

Independent

dailyindkhi@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

Karachi

Ph: 0300-3898091 Vol: 06. No. 12 Rajab 14, 1445 AH Friday January 26, 2024 Pages 04 Price Rs. 12.00

Horrifying Indian plot of terrorism in Pakistan exposed thanks to vigilant security agencies

Credible evidence of links between Indian agents and assassination of 2 Pakistanis, Foreign Office

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani security institutions have successfully exposed the terrorist group as well as Indian handlers and facilitators involved in the terrorism acts and target killings.

The security institutions exposed the plot on basis of evidences that two Indian citizens namely Ashok Kumar and Yugaish Kumar were directly involved in the killing of Muhammad Riaz and Shahid Latif.

The security institutions of Pakistan apprehended the target killers of Muhammad Riaz and Shahid Latif in the light of undeniable evidences.



The target killers involved in the cold blooded killings were arrested when they were attempting to flee from Pakistan.

It may be recalled here that Muhammad Riaz had been killed by the target killers on September 8, 2023 and Shahid Latif gunned down on October 11, 2023 in Daska.

Both the deceased were peaceful citizens and

their only fault was to expose the ongoing cruelty, barbarism and heinous face of India in Kashmir.

The investigating agencies have the authentic proofs that the Indian citizens present in third country were involved in the whole targeted killing campaign, who were not only giving directives along with it's funding, but were also controlling the drive.

Matter of fact also remains that India assassinated the innocent people in terrorism acts in different countries including Pakistan, but no concrete evidences were provided about their evidences.

There's also no denying the fact that India is constantly busy in violation of the international laws and that it (India) is fully violating the relevant ar-

ticles of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and International Convention of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

The Indian intelligence agency (RAW) is playing the role of an international terrorism organization.

Worthwhile to mention is that India had killed the Sikh leader Hardeep Singh in Canada last year.

Canada had reacted strongly to the Sikh leader's killing at diplomatic level and highlighted it at the world level.

India had made plot to assassinate all the Sikh leaders who used to raise voice against the Indian cruel acts.



KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar presides over a meeting to review overall arrangements for the February 8 General Election at CM House.

Caretaker Sindh govt taking steps to ensure foolproof security for general elections: Baqar

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (retired) Maqbool Baqar on Thursday said that general election is scheduled to take place on February 8, 2024, and for this, all necessary security arrangements are being finalized to conduct the elections in a peaceful environment.

Addressing a press conference at CM House after presiding over a meeting to review election arrangements,

he said that a security force comprising 133,000 policemen, Rangers and Pak Army would be deployed to guarantee the election's transparency. He was accompanied by Minister for Home Brig (retd) Haris Nawaz, caretaker minister for Information Ahmad Shah and Special Assistant Advocate Moiz Baig.

The caretaker government of Sindh is making all-out efforts to hold free, and fair elections in the provincial areas of Sindh, the caretaker CM said. He said that general

election would be held to elect representatives of 61 national and 130 provincial assembly seats in Sindh.

Giving details of polling stations for next elections, out of them some 6531 were declared sensitive while 6496 are highly sensitive.

"I had a detailed meeting with the Chief Secretary, IG Police and DG Rangers in which all divisional commissioners and DIGs and provincial

election commissioner, Sindh participated," he said.

He said that overall law and order situation, provision of facilities and arrangement of security staff had also been discussed during the meeting.

After the security audit, the police have worked out a requirement of 109,000 police force against which 105,000 were available, he informed. The caretaker CM disclosed that there was a shortfall of 4000 policemen.



ISLAMABAD: Head of Al-Jomaih Group along with a delegation called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

PM urges Saudi Arabia's Jomaih Group to invest in Pak alternative energy sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday urged the Al-Jomaih Group of Saudi Arabia to invest in the alternative energy sector of Pakistan.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a four-member delegation, led by the Al-Jomaih Group head Sheikh Abdulaziz Hammad, said Pakistan and Saudi Arabia had brotherly ties which were getting further stronger. The Al-Jomaih Group had made a huge investment in the K-Electric.

The prime minister said that Pakistan greatly valued the Saudi investment

and welcomed its investment in the energy sector.

He also lauded K-Electric strategy to invest in the alternative energy sector as it would help reduce the power tariff for the benefit of consumers.

The prime minister also expressed the hope that the K-Electric would further improve its infrastructure to ensure uninterrupted power supply to domestic and industrial consumers.

The Al-Jomaih Group thanked the prime minister and the government team for resolving the longstanding issues faced by the company.



KARACHI: Governor SBP Jameel Ahmed along with Japanese CG Hattori Masaru and other diplomats visiting Traditional Pottery and Ceramic Exhibition 'Yakishime, Earth Metamorphosis' at SBP Museum.

PN kicks Exercise Sea Spark 2024 to evaluate combat readiness

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Navy on Thursday kicked off its Exercise Sea Spark 2024 to critically evaluate its combat readiness and strategy.

The opening ceremony of Pakistan Navy's exercise Sea Spark 2024 was held here, and participated by Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf as the chief guest, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The participants present at the event were briefed on the objectives and strategy of the exercise that would engage all combat assets of Pakistan Navy as well as Pakistan Mari-

time Security Agency (PMSA), Special Forces and Pakistan Marines.

In Exercise Sea Spark 2024, personnel and assets of the Pakistan Navy, Pakistan Army and Pakistan Air Force will participate in joint operations. This exercise will further strengthen Pakistan's resolve to maintain peace and security in the region. The inauguration ceremony was attended by representatives of the Federal Ministries including Defence, Foreign Affairs, Law and National Security Division as well as a large number of Armed Forces officers.



GUJRAT: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addresses to his supporters during public gathering meeting as a part of Election Campaign in connection of the General Election 2024 coming ahead, in Gujrat.

Minerals used in smart phones, cars manufacturing found in Pakistan: Minister

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Sindh Minister for Mines and Minerals Development, Mir Khuda Bax Marri on Thursday said that many of the leading sources of minerals commodities used world over in mobile devices and cars manufacturing were found in Pakistan.

The minister expressed these views while addressing a press conference in the Karachi Press Club (KPC) here.

He said that these sources of minerals were gift from Allah to Pakistan and same were being used the world over in manufacturing of the top three global industries. We should also utilize these sources for development and prosperity of the country instead of exporting these minerals in raw form, he said.

The caretaker minister called for a need to estab-

lish industries in the country to utilize these available mineral sources to produce more iron, cement and other commodities which are high in demand.

