

# Independent

dailyindkhi@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

Karachi

Ph: 0300-3898091 Vol: 06. No. 15 Rajab 18, 1445 AH Tuesday January 30, 2024 Pages 04 Price Rs. 12.00

## Pakistan, Iran resolve to expand ties especially in political & security domains

PM Kakar reaffirms Pakistan's commitment to strengthen bilateral ties with Iran; Both sides have agreed to station liaison officers in Turbat and Zahedan at the earliest date; No doubt militants in Pak-Iran border areas supported by third countries, says Iran FM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Iran on Monday agreed to further expand cooperation in the shared goals of security, regional stability, trade and economy, adopting a collective approach to address the confronted common challenges.

"Pakistan and Iran have agreed to adopt collective and collaborative approaches to confront the terrorism by fully leveraging the robust institutional mechanism which already exists between the two countries," Caretaker Foreign Minister Jilani Abbas said in a joint press stakeout after an extensive meeting with his Iranian

counterpart Hossein Amir-Abdollahian. He said the two sides recognized that the close bilateral relationship was not only imperative for shared prosperity and development of the people of the two countries but also an important source of stability for the region.

He said during the meeting, both sides agreed to establish a high level consultative mechanism at the level of foreign ministers.

The two foreign ministers would meet alternatively in both Iran and Pakistan on a regular basis to oversee the progress that "is being made in various areas of our cooperation",

he added. Stressing the need to address each other's concerns with regard to terrorism, FM Jilani said in that respect the two sides had agreed to station liaison officers on which an agreement was already in place. The liaison officers would be deployed in Turbat and Zahedan, he added.

The foreign minister maintained that the visit of his Iranian counterpart testified deep commitment of both sides to further strengthen the bilateral relations. He said during the meeting, respect of territorial integrity remained the foundational principle of bilateral cooperation.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of Islamic Republic of Iran Hossein Amir-Abdollahian calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, in the Federal Capital.

## Caretaker Minister launches scientific laboratory for archaeological research

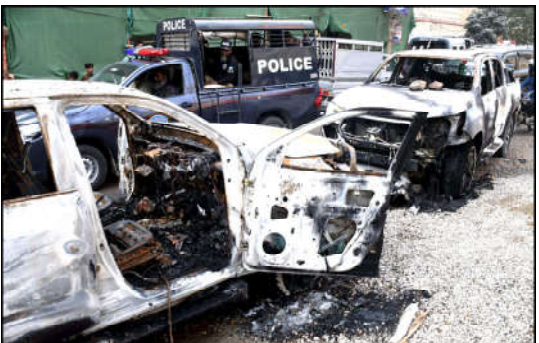
KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Culture, Antiquities and Archives Dr. Syed Junaid Ali Shah on Monday inaugurated a scientific laboratory for archaeological research and exploration.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, Dr. Syed Junaid Ali Shah highlighted the laboratory's significance. "The Scientific Laboratory of Exploration and Excavation Branch is an initiative in archaeological research taken by the Government of Sindh," he said.

He emphasized the department's commitment to advancing archaeological methodologies by integrating advanced technologies like Laminar Flow and Fume Hoods to enhance artefact analysis, preservation and

chemical testing in a controlled environment.

He commended the relentless dedication and teamwork of Roshan Ali Kanasro, Resident Director of Planning and Development Works of the Culture Department, for his pivotal role in establishing the Scientific Laboratory and enhancing the Exploration and Excavation Branch. Moreover, Dr. Shah unveiled a new Web Portal, marking a significant milestone in making the region's rich archaeological endeavours accessible to the public. This online platform will provide access to research papers and meticulously compiled field diaries, shedding light on the daily activities, observations, and findings during archaeological expeditions, he informed.



KARACHI: A view of burnt vehicles after clash between the workers of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) during an election campaign rally at Nazimabad area, in Provincial Capital.

## MQM-P worker killed in clash with PPP in Karachi

A PPP activist sustained injuries in the incident that led to torching of two vehicles, say police

KARACHI (Agencies): A political worker of Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) lost his life while a Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) activist sustained injuries during a violent clash between the two parties late Sunday night in Karachi's Nazimabad area, Express News reported.

