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Pakistan to always champion Jammu & Kashmir cause: PM

Emphasizes progressive foreign policy for socio-economic well-being of people; Pakistan will continue to stand for international law and purposes and principles of the UN Charter, mainstreaming economic diplomacy and support the Palestinian cause

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

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

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

Welcoming the Prime Minister, Foreign Minis-

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

He underscored the need for strengthening the

anchoring role of the Foreign Office in foreign policy formulation and implementation.

In his key-note address, the Prime Minister shared his perspective about the pressing demands on the conduct of Pakistan's foreign policy to align it with present-day imperatives.



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



LAHORE: Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in a group photo with sons of Malik Amir Khokhar (late) and others on eve of their joining the party

PPP strongly denies seat adjustment rumors with PML-N

ISLAMABAD (INP): The leadership of Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) on Thursday strongly denied the rumors related to seat adjustment with Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) in the general election scheduled to be held on February 08, 2024.

Sources close to the development revealed that, during the Central Executive Committee (CEC) meeting, the party leadership expressed anger over the news of seat adjustment with PML-N, stating that such an arrangement is categori-

cally ruled out. The leadership of the party asserted that engaging in seat adjustment with the PML-N would not be fruitful for PPP. They underscored that the PML-N is the primary political competition for the PPP in the forthcoming elections.

The meeting between PPP senior leader Khurshid Shah and PML-N leader Ayaz Sadiq also came forth in the meeting where Khurshid Shah clarified matters with the party leadership.

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

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

"Political parties should come up with the programmes for special people in their election

manifestos and programmes," Murtaza Solangi said while delivering the speech at a function, organized by Pakistan Disabled Foundation for differently-abled persons.

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

He said special persons or differently-abled persons also had the right to vote.



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

No ban on airing Imran's speeches, Pemra tells LHC

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) on Thursday informed the Lahore High Court (LHC) that there was no ban on broadcasting former prime minister Imran Khan's speeches.

The revelation was made by Pemra counsel Advocate Waqas Mir during the hearing of a petition filed by Imran — who is currently incarcerated at Adiala Jail — last year against the authority's decision to bar all satellite TV channels from broadcasting his speeches and press talks.

The ban was imposed with "immediate effect" after Imran had lashed out at

former army chief Qamar Javed Bajwa for what he called "protecting incumbent rulers in their alleged corruption cases".

The PTI chief had subsequently approached the court and challenged the ban, arguing that Pemra's order was "purely driven out of vengeance". The LHC has so far conducted eight hearings on the case since its initiation, Imran's lawyer Ahmed Pansota told reporters.

Today, Imran's legal counsel, Pansota, and the federal government's lawyer appeared in court. LHC's Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza presided over the proceedings.

NEPRA hikes power tariffs by Rs4.12 per unit

KARACHI (INP): National Electric Power Regulation Authority (NEPRA) on Thursday jacked up the tariff by Rs 4.12 per unit for its consumers, ARY News reported.

The NEPRA issued a notification, increasing the power tariff by Rs 4.12 per unit in the account fuel adjustment charges for the month of November 2023.

Meanwhile, the consumers have to pay additional charges in the month of January 2024, however, the increase will not apply to Life-line and KE consumers.

Alvi condoles with Iran over loss of lives in terrorist attack

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday expressed his deep condolences to the government and people of Iran over the terrorist attack in Kerman.

The president condemning the brutal attack said that Pakistan and its people stood in solidarity with the people of Iran in this hour of grief.

He added that Pakistan sympathized with the bereaved families who lost their loved ones in the attacks.

He also prayed for the elevation of the ranks of martyred in paradise and the speedy recovery of the injured.

According to global media outlets and Iranian state media reports, at least 103 people were killed by two bomb explosions near the tomb of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani on his 4th anniversary on Wednesday.

A large number of people were also wounded when the blasts hit a procession near the Sahab al-Zaman mosque located in the southern city of Kerman.

Three children die in NW blast

PESHAWAR (APP): At least three children were killed in a landmine explosion in the Mir Ali area near the Khajoori check post in North Waziristan on Thursday.