He highlighted that the leading mineral resources like lake salt, bentonite, China clay, lime stone, marble, granite and others were found in Sindh. The minerals or minerals sources like zinc, lead, cobalt, graphite, iron, steel, copper, glass/sand, calcium carbonate, talc, silica, nickel and others are also found in Pakistan, he added. He pointed out that these minerals were used in various industries for the production of decorative stones, construction stones, cement, ceramics products, mud of oil drilling, oil filtering, cosmetics, fungicides, textiles and others industries but there was a need to properly utilize these minerals.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior Dr Gohar Ejaz in a meeting with Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi.

IGP reviews preparations for forthcoming general polls

KARACHI (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Riffat Mukhtar Raja on Thursday presided over a meeting at Central Police Office to review the overall preparations and arrangements of the police for upcoming General Elections 2024, including strategy plan, evaluation of available and required manpower and allocation of necessary resources.

During the meeting, IGP Sindh stressed the officers for developing contingency plans with foolproof security measures specifically tailored for the elections. He emphasized the need for sustainable and mutual communication, strict adherence to the election

code of conduct, and the prompt implementation of all relevant orders.

IGP Sindh highlighted the significance of addressing even minor information or complaints during the election campaign, urging timely responses and the implementation of effective preventive and remedial measures. The overall security aspects, including patrolling, picketing, and surveillance, were also underscored, with an emphasis on diligence and alertness. Furthermore, IGP Sindh directed all police officers to collaborate with District Returning Officers (DROs) to report any violations of the code of conduct.

Senior politician Illahi Bux Soomro 'passes away'

KARACHI (INP): Senior politician and former National Assembly speaker Illahi Bux Soomro passed away on Thursday.



According to family sources, politician Illahi Bux Soomro breathed his last at a private hospital in Karachi due to cardiac arrest. The senior politician was admitted to the hospital due to health issues.

The body of Illahi Bux Soomro will be transported to his ancestral village, Jacobabad, where his funeral prayer will be offered to-night, the family sources said.

Pakistani, Iranian envoys discuss ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to Belarus Sajjad Haider Khan held a meeting with Ambassador of Iran to Belarus Alireza Sane'i in Minsk, Belarus on Thursday and discussed matters of mutual interest.

During the courtesy call, they explored the two nations' strong and deep rooted brotherly ties and rejoiced in their return to their respective embassies by January 26, 2024.

In a post on X, the Pakistani ambassador said, "Looking forward to the visit of Iran's Foreign Minister to Pakistan on January 29, 2024. Celebrating the lasting Pakistan-Iran friendship!"



LAHORE: Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) President, Asif Ali Zardari exchanging views with a delegation of Christian Community during meeting held at Bilawal House in Lahore.

Old politicians are playing their last innings, says Bilawal

Proposes to make Asif Zardari president of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former foreign minister and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that the old politicians are playing their last innings, this time the contest will be between the 'arrow' and 'lion'.

In an exclusive interview with Rohi TV programme Newsnight, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that he wants to start a hunger eradication programme and a Kisan Card scheme for the farmers of South Punjab.

He said that the Kisan Card would be very popular among the rural population and would help them im-



KARACHI: Governor Sindh, Kamran Tessori addresses during Report Launching Ceremony organized by Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research held in Karachi.

Japanese CG calls on Mayor Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Consul General of Japan in Karachi Hattori Masaru along with the Deputy Consul General Nakagawa Yashushi called on Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab in KMC head office on Thursday. Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab welcomed the Consul General of Japan who discussed with him matters of mutual interest.

The Mayor Karachi said that cooperation between Pakistan and Japan is continuing in various fields and Japan's support to Pakistan in the industrial sector, including development projects, is valuable.

Mayor Karachi said that we want to take advantage of Japan's technical expertise in improving and modernizing infrastructure in Karachi. He said that Japanese companies would be fully supported for investment in Karachi since attractive opportunities are available for foreign investment in the city and the government is taking all possible steps to promote investment.

Today the world gives examples of Japan's development, in the future, Pak-Japan bilateral relations will be further strengthened and also the bond of friendship, he said.

Mayor Karachi apprised the Consul General of Japan about the ongoing projects for the development of Karachi, he said that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation is taking steps at all levels to provide better facilities to the citizens, along with residential areas.

TTP network busted, commander among 17 terrorists held in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): Security forces in an intelligence-based operation busted banned Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) network and arrested 17 terrorists including a terror commander from Karachi on Thursday.

The terrorists were involved in target killings, ransom and dacoity cases.

The terrorists were planning to collect funds from traders for ransom, attack political and religious parties' leadership to create law and order situation in the country.

Three killed, over 20 injured in university bus-van collision

NAWABSHAH (INP): At least three people including a woman were killed while more than 20 others injured in collision between university bus and a passenger van here on Thursday.

According to details, according to poor visibility caused by dense fog, a university bus carrying students rammed into a passenger van at Sawani Raho bus stop near Qazi Ahmed area of Nawabshah.

As a result of collision, a woman among three people was killed while over 20 others sustained injuries.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Army duties

The state cannot hold elections without the Pakistan Army. On Tuesday, the caretaker government formally approved the deployment of military and civil armed forces personnel at polling stations and sensitive constituencies "in order to maintain peace and security" during the upcoming general elections.

It is understood that these personnel will not only be deputed to guard polling stations on election day but also serve as a rapid reaction force in case any law-and-order situation arises.

The government is said to have approved the arrangement after receiving a summary recommending the same from the hitherto minister-less interior ministry, which cited a severe shortfall of available personnel. The ECP had previously demanded the services of 275,000 troops from the interior ministry for election-related duties after learning that it was facing a shortage of more than 277,000 security officials, of which about 169,000 were needed in Punjab alone.

It is understandable why the ECP wants boots on the ground for the elections. Apart from various administrative and other reasons, there has been a surge in militant attacks targeting security forces in recent months, and the commission would not want anything untoward happening close to or on election day.

There has also been a recent spate of attacks targeting political leaders, mostly in KP, while there are multiple alerts regarding some politicians facing active threats. It is imperative for the state, in these conditions, to provide a secure environment for politicians and voters in the lead-up to and on election day.

However, the troops being deployed should be clearly instructed that their role is limited to providing security and ensuring peace. They must not, for whatever reason, enter polling stations or interfere in the voting and post-voting procedures. The controversies that arose after the 2018 polls must be avoided at all costs.

Finally, though Dr Gohar Ejaz was given the additional charge of caretaker interior minister last evening, it is worth asking what took the government so long to nominate him given that Dr Ejaz's predecessor, Sarfraz Bugti, had resigned in December. The government has been quite aware of the deteriorating security situation and has brought it up on various occasions and in different contexts; why, then, had it left the ministry responsible for law and order without a head for more than a month?

This was a rather reckless approach, given the serious challenges that have emerged, with the elections drawing nearer. Dr Ejaz's new role will require much attention and energy from him as he tries to address various emergent security-related challenges; will he be able to do so, considering he is also holding several other important portfolios? It is a big ask: the responsibility for the safety of millions now lies with him.