According to the police, the deceased has been identified as 44-year-old Faraz Ahmed Qureshi, son of Ghayoor Ahmed Qureshi. The injured youth is identified as 25-year-old

Rao Muhammad Talha, son of Rao Muhammad Salim. Talha was initially rushed to a private hospital after receiving initial medical aid. According to local residents, the clash occurred when a PPP rally was passing by the area.

They said that some PPP workers attempted to hoist the party flag in front of the MQM-P office which led to exchange of harsh words between the workers of both parties and later escalated to physical violence.

Later, unidentified



KARACHI: President Dr Arif Alvi chairing a meeting on the role of Masajid and Madaris in promoting education and creating awareness about health issues, at Governor House.

## President says: Role of mosques, vital for educating out-of-school children, preventing diseases

KARACHI (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday said the mosques might play a vital role in the provision of education to out-of-school children along with imparting religious ethos for bringing about socio-economic development of the country.

He said the mosques had a central place in Muslim society and could be utilized to educate people about important social issues.

The President expressed these views while

President says:

chairing a meeting about the vital role of Masaajid and Madaris in promoting education and creating awareness about health issues.

The meeting was attended by the Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Inter-faith Harmony, Dr Aneeq Ahmed, and religious scholars from various schools of thought.

Addressing the meeting, the President said that educating 26 million out-of-school children was an uphill task in the wake of in-

adequate educational infrastructure. Building new schools would require tremendous resources as well as time, he added.

He said that utilizing almost 2.5 lacs mosques across the country could be a unique and cost-effective avenue to bring these children back to education.

The President said that mosques could be used as centres of education by incorporating the Government's Accelerated Learning Programme.

Assures fairness

## No solid reason yet to justify polls delay

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday said that no solid reason had yet come to the fore to justify a delay in the general elections, assuring that the government was committed to holding polls as freely and fairly as possible.

The prime minister, in an interview with a newly launched television channel (Aik News) said the candi-

dates were canvassing and all the rumours would fall to rest by the evening of February 8 - the date for general elections in the country.

Regarding the usual complaints of rigging before or after the elections, he said that learning lessons from the past, the parliament needed to address all the flaws regarding the laws, administration, or the Election Commission.



KARACHI: New Consul General of Japan in Karachi, Hattori Masaru meeting with Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori.

## IGP Sindh Riffat chairs Security measures for elections scrutinized in high-level meeting

KARACHI (APP): A high-level meeting chaired by IGP Sindh Riffat Mukhtar Raja delved into police security arrangements and readiness for the upcoming 2024 general elections.

The officers received briefings and directives to conduct on-ground assessments of security measures and deployments in their respective areas.

IGP Sindh emphasized the importance of finalizing and implementing election preparations at the zone and district levels, considering past incidents.

Riffat Mukhtar stressed the need for heightened security, especially during nighttime political events and gatherings, based on leaders' confidence and recommendations.

The Sindh Police chief underscored the immediate reporting of any code of conduct violations to the Election Commission and urged strict legal action against individuals involved in weapon displays or disturbances in the areas.

The meeting saw participation from Additional IGP Karachi.



KARACHI: Inspector General Police (IGP) Sindh, Dr. Riffat Mukhtar Raja presides over a high-level meeting regarding the control of law and order situation on the occasion General Election 2024, held at CPO Headquarters in Karachi.

## COAS, Iranian FM reaffirm to remain closely engaged, bar any spoilers to divide brotherly nations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Foreign Minister of Iran Amir Abdollahian called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir here at the General Headquarters on Monday.

During the meeting, both sides reaffirmed the resolve to remain closely engaged and not allow any spoilers to drive a wedge between the brotherly nations, an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

"Pakistan and Iran are fraternal neighbours, and the destiny of both nations are intertwined," both the dignitaries resolved.

Realizing the historical, religious and cultural ties that bind Pakistan and Iran, both sides emphasized on strengthening bilateral ties and fostering greater understanding of

each other's concerns.