Local police informed; that the tragic incident took place in fields near the Honey-moon Hotel in Mir Ali where the children were grazing their goats. The three children aged between five to fifteen fell prey to the explosion and died at the scene.

Police said the shepherd children belonged to Zakirkhel village of Khajoori tehsil. Bodies of the ill-fated children were shifted to Mir Ali Hospital for medico-legal procedures. Police have started an investigation into the incident.

PPP's only rivals poverty, inflation, unemployment: Bilawal

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has emphasised that the party's only rival is the trinity of poverty, inflation and unemployment, which can only be defeated by choosing the symbol of the "arrow" and making the PPP victorious.

In an address to the PPP workers at Jati Umra here on Thursday, he outlined the party's commitment to addressing key issues facing Pakistan. He asserted that the PPP was contesting elections from every constituency with the intention to win. He urged the party workers to embrace the principles of unity and hard work, rejecting the politics of hatred and division.

The PPP chairman highlighted the party's 10-point agenda, emphasising key promises for economic transformation and social welfare. These include doubling the people's income

within five years, providing 300 units of free electricity, offering free quality education, and ensuring free healthcare.

Bilawal pledged to build three million houses for the less fortunate, expand the Benazir Income Support Programme, introduce 'Kissan' and 'Mazdoor Cards' for farmers and labourers, and support the youth through the 'Youth Card' initiative.

Addressing the escalating issues of inflation, unemployment and poverty, Bilawal announced the 'Bhook Mitao' programme aimed at tackling hunger at the grassroots level through union councils.

Expressing gratitude to the party workers, Bilawal urged them to take the 10-point manifesto to every doorstep, emphasising the PPP's commitment to end traditional politics of hate and division.

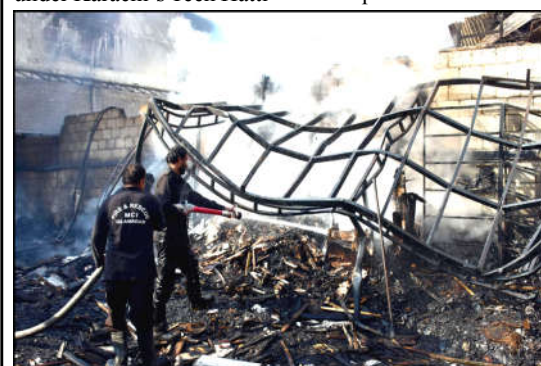


KARACHI: Caretaker Education Minister Sindh Raina Hussain along with Counsel General of Turkey in (Karachi) Jamal Sango and others inaugurate Primary and Secondary School (after its renovation) at Baldia Town in Provincial Capital.

Over 50 huts torched by Teen Hatti fire in Karachi: police

Monitoring Desk KARACHI: Over 50 huts were torched on Thursday after a huge fire erupted under Karachi's Teen Hatti

some human error. Sindh Rescue 1122 Director General Dr Abid Shaikh told Dawn.com the fire erupted in the huts un-



der the bridge and rescue services officials said.

Supermarket police Station House Officer Aslam Bhatti said that around 50-60 huts were destroyed in the fire.

He said the exact cause of the fire could not be ascertained immediately and suggested that it could be the result of

der the bridge at around 6pm. He said initially one fire tender was sent to the location but after the department realised the gravity of the situation, more were dispatched.

The fire was controlled after hectic efforts of 11 fire tenders, Shaikh said, adding that cooling work was under way.



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

Lifetime disqualification is against Islam, says CJP

"Where is that provision which says [a lawmaker] is disqualified for life?" CJP Isa asks

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

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

The hearing pertains to a case concerning the lifetime disqualification of Sardar Meer Badshah Qaisrani — a former member of Punjab Assembly — before the 2018 elections. And interestingly, even Saqib Jilani, the counsel leading the original plea against Qaisrani, told the

court that he was against the original Supreme Court verdict.

Chief Justice Faez Isa heads the bench which also comprises Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Aminuddin, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hilali.

As the hearing started, Advocate Khurram Raza, favouring lifetime disqualification, came to the rostrum and raised questions about maintainability of the proceedings. He asked under which provisions of law the proceedings were being conducted. However, the bench asked Raza to stick to his petition.