E-Governance: Building resilient societies in an uncertain world



By Qaiser Nawab

In the face of unprecedented global challenges such as economic downturns, financial crises, pandemics, and climate change, the need for innovation and adaptability in the public sector has become increasingly evident. However, within these challenges lies an opportunity for nations to harness the power of digitalization, turning adversity into innovation. The COVID-19 pandemic acted as a catalyst for the acceleration of digitalization, forcing industries worldwide to adapt to the new normal. This article explores the role of e-governance in building resilient societies, with a focus on innovation and its potential impact on efficiency, transparency, and accessibility.

The industrial sector, particularly in developed economies like the UK, demonstrated remarkable adaptability by shifting to remote work and embracing digital transformation. Similarly, nations such as Brazil and Canada witnessed a surge in business transitioning to e-commerce. However, developing nations face the challenge of creating awareness among policymakers about the importance of digitalization. Conducive policies, support for innovation, skill development, and improved connectivity are crucial components

for these nations to harness the opportunities presented by digital transformation.

Climate change, a pressing global challenge, further underscores the importance of E-Governance in building resilient societies. As nations grapple with the far-reaching impacts of a changing climate, innovative digital solutions can play a pivotal role in developing and implementing effective environmental policies. E-Governance can facilitate real-time data collection, analysis, and dissemination, enabling governments to make informed decisions for climate mitigation and adaptation. Collaborative efforts between nations, guided by E-Governance principles, can enhance the coordination of climate-related initiatives, ensuring a more efficient and unified response to environmental threats. By leveraging digital technologies, governments can not only strengthen their resilience to climate change but also foster a sustainable and eco-friendly trajectory for future development.

The integration of climate-focused E-Governance strategies aligns with the broader vision of creating a world that not only adapts to uncertainties but actively works towards a more sustainable and environmentally conscious future. The rise of digital technologies, including cryptocurrencies, brings both benefits and challenges. Addressing vulnerabilities, bridging the digital divide, and ensuring inclusive development require global collaboration and strategic policy initiatives.

Developing a comprehensive approach to tackle knowledge gaps, infrastructure disparities, and potential job displacement is crucial for the sustainable integration of digital technologies.

E-governance emerges as a linchpin in the digital transformation of the public sector. Its potential impact on efficiency, transparency, and accessibility cannot be overstated. The United Nations, World Bank, European Commission, McKinsey, and Deloitte all attest to the transformative power of e-governance, citing reductions in corruption, increased citizen satisfaction, reduced processing times, and cost savings.

COMSATS, with its network of 25 Centers of Excellence across three continents, stands as a beacon of support for member states in their digitalization endeavors. These centers offer scientific solutions, policy inputs, training programs, and research to aid industries and governments in navigating the complexities of the digital era. Particularly in middle and lower-middle-income economies, COMSATS members have shown remarkable progress in digitalization, surpassing expectations for their respective stages of development. With internet penetration rates exceeding 80%, these nations are setting an example for others to follow.

Innovation stands as the cornerstone for the success of e-governance initiatives, constituting a dynamic force that propels government into the digital age. Governments, as stewards of societal

progress, bear the responsibility of fostering an environment conducive to experimentation and the adoption of emerging technologies. To achieve this, a collaborative ecosystem must be cultivated, where policymakers actively engage with the private sector and research institutions.

Such partnerships are essential to identify, develop, and implement innovative solutions that address the evolving needs of a digitally-driven society.

As the digital landscape undergoes continuous transformation, innovation becomes not just a strategic choice but a necessity. Policymakers need to navigate the rapidly changing technological terrain, ensuring that governance models are not only adaptive but anticipatory of emerging challenges and opportunities.

Embracing a culture of perpetual innovation allows governments to proactively tackle issues such as cybersecurity threats, data privacy concerns, and the ethical implications of emerging technologies. Moreover, it positions nations at the forefront of technological advancement, fostering a competitive edge in the global arena. In essence, the commitment to continuous innovation in e-governance is a commitment to building responsive, forward-thinking, and resilient societies that can effectively navigate the uncertainties of the digital era.

Navigating the path toward a digitally transformed future is laden with multifaceted challenges that neces-

sitate strategic foresight and collaborative efforts. One of the foremost challenges lies in the realm of cybersecurity threats, where the rapid evolution of digital technologies exposes governments and organizations to increasingly sophisticated cyber risks. Addressing these threats demands proactive measures, including robust cybersecurity frameworks and continuous monitoring to safeguard critical information infrastructure.

Data privacy concerns emerge as another pivotal challenge, as the collection and utilization of vast amounts of personal information raise ethical questions and demand stringent regulations. Striking a delicate balance between leveraging data for societal benefits and safeguarding individual privacy becomes imperative. Moreover, the ethical implications of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and biotechnology, necessitate careful consideration and ethical guidelines to prevent unintended consequences.

In addition to technological hurdles, there is a pressing need for international cooperation to establish global standards for digital governance.

The absence of harmonized regulations may hinder the seamless flow of information and create disparities in digital development. Policymakers face the intricate task of fostering innovation while upholding responsible governance, ensuring that the benefits of digitalization extend across diverse socioeconomic strata. Moreover, ad-

ressing social challenges, including digital literacy disparities and the potential exacerbation of existing inequalities, becomes crucial to fostering an inclusive digital society. Policymakers must navigate these intricate challenges with agility and inclusivity, recognizing that the journey toward a digitally transformed future demands a holistic and collaborative approach.

In conclusion, the imperative for building resilient societies in an uncertain world is underscored by the transformative potential of e-governance-driven digitalization. As nations grapple with unprecedented challenges, including economic downturns, pandemics, and climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic has acted as a catalyst, accelerating the adoption of digital technologies.

While developed economies showcase adaptability, developing nations face the dual challenge of raising awareness among policymakers and implementing supportive policies.

E-Governance emerges as a linchpin, endorsed by global entities for its transformative impacts on efficiency, transparency, and accessibility. Policymakers must balance innovation with responsible governance, emphasizing international cooperation and inclusivity.

Qaiser Nawab, serving as the President of the Belt and Road Initiative for Sustainable Development (BRISD), is an expert in International Relations and Impact Technologies. You can contact him at qaisernawab098@gmail.com

Commerce News

Revolutionary initiatives in IT sector start bearing fruits: Saif

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunications, Dr. Umar Saif has said that the presence of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) is leading to increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) and setting the pace of the country's development.

Addressing a Town Hall meeting during his visit to the Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA) office, Dr. Saif said, "We have achieved 13 out of 15 important targets for the promotion of the IT & Telecom sector in a short period of 5 months in the caretaker set-up. The forum of SIFC will prove to be a great support for the upcoming elected government in the process of building and developing the country, and the elected government will

also reap the benefits of the measures we have taken during the caretaker period."