The COAS underscored the centrality of respecting the other state's sovereignty and territorial integrity, calling it sacrosanct, inviolable and the most important cardinal of state-to-state relationship.

The two sides observed that terrorism was a common threat that needed to be tackled through collaborative efforts, better coordination and intelligence sharing. The COAS emphasized the need for sustained engagement and utilizing available communication channels to address security concerns. Both sides agreed to operationalize the mechanism of deployment of military liaison officers in each other's country at an early date to improve coordination and efficiency of response against common threats.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir exchanging views with Amir Abdollahian, Foreign Minister of Iran during meeting held at General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

## Pakistan's democracy affected by 'politics of hatred, division': Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday reiterated his rallying cry of "burying the old politics" and ushering in a new era, saying that Pakistan's democracy and government system has been affected by 'politics of hatred, division'.

The former foreign minister made these remarks while interacting with students of the Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology (SZABIST) Islamabad campus regarding PPP's manifesto "Chuno Nai Soch Ko (Choose new thinking)".

"Politics of hatred and division is at its peak," Bilawal regretted, adding

that if all political parties keep branding each other "traitor and infidel", then how can Pakistan be managed. He noted that traditional politics have divided society and affected the country's democracy and government system.

He warned that if these parties were to come into power, they would likely victimise their political opponents. "I am contesting to bury the politics of hate and division," he asserted.

Bilawal Bhutto pointed out that inflation, poverty, unemployment and climate change were key issues being faced by the country which needed to be addressed on a priority basis.



RAWALPINDI: Chairman of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Zulfikar Ali Bhutto talking with media persons along with Chief of Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Fiqah Jafariya Allama Agha Syed Hussain Muqaddasi at Ali Masjid in the city.

## Various problems can be solved if people pay taxes: Mayor Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Monday said that Karachi's economic situation and infrastructure

are not major challenges and many problems can be solved if people pay taxes.

He said this while talking to Consul General of Austria Mrs. Andrea Wicke who along with Commercial Consul Dr. Johannes Brunner and Chairman PM Task Force for Strategic Reforms Unit, Hussain Islam called on the Mayor Karachi in his office here.

The Mayor Karachi said that his doors are always open to all people for solving public problems, in this regard the current administration has adopted an open door policy to in-

crease public relations and solve all the problems of the city as soon as possible.

Earlier, Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab welcomed the Austrian Consul General and members of his delegation at Jamshed Nasserwanji Building (KMC head office) and discussed matters of mutual interest with them.

Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab informed Consul General Austria about the history of City Council and KMC on this occasion.

He said that Pakistan and Austria can promote mutual cooperation in the fields of infrastructure development, education and research.

## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Partial justice

It is unfortunate that, on Friday, the International Court of Justice did not endorse South Africa's demand for an immediate cessation of hostilities in Gaza as it delivered a preliminary ruling on the genocide case brought against Israel.

While legal intricacies are important, stopping the butchery of Palestinians is a more pressing concern. However, the court has upped the moral pressure on Tel Aviv to end its amoral campaign against defenceless civilians in the besieged Strip, even though the Zionist state has no intention of doing so.

Importantly, the judges felt that South Africa's evidence supporting the genocide case against Israel could not be ruled out "prima facie". Furthermore, the bench ordered Tel Aviv to take all possible measures to prevent acts of genocide, prevent and punish those involved in the incitement of genocide, and ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza. Israel has been given a month to report back to The Hague with regard to complying with these measures.

In his reaction, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has termed the order "outrageous" and vowed to continue fighting his "just war" in which some 26,000 people have been massacred. Earlier, he had boasted: "Nobody will stop us — not The Hague..."

Meanwhile, the US that has lent its iron-clad support to Tel Aviv, which is responsible for a massacre that will go down in infamy, has said it continues to believe "allegations of genocide are unfounded". Though it may take the ICJ years to determine if, legally, Israel's actions in Gaza constitute genocide, in the popular view the murder of children, the collective punishment and starvation of an entire civilian population, and the ethnic cleansing of Gazans very much fit the definition of genocide. Other states have hailed the ICJ's order.