Resuming his arguments, the counsel said it was only the election tribunal's prerogative to grant a declaration and the

right could not be exercised by the high court or apex court directly. However, he maintained, cases against orders passed by the tribunal could be heard by the apex court under the scope of appeal.

The CJP said this debate won't resolve the problem before the court. Justice Isa remarked the court would not discuss the powers of the election tribunal as it was not the question of an election tribunal or election commission exercising a power but it was about the power exercised by a constitutional court.

Raza said any declaration in the election tribunal or by the SC in the appellate jurisdiction was covered under Article 62(1)(f).

Justice Isa remarked that election tribunal would exercise powers only under the law.

President approves reconstitution of Islamabad Subordinate Judiciary Services Tribunal

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday approved reconstitution of the Islamabad Subordinate Judiciary Services Tribunal. The president also approved the appointment of Islamabad High Court judge Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri as Chairman of Islamabad Subordinate Judiciary Services Tribunal. According to a statement issued by the President House, Justice Babar Sattar and Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan would be the member of the Tribunal. The president approved the reconstitution under section 3 of the Islamabad Subordinate Judiciary Services Tribunal Act 2016.

Mayor Karachi visits office of CPNE

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that he wants to serve the citizens of Karachi with dedication and we have solved their issues, and this process of public service will continue in future.

He said this on Thursday during a visit to the office of the Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE). He said that the remaining period of three and a half years should be focused on solving the problems of Karachi.

He lauded the role played by the CPNE in the development and promotion of journalism. The CPNE formulated guidelines for positive and con-

structive journalism, which raised the quality of journalism at the city, province and country levels, he said. On this occasion, Ijazul Haq, Aamir Mehmood and other senior journalists and editors were also present in large numbers.

Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab met the editors of newspapers and other journalists and said that newspapers identify the problems of the city which guides us. Through newspapers and electronic channels, we easily communicate our performance to the public. Journalists associated with newspapers, magazines and electronic media are our valuable assets.



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

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

KARACHI (APP): The sea phase of International Exercise Barracuda-XII was held at North Arabian Sea on Thursday which was participated by Interim Chief Minister Sindh Maqbool Baqar as chief guest who witnessed the sea phase of the exercise on board Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) Ship KASHMIR. According to the Pakistan Navy news release, the air and surface assets of Pakistan Navy, PMSA, Pakistan Air Force (PAF) and other national stakeholders participated in the sea phase of exercise.

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

helicopters and PMSA ships.

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

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

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Pak's commitment to continued ties with Afghanistan

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

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



Khurram Husain

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

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

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

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

RIP Sartaj Aziz

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

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

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

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

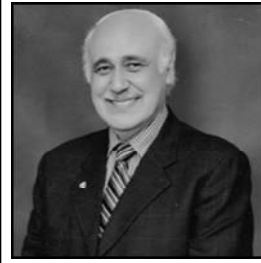
He got his chance to start making a difference in 1985 as a junior minister in the Junejo government, but the limited space that the government had is well known.

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

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

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

A cultural distaff



F.S. Aijazuddin

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Commerce News

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

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

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

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

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



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



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

European, US stocks creep higher

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

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

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

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

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

PSX loses 7.69 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a nominal negative change of 0.01 percent by losing 7.69 points, closing at 64,639.16 points against 64,646.85 points the previous trading day. A total of 548,989,972 shares valuing Rs.15,395 billion were traded during the day as compared to 639,616,328 shares valuing Rs. 20,282 billion the last day.

Some 360 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 155 of them recorded gains and 184 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 21 remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were K-Electric Ltd with 154,661,017 shares at Rs.5.65 per share, WorldCall Telecom with 37,141,119 shares.

Telecom Tribunal to handle telecom sector disputes, cases: Minister

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

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

The Telecom

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

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

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

CDNS secures Rs 50b in Islamic finance bonds

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Winter brings boom to fish trade in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Before making it on medium flame.

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

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

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

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

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

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

While the existing punishment u/s 147 of PPC

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

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



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

CM inaugurates new extended emergency of PIC

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

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

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

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

Terror financing cases increase in 2023: CTD KP

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

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

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

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



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

Ashrafi urges parents to ensure polio vaccination

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

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

not harmful to children's health. Dismissing unfounded claims linking vaccine to reproductive system issues, he reassured the public about its safety.