Ms. Aysha Morani Additional Secretary MOITT, Muhammad Zohaib Khan Chairman P@SHA, Nadeem Malik, General Secretary P@SHA and representative from IT Industry attended the event.

Dr. Umar Saif further said that, to facilitate IT exporters and boost

exports of IT and IT-enabled services, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has increased the permissible retention limit from 35% to 50% of their export proceeds in the Exporters' Specialized Foreign Currency Accounts (ESFCAs). "We worked with the SIFC and the State Bank to make a significant policy intervention, allowing IT companies to keep 50% of their export revenue in dollars.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif in a group photo after Town Hall meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Kazakhstan Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Yerzhan Kistafin called on the Federal Minister for Commerce, Industries, Investments and Interior, Dr. Gohar Ejaz to discuss regional connectivity and bilateral trade at the Commerce Ministry.

PSX witnesses bearish trend, loses 524 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Thursday, losing 524.43 points, a negative change of 0.81 percent, closing at 64,298.01 points against 64,822.43 points the previous trading day.

A total of 460,691,033 shares valuing Rs 25,248 billion were traded during the day as compared to 479,982,148 shares valuing Rs. 22,501 billion the last day.

Norway wants to further enhance business relations with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Ambassador of Norway to Pakistan Per Albert Ilsaas on Thursday said that his country wanted to further enhance business relations with Pakistan.

Talking to a delegation of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), he said that both the countries had the potential to increase bilateral trade and do more business together.

A delegation of ICCI led by President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari visited the residence of Per Albert

Trade and Investment officers visit PSGMEA

SIALKOT (APP): Trade and investment officers appointed by the Ministry of Commerce to abroad visited the Pakistan Sports Goods Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PSGMEA) here on Thursday.

PSGMEA Chairman Arshad Latif Butt, Senior Vice Chairman Zahir Ahmed Dohdy, Vice Chairman Umer-Uz-Zaman and Secretary General Mohsin Masood welcomed the guests. According to Secretary General PSGMEA Mohsin Masood, Arshad Latif Butt and the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) jointly organized an outstanding interaction with the newly-inducted counsellors at different stations abroad.

He said that a Norwegian enterprise had already signed an agreement to invest in solar and hydropower generation in Pakistan.

Roadshow in Bangkok for Pak 300MW floating solar plants on Jan 29

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan will hold a roadshow in Bangkok on January 29 to attract investment for the 300-megawatt floating solar plants project to be executed at the Tarbela-Barotha Complex sites.

Under the project, Pakistan aims to develop two 150-MW AC floating solar plants, the Pakistan Embassy in Thailand said on its X account, inviting potential bidders to participate in the roadshow.

The interested parties can submit international competitive bidding with two envelopes for technical and financial proposals.

The embassy said the project sites were within the Tarbela-Barotha Complex, owned by the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), a highly secure area with controlled access.

The environmental and social impacts of the floating solar plants have already been studied and declared by experts as manageable.

Pakistan's public-sector insurance companies' engine of economic growth: Gohar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Commerce, Industry, Investment and Interior Dr Gohar Ejaz on Thursday said that Pakistan's public-sector insurance companies are engine of economic growth.

He expressed these views in a meeting chaired by Caretaker Finance Minister Dr. Shamshad Akhtar.

During the meeting, discussion was made on reforms in the insurance industry, a news release said issued here. He said that State Life Insurance Company, National

Insurance Company and Pakistan Reinsurance Company have managed around Rs. 2 trillion of funds.

These companies have established themselves as pillars of financial stability and innovation, he said.

These are the best state-owned enterprises in Pakistan, he said. Over the years, he said that the companies have consistently demonstrated their ability to navigate economic cycles, maintain financial stability, and adapt to evolving market conditions.

Food group imports decrease 19.48% in 06 months of FY 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): Food group imports into the country during the first half of the current financial year decreased by 19.48 per cent as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

During the period from July to December 2023, different food commodities costing \$3.957 billion were imported as compared to the imports of \$4.914 billion in the same period of last year, according to

the data of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

During the period under review, the imports of the commodities that went down included milk cream, milk for infants at 25.93 per cent was recorded at \$60.298 million as compared the imports of \$81.404 million, wheat unmilled by 34.84 per cent and reached \$39.126 million as compared the imports of \$609.434 million of the same period of last year.

PTCL Group renews partnership with SNGPL for cellular services

LAHORE: Pakistan's largest telecommunications and integrated ICT services provider, PTCL Group

services to SNGPL under PTCL Group Business Solutions. Group Chief Business Solutions Officer

officials from both organizations. Under this agreement, PTCL Group will provide wireless connectivity and a host of



(PTCL & Ufone 4G), and largest integrated gas company of Pakistan, SNGPL have renewed their partnership for the continued provision of the state-of-the-art cellular

(GCBSO), PTCL & Ufone 4G, Zarrar Hasham Khan, and MD/CEO, SNGPL, Amer Tufail signed the agreement at SNGPL headquarters in Lahore, in the presence of senior

bundled services to SNGPL. Speaking at the signing ceremony, Zarrar Hasham Khan, Group Chief Business Solutions Officer PTCL & Ufone 4G, stated.

Baligh commends role of Pak Navy in making defence of water boundaries impregnable

Independent Report
LAHORE: Commander Central Punjab, Commandant Naval War College, Rear Admiral Azhar Mahmood, called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House Lahore. During the meeting, Commander Central Punjab briefed Governor Punjab on the professional affairs of Pakistan Navy and informed about the performance and activities of the War College.

boundaries impregnable is commendable. He said that the professionalism of Pakistan Navy is a source of pride for the entire nation. Governor Punjab said that the martyrs and soldiers of Pakistan Navy who protect Pakistan's maritime boundaries are the pride of the country and the nation. The two sides also discussed Cadet College Khanpur in detail. Governor Punjab said that due to the change of government in 2018, despite the completion of this project, Cadet College Khanpur could not be started. He expressed hope that the future Punjab government would start classes in Cadet College Khanpur as soon as possible to ensure the provision of quality education to the children. On this occasion, Commander Central Punjab, Rear Admiral Azhar Mahmood invited Governor Punjab to visit Pakistan Navy War College.

Later, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rahman attended the closing ceremony of Pakistan Learning Festival 2024 at Children's Library Complex as Chief Guest. Governor Punjab, Muhammad Balighur Rehman, while addressing the ceremony, said that it is very important to teach students high moral values and build their character. He said that after 2018,



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Raza Naqvi and Corps Commander Lahore Syed Amir Raza witnessing the signing ceremony of handing Administration of Data Darbar Hospital to Anti-Narcotics Force.