Where to from here? Most importantly, when will the slaughter of Gaza's people end? While the ICJ's rulings are binding, the court cannot enforce them. And as Israel's arrogant replies have proved, it has no intention of respecting the court's orders. This is a mockery of the very rules-based order the US, UK and other Western states have sworn to uphold.

In the past, these actors have bombed, or threatened to attack states that have, according to them, strayed from the "rules-based order". Will they take a similar line against Israel? Or will they continue to defend the indefensible? Kudos to South Africa for raising a voice for humanity and against barbarism, irrespective of religious and ethnic affiliations. It is hoped that when the court next meets, more concrete measures are proposed to end the bloodbath and that one day, those responsible for shedding the blood of innocents in Gaza are brought to justice, as are those who aided and abetted them.

### Lesson plan

Muna Khan

Last year I felt a bit stumped when students in my news media literacy class told me they knew who Altaf Hussain was but didn't really believe the stories about his rule in Karachi in the 1990s. Did he really order the city to shut down on a phone call, that too a rotary dial phone? How did that even work in a mobile-less, internet-less time? Did I 'actually' experience it?

You may be tempted to berate them for not knowing this but pause for a moment and ask: how would they know this if Altaf Hussain has been banned from screens most of their lives and, more importantly, where would they have learned this? A cursory look at how they're taught history makes for a depressing read — it's likely you were taught the same stories about Mohammad bin Qasim landing in Sindh or that Pakistan was made for Muslims, etc. The denial of the country's multi-religious and multicultural past has done irrevocable damage and created so much of the confusion around identity. I don't think it's possible to break the idea that 'Pakistaniyat' — even the one packaged as 'naya' — is firmly tied to one religion.

Instead of beating up young people for not knowing about history pre-internet or social media, or 2018, perhaps those doing the adulating can reflect on their role in creating a youth so disconnected or disinterested in knowing Pakistan before them.

I'll start: as a journalist, I didn't think of young people as my audience and was rarely in positions to fight back when ordered to remove XYZ from mainstream

media. As a journalism instructor, I didn't work hard enough to contextualise and frame events from a historical perspective. I should have used a megaphone to say 'this isn't the first time this is happening', etc.

Maybe, this is why I wasn't so surprised to read the results of a survey Dawn online conducted earlier this month about the elections. The majority of the 5,500 respondents fell under the youth category of 18 to 40 years in age. While 65 per cent said they would vote, they were sceptical of the election process. (You'd be hard pressed to find someone who isn't cynical about these polls.) Meanwhile, 62.69pc "felt their vote won't make a difference" followed by 20.41pc "who feel disenchanted with all candidates". A significant number of respondents said they had little to no faith in elected officials' ability to address issues like unemployment or poverty. This may explain why 64pc want to see the inclusion of 'None of the Above' on the ballot.

It is no surprise to read that the majority of respondents — 67.3pc — support PTI, though opinions about their rule from 2018 to 2022 are mixed with a majority saying it was "neither good or bad".

The part that interests me the most is trust in media, which sadly, is low. Only 7pc have confidence in the media for unbiased coverage; 45.83pc expressed complete distrust; 30pc "only slightly trust" while 16.4pc have moderate trust in the media in providing accurate and unbiased coverage of the elections.

This should be a wake-up call for many in the media who have not been able to connect

with younger audiences, most of whom consume news on platforms that speak to them like TikTok. Instead of berating youngsters for trusting influencers over anchors, perhaps news organisations should be adapting to these changes. And making an effort to connect with younger audiences, including children, who are absorbing the 'news' in their surroundings but don't know who to ask questions from.

Everyone should be taught how the news is created, how to identify disinformation and differentiate bet-we-en fact and opinion. Because once they understand why things happen the way they do, they may want to do something about it. Like vote. Like hold the powerful to account, something journalists commit to doing every day on the job, without bias or judgement but with courage and conviction.

In that same class last semester, one student shared a link of an interview with Altaf Hussain conducted by a YouTuber based abroad three months ago. It had nearly 750,000 views and I scrolled through the near 5,000 comments from viewers saying things like "we didn't know this about MQM".