Expressing gratitude to the Punjab Health Department for successfully eliminating polio in the province, Ashrafi asserted the government's commitment to eradicating the polio virus nationwide by 2024. He acknowledged the sacrifices made by individuals, including army, police, and health workers, who lost their lives in the mission of polio eradication.

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

Minister stresses bringing accident ratio of mine workers to zero

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

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

labour was very high worldwide, and education and skills should be imparted to them.

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

PHC issues written verdict in Zartaj case

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

KPK Health Department launches a crackdown against sale of illegal medicines

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

The Drug Control and Pharmacy Services Department has acted swiftly in response to reports received from various districts to crack down on illegal drugs including food supplements,

nutraceuticals, unani, ayurvedic, homeopathic, and herbal products.

According to a report submitted by the Director General, Drug Control and Pharmacy Services to the Secretary Health Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Thursday, drug inspectors in different provinces have been specially tasked to launch special campaigns in their respective districts. . Abbottabad, Bajaur, Bannu, Buner, Chitral, DI Khan, Karam, Mardan, Haripur, Mansehra, Lucky Marwat, Nowshera, Orakzai, Dir Lower, Dir Upper, Illegal sale, stocking.

International News

US, allies warn Huthis as ship attacks rattle global commerce

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Twelve nations led by the United States on Wednesday jointly warned Yemen's Huthi rebels of unspecified consequences unless they immediately halt sea attacks that are increasingly disrupting global commerce.

President Joe Biden's administration described the statement—joined notably by Britain, Germany and Japan—as a final warning as he weighs possible military strikes against the Huthis if attacks persist.

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

solidarity with Palestinians in the battered, Hamas-run Gaza Strip.

"Let our message now be clear: we call for the immediate end of these illegal attacks and release of unlawfully detained vessels and crews," said the joint statement released by the White House.

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

"I would not anticipate another warning. I

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

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

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

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



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

North Korea moves to redefine relations with South

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

UK leaders kick off electioneering

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Russian hackers were inside Ukraine telecoms giant for months

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

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

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

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

Migrant arrivals to Spain nearly doubled in 2023

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

A total of 56,852 migrants entered Spain illegally last year, an 82.1 percent jump from 2022 and the most since 2018 when 64,298 migrants entered the country, according to provisional interior ministry figures.

The bulk of them, 39,910, arrived by boat in the Canaries after making the perilous crossing from Africa, an increase of 154.5 percent over last year and surpassing the record number set in 2006. With controls tightening in the Mediterranean, the Canaries route has become a favourite for

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

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

Pakistan supports Kashmiris' right to self-determination: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has said that Pakistan remained determined to playing its role in supporting the right to self-determination of Kashmiris through a free and impartial plebiscite as per the United Nations Security Council resolutions.

The president, in his message in connection with the Right to Self-Determination Day being observed on January 5, said, "Our strong and steadfast moral, political and diplomatic support for the Kashmiri people will continue till the realisation of this inalienable right."

"Every year, on the 5th of January, we renew our support for the right to self-determination of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. On this day in 1949, the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) unanimously

adopted a resolution affirming the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people through a free and impartial plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations," he added.

"The right to self-determination is a cardinal principle of international law, upheld in numerous core United Nations treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights."

President Alvi said, "For decades, it has been reaffirmed by the UN General Assembly in its annual resolution on self-determination.

However, the last 76 years of India's occupation of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) are a sad story of repression of the people of

Jammu and Kashmir.

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

"Today's commemoration is aimed at reminding the international community of its responsibility towards the oppressed Kashmiri people. The United Nations must honour the commitments that it had made 75 years ago and support the Kashmiri people's struggle for self-determination," he concluded.



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

PPP to announce manifesto soon: Shazia

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) Secretary Information Shazia Marri said on Thursday the party manifesto, addressing the economic challenges of the country, would be issued soon.

Highlighting a historic decision in the Central Executive Committee (CEC) meeting, she emphasised the manifesto's 10 points, presented by Chairman Bilawal-Bhutto Zardari, focusing on income, inflation, and unemployment issues. Marri conveyed Bilawal's commitment to

fighting against hatred, division, and inflation, emphasizing a positive approach to lead the nation forward.