Administration of Data Darbar Hospital entrusted to Anti-Narcotics Force

Independent Report
LAHORE: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed to transfer the management of Data Darbar Hospital to the Anti-Narcotics Force.

According to the terms of the agreement, the Anti-Narcotics Force will oversee the rehabilitation and upgrading of Data Darbar Hospital. The hospital's focus will be on the treatment and rehabilitation of individuals struggling with drug addiction.

The signing ceremony took place at the Chief Minister's Office with the presence of Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, Corps Commander Lahore Lt Gen Syed Aamer Raza and DG Anti-Narcotics Force Maj Gen Aneeq Ahmad Malik. Secretary Health Punjab Ali Jan and Regional Director ANF Brig Sikandar Hayat Ch signed the MoU. Following the agreement, documents were exchanged.

Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi announced the dedicated allocation of Data Darbar Hospital for the rehabilitation of drug addicts. The event was attended by Ministers Dr Jamal Nasir, Azfar Ali Nasir, chief secretary, IG Punjab, secretary Auqaf and others.

Federal Ombudsman visits KP Ombudsman Secretariat

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Federal Ombudsman Ijaz Ahmad Qureshi paid a visit to Provincial Ombudsman Secretariat and held meeting with Provincial Ombudsman Syed Jamal ud Din Shah here at his staff the other day, said a press release issued here on Thursday.

He also apprised him in connection with the complaints and redressal method of the complaints at the secretariat level. He said that in the year 2023, the provincial Ombudsman Office has received record number of complaints which were more than the previous years and majority of complainants received relief by resolving their grievances with in specific period as prescribed in the Ombudsman act.

Police conduct raid on Javed residence, arrest his son in law, servants

MULTAN (Online): Police have conducted raid on the residence of Javed Hashmi and arrested his son in law and domestic servants.

Javed Hashmi has said in this regard police conducted raids at his residence during PTI workers convention in Makhdoom Rashid and arrested PTI candidate and his domestic servants.

Police broke the doors and rushed into his home besides subjecting the women to violence.

PTI leader Mehrbano Qureshi and Zain Qureshi were to participate in PTI workers convention.



KARACHI: Independent Candidate for NA-241 and PS-110, Dr. Shahab Imam addresses during corner meeting as a part of Election Campaign in connection of the General Election 2024 coming ahead, at Gizri area in Karachi.

PEN calls on minister for IC&TE, discusses issues of private schools

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: A delegation of private educational institutions organisation 'Private Education Network' on Thursday called on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged Districts Affairs, Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Dr Aamer Abdullah here at his office and discussed issues related to private educational institutions.

The Private Schools Regulatory Authority Fazlullah Daudzai and Syed Anas Takreem Kakakhel, office bearers of the organisation from Nowshera district Qazi Fazal Hakeem, Rashid Maqbool and Noorshad. Special Secretary Elementary and Secondary Education Department, Samar Gul, Managing Director Private Schools Regulatory Authority Tanzila Sabhat and other officials of the education department were also present on the occasion.

The delegation was comprised of Vice Presidents of the organisation and members of



PESHAWAR: Director General Audit Shehzad Naeem presenting Audit Report 2022-23 to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali.

Making country an Islamic welfare state is vision of Jamaat-e-Islami: Mushtaq

Independent Report
RUSTAM, Mardan: Jamaat-e-Islami Senator Mushtaq Ahmed Khan says that making the country an Islamic welfare state is the vision of Jamaat-e-Islami, where there is worship of Allah and slavery of the Prophet, and where every child, oppressed, youth, orphan, and widow gets free education, justice, treatment, employment, and justice, and the system of oppression and drugs is abolished.

He expressed these views while addressing a convention at Rustam Eidgah, where Jamaat-e-Islami candidates for NA-21 and PK-55 and district and tehsil leaders also spoke.

He said that the PDM government passed a law to abolish the tax on drugs, and he raised his voice against it on the Senate floor for six years. He has fought and will fight for the rights of the people.

ANF recovers 138 kg drugs in eight operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting eight operations across the country managed to recover 138 kg drugs and arrested nine accused including two women, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday.

He informed that 2 kg of Ice drug was recovered from a parcel at a Cargo Office in Lahore. In another operation, 1 kg of Ice was recovered from a parcel being sent to Bahrain from DHL Sadar, Peshawar.

In the third operation, 50 kg hashish and 40 kg opium were recovered from the possession of two accused arrested near M-1 Motorway Islamabad. 15 kg hashish and 12 kg opium were recovered from an accused netted near Motorway Bridge Peshawar.

In the fifth operation, 6 kg of weed was recovered from the possession of 2 suspects nabbed near M-9, Jamshoro Toll Plaza. representatives of UN agencies, civil society organizations, donor agencies and academia.

KP Labour Deptt launches first ever Child Labour Survey of KP

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Labour Department on Thursday has launched its first ever Child Labour Survey 2022-23 conducted across all districts of the province including the newly merged districts in a ceremony held here at a local hotel.

KP Child Labour Survey 2022-23 is the second provincial survey in Pakistan, after Punjab, it was said during the event attended by the officials of various government departments, representatives of UN agencies, civil society organizations, donor agencies and academia.

Teenager shot, injured over land dispute

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): A child was shot at and injured in a heated verbal clash that erupted over a land dispute between the two families, according to the rescuer.

The victim was identified as Muhammad Rashid, 17, s/o Muhammad Latif, a resident of Moza Kotla, who was reported to have received gunshot wounds on the forehead.

International News

NATO's largest military exercise since Cold War kicks off

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The US Navy dock landing ship Gunston Hall left port on Wednesday to mark the first movement for the largest NATO exercise since the Cold War, officials said.

Some 90,000 troops from the United States and fellow NATO allied nations are due to join the Steadfast Defender 2024 drills that will run through May.

More than 50 ships from aircraft carriers to destroyers will take part, as well as more than 80 fighter jets, helicopters and drones and at least 1,100 combat vehicles including 133 tanks and 533 infantry fighting vehicles.

The drills will rehearse NATO's execution of its regional plans, the first defence plans the alliance has drawn up in decades, detailing how it would respond to a Russian attack.

NATO did not mention Russia by name in its announcement. But its top strategic document identifies Russia as the most significant and direct threat to NATO members' security. The exercise comes at

an important moment after Russia's invasion of Ukraine started the deadliest war on European soil in more than 70 years.

"NATO today launched its biggest military exercise since 1988 with 90,000 personnel taking part in drills across the North Atlantic and Europe," Matthias Eichenlaub, a NATO spokesperson, said on Twitter.

"The departure of the @USNavy's Gunston Hall from Norfolk marked the (official) start of #SteadfastDefender24."



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un attends the 19th expanded political bureau meeting of the 8th Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea in Pyongyang, North Korea.