This is what happens when the media isn't allowed to do its job. Not every journalist can afford to move abroad and/or start their own channel but media owners can afford to take a hard look at ground realities and vow to invest in the principles of journalism.

Technological advancements may change the medium but the message of impartiality will remain the same. -- Courtesy Dawn

### Challenging times

Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

The year 2024 could not have started on a worse note. First, a humanitarian catastrophe of genocidal proportions has been unfolding in Gaza for over three months, owing to daily attacks by Israel's defence forces. The Houthis are attacking merchant ships in the Red Sea, obliging the US and other countries to mobilise their navies. Israeli attacks on Lebanon and Syria carry the risk of the conflict engulfing the entire region.

Second, the war in Ukraine has devastated the country, once known for its fertile land and grain exports. Millions of Ukrainians have been displaced, with little access to food, water or electricity. Russia, too, has suffered losses, but remains determined to fight on despite economic sanctions and Nato's continued expansion eastward. Finland's inclusion as its 31st member has more than doubled the length of Nato's borders with Russia. Sweden, too, is gearing up to join. The war's end is not in sight.

Third, the US-China strategic competition is intensifying, deepening risk and uncertainty in a world already in disorder. The two countries remain locked in a technology war, with growing rivalry over AI supremacy and the manufacture of advanced semiconductor chips that power AI technologies. The US, which has an edge in semiconductors supply chains, is building up additional pressure on China through export controls and investment curbs. For its part, China retains dominance in supply chains for minerals, particularly cobalt and lithium used for manufacturing EVs, batteries and solar panels. To neutralise these advan-

tages, the US has imposed a high tariff on Chinese cars and other products. The rivalry has created alarm that the world is headed towards camp politics.

Fourth, the international security environment has been vitiated. Major powers are modernising their nuclear arsenals as arms control regimes give way to a nuclear arms race. In November, Russia de-ratified the CTBT, opening the door for further nuclear testing. The Iran nuclear deal remains in a state of stalemate. The US-Russia agreement, New START, which limits the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads, was suspended by Russia in 2023. The INF treaty, which sought elimination of intermediate-range nuclear forces deemed essential for European security, was terminated by the US in 2019.

In the midst of all this, dozens of countries are heading towards elections in 2024. Anxiety surrounds the forthcoming presidential election in the US. Joe Biden, 81, and Donald Trump, 77, are up for a contest the outcome of which would have profound implications for geopolitics, particularly the transatlantic equation. Russian President Vladimir Putin is seeking a fifth term in March. Indonesia and India are going to polls in February and May respectively. The UK will hold elections in the second half of the year. Acrimonious and populist rhetoric is sharpening societal polarisation in countries undergoing electoral transitions. The world economy has picked up pace, and the business use of generative AI has grown manifold. But most developing countries continue to suffer low growth, high inflation and unemployment challenges.

For Pakistan, 2024 is a watershed moment. For years, it has remained in the grip of political instability, economic uncertainty and rising terrorism. The pre-election environment is toxic. The blame game is at its peak. Investors are worried about Pakistan's economic future. The balance-of-payment crisis is not resolved. In this background, the Feb 8 polls are crucial. Pakistan needs a sustained period of political stability, which would ensure continuity in economic policies and help restore growth and industrial development.

In foreign policy, the next elected government has to manage ties with China and the US, despite their growing rivalry. One piece of good news is that the economies of both countries are so inter-dependent that the decoupling from China's economy the US had earlier envisaged is not happening. That opens up possibilities for Pakistan to maintain ties with both China and the US. In an age of rising unilateralism and declining multilateralism, countries like Pakistan need to engage in multi-alignments to promote their political, economic and security interests. Pakistan also needs to stabilise its frontiers with Afghanistan and Iran, shifting the focus to economic cooperation. The trajectory of Pakistan's ties with India will be determined by the outcome of India's elections. With the scare created in India against Muslim icons, especially historical mosques, and the tendency of Indian intelligence to target opponents on foreign soil — Canada, the US, and now Pakistan — the new government will need much effort and smart diplomacy to restore normal ties with India. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News

Dr Umar Saif says:

### IXP & data center set up to boost reliability of internet connectivity

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Dr Umar Saif, Monday said that Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) has established its first-ever carrier-neutral Internet Exchange Point (IXP) and Data Center to boost the reliability of internet connectivity in the country.

