar, several senior government officials and members of the civil soci-

The launch of a model facility such as this signifies the government's commitment to improve access to justice for survivors of sexual violence under the Anti-Rape (Trial and Investigation) Act 2021 try around the globe and through a coordinated and urged to handle this issue.

the Hospital will provide specialized training sessions for all relevant healthcare officials, such as doctors and nurses on trauma-informed care and the specific needs of sexual violence survivors. Iftikhar Ali Shallwani stated that the social evils of sexual violence exist in any country around the globe and

## **GE2024:** PID strives to foster electoral understanding among masses

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Press Information Department (PID) is commit-countable democratic systed to foster electoral understanding among the masses through awareness campaigns ahead of the general elections in 2024.

The PID, in this regard, has already launched a series of seminars to ensure active civic engagement and participation in the electoral process and elections slated for February 8.

According to the PID. the stakeholders being invited to the seminars included representatives from mainstream political parties, the Election Commission of Pakistan, media, academia, civil society and the general public.

It said these seminars would serve as a platform to educate citizens on the electoral system, and the role of elected representaals to make informed deci- ent topics.

sions, ultimately contributing to a more robust and actem," the PID added.

On January 11, the PID organized its first seminar titled 'Pakistan elections 2024: The Economic Reforms Agenda of Political Parties' here at a local hotel in Islamabad which had across-the-board representation from the stake-

holders. According to the PID, the spotlight was on the economic reform agendas presented by political parties of Pakistan gearing up for the 2024 elections. "The electorate is

keenly interested in the economic visions put forth by diverse political entities and this exploration aims to provide a concise overview of the economic landscapes envisioned by the key playimportance of voting, the ers in Pakistan's political arena." For general public knowledge, it is informed tives. "By fostering public that the PID had planned awareness, the seminars three more seminars here in seek to empower individu- the Capital city on differ-

#### CDA decides to build model village in Islamabad

SLAMABAD (APP) The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has decided to build a new model village in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT).

This model village will be built on 3621 kanal of land which will be completed within two years. The 4500 residential plots of 10-marla will be developed in this model village A commercial center and three class 3 shopping centres will be built in this village. A Jamia mosque will be constructed and a health centre will also be estab-

lished in this model village. CDA official said all the plots of this model village will be allotted to those affected people whose land was acquired by CDA for 'ark Enclave.

The plots will be given to the affected people of Mauza Kurri and Rihara in this model village.

This project has been facing dillydally for nine years. Now Islamabad High Court (IHC) ordered CDA to initiate this project and complete it within two vears.

#### Police arrest suspects in assassination case of cleric

SLAMABAD (APP): In a significant development, Islamabad police said on Monday that they have apprehended two suspects believed to be involved in the assassination of a cleric Maulana Masood Rehman Usmani.

According to a police spokesman, the initial reports suggested that the arrested individuals have alleged affiliations with a banned organization, a private news channel reported.

Religious leader Maulana Masood ur Rehman Usmani was shot earlier this month here in Islamabad when unknown assailants opened fire on his vehicle.

#### Famous urdu poet, Sufi scholar Wasif remembered

SLAMABAD (APP) Famous Urdu poet, teacher, writer and Sufi scholar Wasif Ali Wasif was remembered on the ocasion of his birthday on Monday.

He was born on January 15, 1929, in Khushab and is famous for his unique literary style. Probably no contemporary Urdu writer is more cited in quotations than him. Master of aphorism, he has almost a miraculous ability to capture a rainbow of meaning in a few dewdrops of well-chosen

Many of his aphorisms have become proverbs in recent years.

His book "Kiran Kiran Suraj" containing these aphorisms remained a best seller for many many

### Ulema to highlight energy efficiency, conservation in Friday prayer sermons religious standpoint.

Ulema from various schools of thought will highlight the importance of energy efficiency and conservation from a religious perspective in their Friday prayer ser-mons across the country. This commitment was

formalized through a declaration signed by Ulema who participated in a oneday seminar organized by the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (NEECA) on

Bushra Bibi, wife of PTI

founder Imran Khan has

challenged Nikah during

iddat case in Islamabad

petitioner will try to get fix

the case for hearing in IHC

petition that the petition

filed against Bushra Bibi

and her husband PTI

founder is based on

malafide intent. Former

husband Khawar Manika

got registered complaint January 01, 2018.

The lawyers of the

It has been said in the

High Court (IHC).

The declaration affirms the Ulema's agreement to raise awareness about energy conservation through their sermons, expressing their dedication to a national-level energy conservation drive.

They presented their views in light of the Quran and Sunnah, emphasizing the significance of energy conservation and its social, moral, and religious implications. Sardar Mohazzam, energy conservation from a the Managing Director of

ous designs. False allegation

of nikah during iddat was

leveled on the basis of false

and fabricated documents.

said according to former

husband he divorced me

(Bushra Bibi) on Novem-

ber 14, 2017. Khawar

Manika had pronounced

triple talaq on April 15, 2017. She shifted to her

mother's home in August

2017. She stayed in her

mother's home till her mar-

riage with PTI founder on

ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gul Bar Khan along with

the provincial ministers are offering condolences and praying to the family mem-

bers of the well-known religious scholar Allama Sheikh Mohsin Najafi (Late).

nounced by the government

urged the citizens to pro-

vide their accurate data at

the time of registration

while those who will pro-

vide false information will

never be allowed to become

any complaint about the

programme can contact the

toll-free number 0800-

26477 and official social

media accounts of BISP.

the complaints of the citi-

zens in a shortest possible

courage not only the poor

segments to participate in

the survey but also middle

class, lower and upper

middle class for compila-

their data will help the gov-

ernment provide them any

subsidy or facility in the

time of any emergency situ-

ation in future on the basis

of their socio- economic

tion of their data"

data", he added

The DG said, "We en-

The compilation of

'We are ready to resolve

The citizens having

part of this programme.