Aid groups call for stopping arms supply to Israel

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Sixteen international humanitarian and rights organisations on Wednesday called for a halt to weapons transfers to Israel and Palestinian armed groups in a bid to end the Gaza conflict.

In a joint statement they urged United Nations member states to stop sending weapons, parts and ammunition to "stop the crisis in Gaza and avert further humanitarian catastrophe and loss of civilian life."

"Israel's bombardment and siege are depriving the civilian population of the basics to survive and rendering Gaza uninhabitable," the statement added.

"The civilian population in Gaza faces a humanitarian crisis of unprecedented severity and scale." The Israeli aggression has led to dire shortages of food, water, fuel and medicines in the besieged territory.

Gaza officials say Israeli fire strikes a crowd waiting for aid, killing at least 20

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Gaza's Health Ministry said Israeli fire struck a crowd of people waiting for humanitarian aid at a roundabout in Gaza City on Thursday, killing at least 20 and wounding 150. The Israeli military says it was looking into the reports.

Meanwhile, the death toll from a strike the day before on a crowded shelter in Gaza rose to 12, with over 75 wounded, according to Thomas White.

Erdogan, eyeing more trade with Iran

Monitoring Desk
ANKARA: Turkey is considering opening new border crossings with eastern neighbour Iran, President Tayyip Erdogan said late on Wednesday after talks with his Iranian counterpart, as they seek to revive sagging economic relations.

from around \$10 billion a year earlier. "The issue of opening new border gates with Iran is also on our agenda. Efforts to establish trade centres in border (areas) to increase the economic development of our border provinces continue," he said.

Erdogan, speaking at a Turkish-Iranian business council meeting alongside Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi, blamed international sanctions on Tehran and the COVID pandemic for a decline in trade volumes.

Trade between Turkey and Iran peaked in 2012 at nearly \$22 billion but has since fallen. It stood at \$7.4 billion in 2023, according to Turkish Trade Minister Omer Bolat, down

Turkey, a NATO ally, and Iran currently have four border crossings between them. One of those gates, between the Gurbulak-Bazergan regions, has been under construction since 2021. "While we have left behind the pandemic, the restrictive effect of sanctions lingers," Erdogan said, adding that Turkey would not cut its economic ties with Iran because of the international measures.



RAFAH: Palestinians inspect the site of an Israeli strike on a mosque, amid the ongoing aggression in the southern Gaza Strip.

US Navy intercepts missiles in Red Sea while escorting Maersk ships

Monitoring Desk
COPENHAGEN: Maersk said explosions nearby forced two ships operated by its US subsidiary and carrying US military supplies to turn around when they were transiting the Bab al-Mandab Strait off Yemen, accompanied by the US Navy.

A spokesperson for Yemen's Houthi military forces said they fired ballistic missiles at several US warships that were protecting two US commercial vessels.

Both commercial vessels are operated by Maersk Line, Limited (MLL), its US subsidiary that carries cargo for the Department of Defense, Department of State, USAID, and other US government agencies.

"While en route, both ships reported seeing explosions close by and the US Navy accompanied also intercepted multiple projectiles," Maersk said in a statement, adding it was sus-



Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) authorities demolishing structures on the facade of an eatery near Minara mosque in Mumbai.

Attacks in Nigeria's Plateau state leave at least 30 dead

Monitoring Desk
MAIDUGURI: At least 30 people have been killed and several others injured in Nigeria's central Plateau state in a series of attacks around Mangu town, despite a curfew imposed by the state government, a community spokesperson said.

The area which left at least 140 people dead. A dusk-to-dawn curfew was imposed on Jan. 23.

A Plateau police spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the attacks which took place over two days.

Farmer-herder attacks and communal conflicts are rife in central Nigeria, an ethnically and religiously diverse hinterland known as the 'Middle Belt' where a circle of violence has claimed hundreds of lives in recent years.

The attackers targeted several villages including Kwahaslalek, Kinat and Mairana, located on the borders of Mangu and Barkin Ladi local government areas, said Joseph Gwankat, head of the community group Mwachavulu Development Association (MDA).

Nearly all US Senate Democrats back two-state solution for Israel and Palestinians

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: An overwhelming majority of President Joe Biden's fellow Democrats in the Senate on Wednesday backed a statement reiterating US support of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Forty-nine of the 51 members of the Senate Democratic caucus backed an amendment supporting a negotiated solution to the conflict that results in Israeli and Palestinian states living side by side, ensuring Israel's survival as a secure, democratic, Jewish state and fulfilling the Palestinians' "legitimate aspirations" for a state of their own.

Senator Brian Schatz introduced the measure as an amendment to an upcoming bill that would provide national security aid to Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan.

"What will determine the future of Israel and Palestine is whether or not there's hope. And the two-state solution has to be that hope."

Britons should be prepared to fight a land war, says army chief

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: British citizens should be prepared to fight in a potential land war, the highest ranking army officer General Patrick Sanders said on Wednesday.

The chief of the general staff said any conflict would need to be a "whole-of-nation undertaking" and that citizens should be trained and equipped to be in a state of readiness. The general's remarks come after the UK defence ministry said last year that it would cut overall numbers in the UK's professional army from 82,000 to 73,000 by 2025. "Taking preparatory steps to enable placing our societies on a war footing when needed are now not merely desirable but essential," Sanders said in a speech at an armoured vehicles conference in southwest London.

"Within the next three years, it must be credible to talk of a British Army of 120,000, folding in our reserve and strategic reserve."

Japan man gets death sentence for killing 36 in anime studio arson - NHK

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: A Japanese man was convicted and sentenced to death on Thursday for the arson and killing of 36 people at famed anime studio Kyoto Animation in 2019, public broadcaster NHK said. The deadly attack on the Kyoto-based studio, better known as KyoAni, had sent shockwaves not only through Japan where violent crime is rare.

Pakistan raises Ram temple issue at OIC meeting; urges UN to protect Islamic sites in India

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Reiterating its condemnation of the recent consecration of 'Ram Temple' on the demolished Babri Mosque's site, Pakistan has urged the top official for the U.N. Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) to play his part for the protection of Islamic sites in India. Ambassador Munir Akram told an OIC Ambassadorial meeting Wednesday.

At the meeting held at UN headquarters in New York, the Pakistani envoy shared with OIC colleagues a letter he addressed to the UNAOC High Representative, Miguel Angel Moratinos, in which he said that the event in Ayodhya marked a "disturbing rise in Hindu majoritarianism in India", according to a Pakistan Mission press release.

"The developments over the past 31 years, culminating in the recent consecration ceremony, are in-

dicative of a disturbing rise in Hindu majoritarianism in India," Ambassador Akram said in his letter to the UNAOC head.

"This trend poses a significant threat to the social, economic, and political well-being of Indian Muslims, as well as to the harmony and peace in the region.