She mentioned plans for a district-level youth centre and urged unity, stating that the PPP responds to criticism without resorting to it.

Regarding elections, she affirmed Bilawal's openness to opponents contesting from any location. Marri said that a clarification from Khurshid Shah has been sought on a meeting with PMLN's Ayyaz Sadiq.

Commissioner inaugurates week long anti-polio campaign

HYDERABAD (APP): Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad Division Syed Muhammad Sajjad Haider along with Deputy Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad Zahid Hussain Rind here on Thursday inaugurated the week long national anti-polio campaign by administering polio drops to children at Maternal and Child Healthcare Center Nawabshah.

Dr. Asadullah Dahri, Area Coordinator WHO Dr. Jhangir Korai, Focal Person for Polio Dr. Allah Bakhsh Raipar, Information Officer Sher Mohammad Jamali and

other health department officials were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the Commissioner said that all resources would be utilized to make the national anti-polio campaign successful and to administer polio vaccine to all children up to five years of age.

He appealed to the masses to cooperate with the door-to-door polio teams during the national anti-polio campaign.

On the occasion, an awareness rally was also held which was led by the Commissioner.



HYDERABAD: Naib Ameer Jamaat e Islami Pakistan Candidate NA-219 Dr Miraj ul Huda Siddiqui addressing a press conference with NA & PS Jamaat e Islami Candidates at HPC.

DC Sanghar for utilizing all resources for success of anti-polio campaign

HYDERABAD (APP): The Deputy Commissioner Sanghar Dr. Imran-ul-Hassan Khawaja has directed the Health Department officials to deploy all resources to ensure the success of the polio eradication campaign and give polio vaccine to every child under five years of age in the district so that the children do not face any disability in future.

He said this while chairing a meeting with the officers of the Health Department here Thursday regarding the arrangements for the anti-polio campaign to be started from January 8 to January 12, 2024 at his office. The DC directed the

officers of the Health Department to supervise all the teams effectively and to complete the polio campaign report in a timely manner.

During the meeting, the officials of the Health Department briefed the DC on the devised plan to make the campaign successful.

They mentioned that 1,327 teams have been formed to administer polio drops to over 500,000 children door to door.

The meeting was attended by District Health Officer Dr. Faiz Muhammad Mari, Dr. Vishnu Mal, Dr. Deedar Hussain and others.

Fog causes cancellation of another 24 flights

KARACHI (INP): Heavy fog in different parts of the country has disrupted air operations severely as another 24 flights from various airports have been cancelled. The number of cancelled flights has reached 88 in two days.

The PIA air schedule has been severely affected due to disruption of Islamabad's flight operations. Two flights to Islamabad, Sialkot, and Peshawar were diverted to alternative airports.

The PIA flight PK-212 from Dubai to Islamabad took off from Karachi, flight PF-719 of Air Sial from Jeddah to Islamabad landed in Lahore while Air Sial PF-737 from Muscat to Sialkot was taken off from Lahore.

Shaheed Z.A Bhutto 96th birth anniversary will be celebrated

KARACHI (APP): The 96th birth anniversary of the Founder Chairman and the Former Prime Minister Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto will be celebrated on Thursday in Larkana, Garhi Khuda Bakhsh, Naudero.

Glowing tributes would be paid to Shaheed Bhutto, also known as Quaid-e-Awam, for his services to the nation and the country. The programmes for the anniversary will start with the recitation of the Holy Quran at his grave on Friday. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was born on January 5, 1928 he laid the foundation of democracy in the country with the formation of the Pakistan People's Party on November 30, 1967.

Floral wreaths will be laid at the grave, and special prayers will be held for the departed soul. Various wings of the PPP will hold functions across the country to mark the day.

PPP activists have planned events in all major cities where the local leadership would speak about Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's life and political philosophy.

Anti-polio campaign to kick off from Jan 8

SUKKUR (APP): The anti-polio campaign will kick off in all eight taluks of the Khairpur district from the 8th to 12th January.