Addressing at the operational ceremony of 'Pakistan Internet Exchange (PIE) powered by DE-CIX', the first carrier-neutral IX in the

country, Dr. Saif underscored the significance of the telecom and Information Technology industry in Pakistan. He said: "Today is a monumental day for the Pakistan telecom and IT industry."

Three important milestones have been achieved today in collaboration with PTCL, SCO, PTA, DE CIX, PEACE Cable, and China Mobile, he added.

The minister said, we have reached an agreement with China to route its Internet traffic through Pakistan, thereby making Pakistan a regional hub for

connectivity. This strategic move is expected to generate substantial revenue for Internet transit traffic in Pakistan, he added.

Dr. Saif revealed that PTCL would be collaborating with DE CIX, a German data center, and IXP operator, to manage the operation of this new data center.

He emphasized that partnering with a world-class data center operator would enable Pakistan to introduce super-scaling cloud services such as AWS, Google Cloud, and Azure to the country. Additionally, it

would serve as a local content hub for popular services like YouTube, TikTok, and Netflix.

With these advancements, the minister expressed optimism that Pakistan's internet users could now access services locally, positioning the country to become a hub of regional connectivity.

Over the past few years, he said, we have made significant strides in advancing fiber connectivity. We got two fiber loops from Kashgar to Rawalpindi, further extended to Karachi by PTCL, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication, Dr. Umar Saif in a group photo on the occasion of Operational Launch of Carrier Neutral Pakistan Internet Exchange & Data Center.



ISLAMABAD: Dr. Pema Gyamtsho, Director General International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) called on the Caretaker Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research Dr. Kausar Abdullah Malik.

### Businessmen honored commendation certificate for meritorious services

PESHAWAR (APP): A noted businessman from Peshawar, Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi has been honoured with the awarding of a commendation certificate by the Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), Amjad Zubair Tawana on the occasion of International Customs Day observed on January 26.

The certificate has been awarded to Zia Sarhadi for his outstanding and meritorious services for the cause of promotion of trade in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and at the

regional level between Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics (CARs).

On the occasion, Zia Sarhadi also received the honourable title of Babae-Customs for his decades-long services in custom clearing, shipping and goods forwarding fields. Zia Sarhadi presently holds the office of Coordinator Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI) and has vast experience of around five decades in import, export,

### Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Four ships namely, Olympia, Silver Eburna, EceNurBayraktar and Simaisma carrying Containers, Palm oil, Urea and LNG, berthed at Container Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Grain Terminal and Gas Terminal respectively on Sunday.

Meanwhile three more ships, MSC Yuktax, MSC Mumbai-VIII and FSM with Container and LPG are also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim during last 24 hours. total of nine ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, Olympia and Silver Eburna are left the port on today morning and two more ships, MookdaNaree and Pacific Merit are expected to sail on same day.

Cargo throughput of 110,836 tonnes, comprising 109,226 tonnes imports cargo and 1,610 tonnes export cargo carried in 609 Containers (521 TEUs are Import and 88 TEUs are export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours. There are 07 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them three ships, Encore.

### Satisfied with SIFC initiatives FPCCI demands to know its incorporation in MQM-P manifesto: Saquib Fayyaz

**Independent Report**  
KARACHI: Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI, has appreciated that Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Convener of MQM Pakistan & Dr. Farooq Sattar, Senior Deputy Convener of MQM Pakistan, have visited the head office of the apex

initiatives being undertaken by Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC); and, wants to know how MQM Pakistan will incorporate those initiatives into their economic manifesto.

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon added that the political parties should consult FPCCI before



formulating their economic policies for their manifestos as the business community can provide them with the right grass-root level information and advice.

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon stated that Karachi is the fifth most livable city in the world.