The letter he shared with OIC Ambassadors also said: "Regrettably, this is not an isolated incident, as other mosques, including the Gyanvapi Mosque in Varanasi and the Shahi Eidgah Mosque in Mathura, face similar threats of desecration and destruction. The statements of some Chief Ministers of Indian states have linked such actions to territorial claims against Pakistan. "I am writing to seek your urgent intervention for the protection of religious sites in India. Under your esteemed leadership, the United Nations Alliance of

Civilizations must play a crucial role in safeguarding Islamic heritage sites and securing the rights of religious and cultural minorities in India.

"The Secretary-General has entrusted you to implement the action plan for the protection of religious sites. We urge you to expedite efforts to implement the action plan and ensure the safeguarding of religious sites in India".

The OIC Ambassadors acknowledged the importance of the issue, with some envoys mentioning the attacks on mosques in some European countries.

The Palestine Permanent Representative to the UN, Riyadh Mansour, drew attention to the Israeli desecration at Al-Aqsa and the demolition of mosques and churches in the occupied territories.

The meeting decided to include this issue on the agenda of the next OIC ambassadorial meeting.



KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar addresses a press conference at CM House.

Diligent officers work selflessly to serve people by formulating innovative public policies: CM Baqar

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (ret'd) Maqbool Baqar on Thursday said that diligent public servant works day and night selflessly to serve the people by taking pains in formulating innovative public policies and interventions, and making sure that the policies and interventions were implemented effectively so that the public at large felt served.

He said, "If the public does not own the public servants, it should be taken as a sign of dissatisfaction. Against all the odds and challenges of this profession, he urged the officers to work with conviction and personal commitment."

He said this while

speaking at the Graduation Ceremony of BS-19 officers who completed their 16-week-long Senior Management Course (34th SMC) at the National Institute of Management (NIM), Karachi. Those who attended the program include the Director General, NIM Dr. Lubna Ayub, Chief Instructor, Senior Management Course (SMC) Khaliq Shaikh and others.

The chief minister said this course, though being a mandatory requirement for promotion to BS-20 positions, must have brushed up the officers underwent existing repertoire tools and skills, and helped them gain critical new insights on numerable issues and

challenges through various training activities including lecture and panel discussions by distinguished speakers/scholars/economists.

He said that since the performance in the NIM course carried significant weight for officers' career advancement, therefore he hoped that the course participants must have invested their time, energy, and passionate efforts to gain knowledge, skills and necessary tools, for their personal and professional transformations as required for holding senior echelons of policy and decision making tiers of the government(s) at both the Federal and Provincial levels.

Democratic system meant to serve people, not vice versa: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Thursday said that the democratic system was meant to serve the people, who should have the power to hold their elected representatives accountable.

"Steps should be taken to reinvigorate the democratic system, which is only to take care of the people and not vice versa," he maintained.

The minister was speaking at a seminar on "Electoral Code of Conduct: Ethical Practices of Stakeholders including Media", organized by the Press Information Department.

He said that as per the Constitution, Pakistan was a federal parliamentary democratic country and the people's elected representatives must do legislation to strengthen the system.

The minister said that

the concept of "recalling elections" was first introduced in Greece and the practice was now being followed by other countries, including Canada, the United States of America and Germany.

A certain percentage of constituents should be empowered to recall their elected representatives by complaining to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) if they failed to meet their expectations, he added.

Solangi said that the caretaker government was taking all possible steps to facilitate the ECP to hold free, fair and transparent elections on February 8 so that the people could elect candidates and parties of their choice in a peaceful environment.

He said that the Election Commission had issued a code of conduct, and the media houses management and media persons should be fully mindful of it.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori talking to media persons during his visit to Haideri Market.

Commissioner chairs meeting regarding arrangements of general election

HYDERABAD (APP): Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad Division Syed Muhammad Sajjad Haider chaired a meeting in the committee room of the Commissioner's office here Thursday to review the arrangements for the general elections 2024.

Addressing the meeting, the Commissioner said that it was the important national responsibility of the administration to make arrangements for the peaceful and transparent conduct of the general elections, which should be done in

smooth manner. Provision of water, washrooms and other facilities should be ensured, he directed.

The Commissioner instructed all the deputy commissioners that a plan should be formed for establishing a medical camp on the day of the election, while a committee should be formed to solve the problems at tehsil level. He directed all the deputy commissioners that the transport plan should be finalized within two days and the report should be sent.

Rangers, Police nab Lyari gang member involved in heinous crimes

KARACHI (APP): In a collaborative effort based on intelligence input, Pakistan Rangers Sindh and the Police successfully apprehended Junaid Baloch, associated with the Lyari gang Jameel Chhanga group, in the Preedy area here Thursday. The accused was facing charges ranging from target killings, extortion and drug trafficking to robberies and police encounters.

A spokesperson for the Rangers disclosed that arms and ammunition were seized from Baloch's possession during the arrest. Having joined the Lyari gang Jameel Chhanga group in 2016, the accused collaborated in various criminal activities with gang members Naveed alias Kuppi and Waseem Joji.

One of the heinous incidents involved Baloch and his accomplice Amir alias Motta fatally assaulting Pakistan Coast Guard personnel Muhammad Bilal near Capri Cinema on M.A. Jinnah Road on September 9, 2023, during a motorcycle and cash snatching attempt.

session during the arrest. Having joined the Lyari gang Jameel Chhanga group in 2016, the accused collaborated in various criminal activities with gang members Naveed alias Kuppi and Waseem Joji.

One of the heinous incidents involved Baloch and his accomplice Amir alias Motta fatally assaulting Pakistan Coast Guard personnel Muhammad Bilal near Capri Cinema on M.A. Jinnah Road on September 9, 2023, during a motorcycle and cash snatching attempt.



KARACHI: A team of Sindh Food Authority (SFA) inspecting the food items during surprise inspection raids, at various restaurants and hotels located on University road in Karachi.

VC SAU congratulates four graduates for outstanding performance in competition

HYDERABAD (APP): The Vice Chancellor of Sindh Agriculture University (SAU) Tandojam Dr. Fateh Mari congratulated four graduates of the University for their outstanding performance including second position at the provincial level in the National Idea Bank Award competition.

According to the University's spokesman on Thursday, 80 candidates from different universities of the province participated in the competition, which was held at Jinnah University of Women Karachi, 24 graduates were successful at the provincial level, including four students at SAU Tandojam, and one graduate also secured the second position. The VC congratulated the winners

of the University and expressed that it has marked a momentous occasion as four talented candidates from our University were selected to compete at the national level.