During the campaign, children under five years of age will be administered anti-polio drops for which a total of 792 teams will perform duty.

Deputy Commissioner Syed Ahmed Fawad on Thursday urged the officers concerned to use all available resources to make the campaign 100 per cent successful.



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

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

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

The prime minister, in a meeting with Ambassador of Qatar in Islamabad Ali Mubarak Ali Essa Al-Khater, said that Pakistan and Qatar enjoyed strong, fraternal ties. He expressed Pakistan's desire to expand bilateral cooperation across all spheres, particularly trade and investment.

He also conveyed warm regards to the Amir of Qatar. The prime minister

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

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

He stressed the need for concerted efforts by the international community, particularly Muslim Ummah, to bring peace in Palestine. As this was Ambassador Al-Khater's first call on the prime minister since presenting his credentials in November, he congratulated the envoy on assuming ambassadorial responsibilities in Pakistan and hoped that the bonds of friendship between the two countries would further strengthen during his tenure.

Three project started to generate energy from waste materials: Mayor Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab said that three projects had been started to generate energy from waste which would not only make Karachi clean but also create sources of energy.

Chairing a meeting here on Thursday, the Mayor said that Sindh was the first province in Pakistan that got energy from waste. Where this project has been started, we want to ensure the development of the city and take steps to solve the problems as soon as possible, he said.

Managing Director Sindh Solid Waste Management Board Naseemuddin

Mirani, Project Director SWIP Zubair Ahmed Channa, officials of Green Waste Energy, Khan Renewable Energy and Engroee energy besides Karamullah Waqasi Spokesperson for Political Affairs for Mayor, Dil Muhammad, General Secretary PPP Central District Javed Mureed, Chairman UC and other concerned officers were also present on this occasion.

The Mayor Karachi told the officials of the companies that the public had high expectations from us, so complete the feasibility study and process of generating energy from waste as soon as possible.



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

Sindh Police reports significant arrests, operations from September to December

KARACHI (APP): In the span of four months, between September and December 2023, the Sindh Police made substantial strides in law enforcement activities across the province.

According to the performance report presented to IGP Sindh Riffat Mukhtar Raja, a total of 6655 proclaimed offenders and 11252 absconding accused were apprehended through rigorous raids, snap-checking, patrolling, and various other operations.

The comprehensive report highlighted a range of achievements, including police encounters, dismantling criminal gangs, arrests related to robbery, terrorism, target killings, and the capture of kidnappers. Across Sindh, a detailed breakdown revealed the arrest of 6820 robbers/criminals, 23 terrorists, 6 target killers, 10 notified robbers, 5 highway robbers, and 6 kidnappers.

Notably, the report indicated that 97 dacoits met their fate during 972 encounters with the police, while 1340 criminal gangs were neutralized throughout Sindh. In Karachi alone, among 393 police encounters, 3812 dacoits/criminals, 1 terrorist, 2 highway robbers, 6 kidnappers, 855 proclaimed offenders, and 3631 absconders were apprehended. Additionally, 39 dacoits/criminals were eliminated, resulting in the eradication of 1133 gangs from the city.

Across various districts, similar successes were evident. In the Hyderabad range, 1699 accused, 998 proclaimed offenders, and 2111 absconding accused were arrested, accompanied by the elimination of 59 dacoit gangs. Similar efforts in other ranges, such as Mirpurkhas, Shaheed Benazirabad, Sukkur, and Larkana, demonstrated significant arrests, encounter statistics, and gang neutralisations.



HYDERABAD: Residents of Khathar are holding protest demonstration against drug dealers in their area, at Hyderabad press club.

PTA intensifies crackdown on illegal issuance of SIMs

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

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

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

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

Police thwarts attempt of ceramic tiles smuggling

KARACHI (APP): Keamari District's Mochko police station conducted a successful operation at the Mochko check post, as reported by SSP Keamari Arif Aslam Rao. The vigilant effort led to the interception of a 22-wheeler trailer transporting ceramic tiles from Hub Chowki Balochistan. The trailer, carrying a significant quantity of 3558 cartons of non-custom paid ceramic tiles, was seized during the operation.