The DG NSER has

in the future, he said.

**BISP** registration process

continues smoothly

ISLAMABAD (APP): to give any subsidy, if an-

The registration process in

the National Socio-Eco-

nomic registry (NSER) Sur-

vey of the Benazir Income

Support Programme (BISP)

is successfully continued

across the country through

the registration centers es-

tablished by the Tehsil of-

Director General, National

Socio-Economic Registry (NSER), BISP, Naveed

Akbar in a video message

released through a social media platform. The DG

stated that the citizens, be-

longing to the low-income

groups, can register with

the Benazir Income Sup-

port Programme through

visiting the registration cen-

ters opened from Monday

bring Computerized National Identity Cards, B-

Forms of children for regis-

quired to bring electricity or

gas bills, if have connec-

tions, so that we can enter

these bills in the database

They are required to

The citizens are re-

till Saturday.

tration purpose.

This was stated by the

fices of the programme.

The petition further

case in IHC

Ulema for collaborating with NEECA on this national cause He said that achieving

behavioral change at the national level requires collective efforts, and Ulema. through their sermons, can significantly impact society by discouraging the wasteful use of energy. He said that NEECA has developed a booklet with the support of Ulema, focusing on energy conservation from a religious perspective.

#### **FGEHA Bushra challenges** continues Nikah during iddat operation ISLAMABAD (Online): under ill intent with nefari-

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) has continued a targeted operation against illegal encroachments in the Green Belt area between Sector G-13 and G-12, as well as in G-15/3 in Islamabad. The encroachment operation was launched in collaboration Encroachment Wing Islamabad Police, and IC Administration which aimed to address unauthorized constructions.

# against illegal encroachments

# perspectives and cultures. Pakistani-American

Posters urge

people to voice

for demand of

**UN resolutions** 

ISLAMABAD (APP)

Posters have appeared in

parts of Indian illegally oc-

cupied Jammu and Kashmir

urging people to raise

voices for the resolution of

the Kashmir dispute based

on the right to self-deter-

mination, pledged to the

Kashmiris in its resolution

passed on 5th January

Media Service, the posters,

displayed in Islamabad dis-

trict by pro-freedom orga-

nizations, said that the BJP

government while continu-

ing their atrocities and state

terrorism is changing the

demography of the territory

keeping Kashmiris under

According to Kashmir



Advisor to the Prime Minister on Aviation, Air

Marshal (retd) Farhat Hussain Khan meets with

Ambassador of Iraq in Pakistan, H.E. Hamid Abbas

Lafta to discuss issues of mutual interest at Em-

ISLAMABAD: Salman Chaudhry PSP a Grade-21 Police officer of Policr Service of Pakistan, assumed charge as Inspector General, National Highways & Motorway Police.

He is the 22nd Inspector General of National Highways & Motorway Police. Before his posting as IG, NHMP, he was working as Additional Inspector General Police in Baluchistan.

On his arrival at NHMP Headquarters in sented a Guard of Honor subsequent to which he held a brief meeting with officers of HQs. The new best efforts and will focus on to strengthen the organization to improve pub-

lic services. During his illustrious career, he undertook various important assignments.

He is considered as the most professional police officer. He lauded that National Highways and Motorway Police is a well reputed force and we have to work with more enthusiasm to enhance credibility level of this department at national & international

He urges that I want to energize this department with the all best efforts. In his opening address he em-Islamabad, he was pre- phasized that my officers are my assets and my success is hidden in their professionalism and commitment. There is a dire need commander committed to that commanding officers resolve core issues with his and field formations should work hard to focus on help culture and courtesy with the commuters.



Salman Chaudhry assumed the charge of 22nd Inspector General of National Highways and **Motorway Police** 

# NASTP park aims to transform country into Knowledge economy, create jobs: DG

rector General National Aerospace Science and Technology Park (NASTP) Air Vice Marshal (RETD) Asad Ikram said on Monday that the 'Digital Science Park' was established in Karachi to transform the country into a knowledge-based economy and provide employ-ment opportunities for the youth.

Talking to PTV news channel, he said that it was part of a strategic initiative designed to benefit the country in numerous ways, adding, that these parks will serve as a launchpad for will

searchers, innovators, vations. and entrepreneurs.

yield manifold benefits for the country, adding, that it would spur technological progress and foster self-reliance by offering a platform to the

He said that under this project we will set a model for the whole nation, adding, that the 'Digital Science Park'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Di- the country's leading re- multidisciplinary inno-

The government He added that NASTP is a project of national and strategic significance that would will give special emphanism to science and technology education to enable the youth to reach their potential, he further mentioned.

"Equipping the youth with the latest technologies will help create immense oppor-tunities for them," he added. Replying to a question, he said that NSTP will include agriculture technology, automobile technology, education technology, promote scope of jobs.

ISLAMABAD: A large number of the passengers are trying to board in, metro bus for reaching towards their destination as the quantity of buses are less comparing to the numbers of passengers, which needs the attention of concern authority.

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