Dr. Waseem Laghari, from SAU achieved second position in the Sindh region, while Engr. Zaheer Ahmed Khan, Ms. Ujala Liaqat and Muhammad Asif are among the winners. The VC stated the achievements at the Provincial award ceremony serve as a testament to the prowess of Sindh Agriculture University Tandojam and the incredible potential within its students. He said the university continues to play a pivotal role in shaping future leaders and contributing to the advancement of the agricultural landscape in the region.



ISLAMABAD: President, Dr. Arif Alvi in a group photo along with a delegation of educationists from Antalya Schools Franchise System, at Aiwan-e-Sadr in Islamabad.

'Pakistan emerges as premier choice for lucrative US investments'

KARACHI (INP): In a groundbreaking virtual meeting with the President of the Pakistan Chamber of Commerce USA (PCC-USA) Amir Piprani and Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan declared Pakistan as the top destination for profitable investments by U.S. entrepreneurs.

Ambassador Khan emphasised that the recently established Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) is dedicated to providing a seamless, one-window solution for investors, ensuring they capitalise on the vast opportunities offered by Pakistan's expan-

sive market. During the meeting, also attended by Pak Consul General in Houston Aftab Ahmed Chaudhry and Trade & Investment Attaché Shaista Bunyad, Ambassador Khan reiterated the commitment of SIFC to facilitate foreign investors, particularly the Pak-American business community eager to invest in their homeland. Highlighting the significance of SIFC, Masood Khan stated, "We have established the Special Investment Facilitation Council to guarantee that foreign investors, especially the Pak-American business community, receive the necessary support in pursuing their business ventures in Pakistan."

The State Bank of Pakistan, in a statement issued here on Thursday, informed that SBP received IMF tranche under SBA and executed government's external debt repayments during the week under review.

After accounting for all flows, SBP's reserves recorded a net increase of \$ 243 million to reach \$ 8,270.5 million, the central bank informed adding that net foreign reserves held by commercial banks stood at \$ 5,070.9 million.

Sindh halts compensation payments for missing persons' families

KARACHI (INP): The Sindh Home Department has officially announced the suspension of compensation payments to families of missing persons, as revealed in a report submitted to the Sindh High Court. The court had directed the submission of a comprehensive report to federal authorities, including the Interior Secretary and Defense Secretary, concerning applications related to compensation for families of missing persons.

Before a two-member

bench led by Justice Nimatullah Phalpot, petitions regarding government compensation for the families of missing persons were heard. The representative from the Sindh Home Department informed the court that objections from certain individuals led to the discontinuation of compensation. Justice Phalpot remarked that those with objections should refrain from contributing, emphasizing that families seeking compensation for missing persons should continue to receive it.

Senior Govt officer, cop shot dead

PESHAWAR (APP): Unidentified armed men on Thursday shot dead a Senior Planning Officer of the Social Welfare department here in the jurisdiction of Police Station Gul Bahar and a police constable in the jurisdiction of Police Station Daudzai.

According to police, armed motorcyclists targeted the senior planning officer when he was going to the office in his official vehicle. The attackers managed to escape from the scene.

Meanwhile, unidentified assailants shot police constable Kamran Taj resident of Gulbaila with a pistol when he was taking his children to the school van stop.

Governor SBP inaugurates Japanese traditional pottery, ceramics exhibition Yakashime

KARACHI (APP): Governor State Bank of Pakistan, Jameel Ahmed, inaugurated a special exhibition "YAKASHIME: Earth Metamorphosis- Japanese Traditional Pottery and Ceramics" at the SBP museum on Thursday. Consul General of Japan, Hattori Masaru, diplomats from different countries and renowned political and cultural personalities attended the launching ceremony of the exhibition organized by Japan Foundation in collaboration with the State Bank of Pakistan Museum.

Governor SBP, Jameel Ahmed, speaking on the occasion, said that cultural exchanges and people-to-people contacts were instrumental in fostering understanding and good-will between the nations.

He said that the cultural agreement, signed in 1957 between Pakistan and Japan, has been the bedrock of bilateral relations as it laid the foundation for deep-

ening and broadening the bilateral relations.

"Programs we have undertaken jointly include performances, exhibitions, student exchange, scholarships and joint research initiatives between the two nations," he said adding that such activities played an important role in fostering cultural learning, cross-cultural relations and collaboration between the citizens.

The Governor of SBP said that Pak-Japan relations spanned over decades and include cooperation across a wide range of economic, cultural and diplomatic arenas. "These relations exemplify your shared values to progress peace and mutual respect," he added.

Over the years Pak-Japan relations have primarily focused on social and economic development and Japan is one of the major trading partners of Pakistan with an annual trade of around \$1.5 billion.



HYDERABAD: Chief Commissioner Regional Tax Office Hyderabad, Muhammad Farooq Azam Memon talking to media persons, at Site area in Hyderabad.

Commissioner Sukkur orders to finalize all arrangements regarding general elections

SUKKUR (APP): The Divisional Commissioner Sukkur, Fayaz Hussain Abbasi on Thursday has directed all the concerned officers of the Sukkur, Khairpur and Ghotki districts to finalize all arrangements regarding the general elections and enforce the code of conduct issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

Presiding over a meeting at his office, the Divisional Commissioner said that all possible facilities should be provided to the voters and all the activities should be strictly monitored on the day. Special measures should be taken for sensitive polling stations. All officers of the district administration

should remain in constant communication and inform higher officers of the situation moment by moment, he directed.

On this occasion, the Deputy Commissioner Sukkur elaborated that arrangements were underway for elections involving two National Assembly and four Provincial Assembly seats across four tehsils in the Sukkur district. He emphasized that all candidates had been instructed to fully adhere to the code of conduct issued by the ECP.

SSP Sukkur Zubair Nazeer Shaikh stated that foolproof security would be provided in the district on the occasion of the general elections.



HYDERABAD: Directorate of Intelligence & Investigation officials set on fire illegal cigarette carton at Gunjo Takkar Mountain.



HYDERABAD: Lawyers and PTI activists stage a protest sit-in against illegal raids on the houses of their candidates for National and Provincial assembly seats and arrest of their relatives outside Sessions Court.

HEC chairman advocates focus on science and technology for progress

HYDERABAD (APP): The Chairman of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Islamabad Dr. Muktar Ahmad highlighting the crucial role of science and technology in the progress of nations worldwide said that in order to achieve development, we have to give attention to the fields of knowledge and technology so that we can make our position better.

Speaking at the 27th convocation of Mehran University of Engineering and Technology, Jamshoro, on Thursday, he

expressed concern that Muslims, who once laid the foundations of disciplines such as medicine, mathematics and science have deviated from these paths, resulting in a loss of direction.

Dr. Muktar Ahmad commended Mehran University for its numerous projects initiated by the HEC. He announced a grant of 250 million rupees for the university's solar energy project, emphasizing the need for advancements in the field of science and technology to enhance Pakistan's global standing.