The estimated value of the confiscated goods stood at over 20 million rupees. One suspect, identified as Karim Jan and allegedly involved in smuggling, was apprehended during the operation.

Karachi DSP seeks justice as lady SHO 'refuse' to register case

KARACHI (INP): The serving Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) is looking to get justice for his son as the lady Station House Officer (SHO) of Darakhshan Police Station allegedly refused to register his case.

Sindh police once again look helpless in the face of the vassal system, as the DSP of Sindh police is looking to get justice for his son after the lady SHO of Darakhshan Police Station allegedly refused to register his case against some 'influential' individuals.

The son of a DSP, in his complaint, claimed that on December 29, 2023, two single-cabin vehicles obstructed his vehicle, allegedly driven by 'influential individuals', who later brandished advance rifles at him.

Karachi sees coldest morning of 2024

KARACHI (INP): Karachi recorded the coldest morning of 2024 on Thursday as the minimum temperature dropped to 14°C in the metropolis, according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD).

The Met Department said the temperature in Karachi dropped due to north-east winds blowing in the city at the speed of eight kilometers per hour.

The Met Office has also predicted light rain in Karachi today. Met Office further informed that due to stable atmosphere, prevailing dense foggy conditions will continue over Punjab including Islamabad, plains of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and upper Sindh.

A rain-bearing westerly system will likely enter Balochistan on 04th January (today) and may affect parts of Balochistan till 05th January 2024.

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

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

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

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

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

The CJP remarked the

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

The CJP remarked are the other children not Pakistanis.

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

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

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

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

The court remarked we summer Attorney General (AG). The court while issuing notice to AG adjourned the hearing of the case for indefinite period.



HYDERABAD: Leaders and activists of Peoples Party (PPP) are cutting cake as they are marking 96th Birthday Anniversary of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, during celebration ceremony held in Hyderabad.

LHC dismisses petition against revoking PTI election symbol 'bat'

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

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

Justice Jawad Hassan announced the reserved

verdict on a petition, filed by Chaudhry Umar Ahab Dhillu, Sheikhupura District PTI president, and others. The court had reserved the verdict after hearing arguments of the parties a day earlier.

In his arguments, the petitioners' counsel had argued that the PTI intra-party elections were held in accordance with the party constitution, and all required documents were submitted to the ECP as per the Elections Act. However, the ECP declared the appointments of the PTI officials as void and also revoked the party's election symbol 'bat', he added.

PTI leader Firdous Shamim's appeal against rejection of election candidature from Karachi accepted

KARACHI (INP): The Sindh High Court's (SHC) election appellate tribunal on Thursday accepted PTI Central Vice President Firdous Shamim Naqvi's appeal against the rejection of his nomination papers from Karachi's NA-236 constituency for the Feb 8 polls.

Naqvi was among several PTI leaders whose nomination papers were rejected. On Monday, he had approached the election tribunal against the decisions of returning officers regarding his papers.

The former lawmaker, who is currently confined at his house in connection with a case related to the violent incidents of May 9, had filed the appeal through his lawyer and human rights activist Jibran Nasir.

According to Nasir, his client had filed three identical nomination papers from the same constituency as a precautionary measure after incidents of harassment and abduction of seconders and proposers were reported, especially from Punjab.



GARHI KHUDA BUX: Patient examine by doctor during the three-day free eye medical camp organized by Peoples Doctors Forum held at Rural Health Centre in Garhi Khuda Bux.

SMIU students organise 'Marketing Expo SMIU 2024'

KARACHI (APP): The Vice Chancellor Sindh Madressatul Islam University Prof. Dr. Mujeeb Sahrai on Thursday said that students should not be restricted to classroom learning but they must be encouraged in entrepreneurship activities, as in future the graduates could not be job seekers but could create job opportunities for others.

He said this while inaugurating the 'Marketing Expo SMIU 2024' at SMIU organised by second-year students of the Department of Business Administration in collaboration with the Office of Research, Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC).

The students exhibited their products which ranged from handicrafts including handbags, mobile covers, handmade fans of straws and a variety of perfumes, decoration pieces, electronic devices, electric items and other things.

The vice chancellor said SMIU will include an extended version of the course of producing products in its syllabus as students could continue to produce their products.