### SBP decides to maintain interest rate at 22 percent

KARACHI (INP): State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Governor Jameel Ahmed announced that the State Bank Monetary Policy Committee has decided not to change the interest rate and to maintain it at 22 per cent.

SBP Governor Jameel Ahmed and the Monetary Policy Committee members held a joint press conference and informed the media persons about the financial statistics of the country.

He said in an important economic

assessment of the committee, that there has been a significant improvement in the foreign exchange reserves and in the last six months, the foreign exchange reserves have exceeded 8 billion dollars.

He added that the foreign exchange also saw an increase of four billion dollars despite paying the external debt and other payments.

The SBP governor said the current account deficit was 17.50 billion dollars last financial year.

He said the committee also focused on various projections after reviewing the economic statistics.

He said the productivity of the industry is improving now and economic activities have been taken positively by the industry.

SBP Governor Jameel also said that the inflation rate will be between 23 and 25 per cent at the end of this financial year.

Jameel Ahmed said that economic growth is expected to be 2 to 3 per cent this fiscal year.

### PSX witnesses bearish trend, loses 1,039 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Monday, losing 1,039.34 points, a negative change of 1.63 percent, closing at 62,773.72 points against 63,813.06 points the previous trading day. A total of 317,577,239 shares valuing Rs 10,693 billion were traded during the day as compared to 412,823,322 shares valuing Rs 16.185 billion the last day.

### WAPDA organises Road Show in Bangkok to woo contracting firms

LAHORE (APP): Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) on Monday organized a day-long Road Show in Bangkok for the 300 MW-Floating Solar Project - the first of its kind in Pakistan.

According to a WAPDA spokesman here, the Road Show aimed at forging an enhanced

competition amongst the prospective bidders for the project. As many as 58 delegates, hailing from 50 international reputed firms participated in the event. Chairman WAPDA Engr Lt Gen @ Sajjad Ghani, Pakistan's Charge d'Affairs in Thailand Yasir Hussain, World Bank's representatives.

## South Punjab's development PML-N's top priority: Shehbaz

RAJANPUR (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif on Monday assured the people of Rajanpur of the revival of development projects after coming into power.

Former three-time prime minister Nawaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz, Hamza Shehbaz and other PML-N leaders are carrying out vigorous election campaigns across Punjab ahead of the general elections.

Shehbaz Sharif reached Rajanpur to address a public gathering in connection with the February 8 general

elections on a helicopter. The development of South Punjab remains PML-N's top priority, he added.

The former prime minister thanked the people of Pakistan for their continued support for Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz.

Recalling the 2010 super floods, the PML-N president said he reached Rajanpur to oversee the relief work in the region being the then-chief minister.

"Weather was not good so I reached Rajanpur in the vehicle, despite warnings from the authorities," Sharif said.

PML-N government

constructed Danish Schools in South Punjab and Basic Health Units so the people can get health services in the region.

On Saturday, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) launched its much-awaited election manifesto.

The manifesto was unveiled by PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif.

On the other hand, according to Election Commission of Pakistan sources, overall 90,675 polling stations have been set up across the country for the upcoming general elections, slated for Feb 8, 2024.



President Dr. Arif Alvi in a meeting with a delegation of the Employers' Federation of Pakistan, at Governor House, Karachi

## KP Governor formally inaugurates Governor's Secretariat website

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Haji Ghulam Ali formally inaugurated the website of the Governor's Secretariat here Monday.

The website was inaugurated during a ceremony held here in the Governor's House.

Besides, Caretaker KP Minister for Education, Dr. Qasim Jan; Secretary IT Board, Mohammad Ali Shah; Vice Chancellors of the University of Peshawar, Khyber Medical University, and Agricultural University Peshawar; Director of

IMS Sciences, Dr. Usman Ghani; and officers of the Governor's Secretariat and IT Board were also present on the occasion.

All affairs of the Governor's Secretariat will now be available online.

Through the website, the employees of the universities could file applications against

the administrative decisions of their respective universities, and any order on their online appeal would also be available on it.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, Haji Ghulam Ali said, "Today is the era of information technology, so the public should also be provided information on the basis of the requirements of the modern era."

"The website is created for the access of the people to the affairs of the Governor's Secretariat and is the beginning of a journey towards the modern era," he said.

## CM ensures full support for peaceful elections

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi held a meeting with Provincial Election Commissioner Punjab Ijaz Anwar Chauhan to discuss the peaceful conduct of the upcoming general elections and review the preparations.

Mohsin Naqvi, in his remarks, assured full support from the Punjab government for the seamless execution of the election process. He emphasized the implementation of the Election Commission's code of conduct, and measures will be taken to ensure compliance.

The chief minister further stated that law enforcement, including the police and other security agencies, will play a pivotal role in upholding the rule of law during the electoral process.

The Provincial Election Commissioner acknowledged the valuable cooperation of the Punjab government in this regard.



LAHORE: Provincial Election Commissioner Ejaz Anwar Chohan meeting with Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi.

## Minister says: Breastfeeding awareness drives safest way of preventing outbreak of 'Pneumonia cases'

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Health Minister Professor Javed Akram Monday expressed that the low rate of breastfeeding is a major cause of the pneumonia deaths among kids.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that lack of breastfeeding can also result in stunted growth in children and so the health department is taking steps to encourage this feeding and nursing of infants in early ages.

To another question, he said that the Punjab has reported around 17,000 pneumonia cases so far this, with a mortality rate of 1.3 percent.

He said media need to run massive awareness campaigns to educate the public about benefits of mother feed and for timely vaccination.

"A majority of victims of pneumonia are malnourished kids with low immunity," he said, adding, mothers must breast-feed their children to boost their immunity against such diseases.

Minister for Health said that malnutrition and promotion of breastfeeding remained a top priority agenda of the current government as relevant ministries and departments have been endlessly engaged in efforts to address the issue of malnutrition and to control Pneumonia cases.



LAHORE: Inspector General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar listening to the problems of Police employees and people during open Katchery at Central Police Office.

## DCM Schofer visits emperor Jehangir's mausoleum in Lahore

LAHORE (APP): Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) at the U.S. Embassy, Islamabad Andrew Schofer on Monday visited the mausoleum of the Mughal emperor Nuruddin Mohammad Jahangir and hailed the artistic finesse of the 17th century architectural masterpiece.

Din Muhammad Salim, known as Jahangir, (1569-1627) was the fourth Mughal emperor who ruled India from 1605 to 1627. The tomb was decreed to be built at Dilkusha Garden - favourite sojourn of the Mughal emperor in Lahore - by his descendant emperor Shah Jahan. The mausoleum was completed in 1637.

DCM Andrew Schofer was accompanied by US Consul General to Lahore Kristin Hawkins and Public Affairs Officer Karl Rogers. After a warm welcome by the Walled City of Lahore Authority (WCLA) officials, Andrew Schofer was shown round the tomb while he also had a bird's eye view of the sprawling gardens and adjacent tomb of Asif Khan from one of the minaret of the tomb. DCM Schofer showed keen interest in the Mughal architecture and briefed on the facade of the mausoleum and was briefed about the red sandstone inlaid with marble motifs which were preserved in original.

## CPO directs tight security for general elections

FAISALABAD (APP): City Police Officer (CPO) Captain (Retired) Muhammad Ali Zia has directed the police officers to ensure tight security at all polling stations during General Election 2024.

Chairing a meeting here on Monday, he reviewed security arrangements and said that the district would be divided into sectors, sub-sectors and clusters and their incharges would be bound to provide tight security arrangements in their respective jurisdiction. He said that the police officers should finalize their security plan and make it comprehensive from all aspects.

## One killed, another injured in road accident

FAISALABAD (APP): A man was killed while another sustained injuries in a road accident, in the limits of Roshanwala police station. Rescue 1122 spokesman said on Monday the accident took place at Khannuana road where a rashly driven car overturned in a bid.

## KP Govt to provide over Rs 5bln to govt hospitals for emergency: CM's aide

**Independent Report**  
PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister for Health Riaz Anwar on Monday said that the provincial government has decided to release more than five billion rupees to the health department to address the shortage of medical equipment and emergency and essential medicines at the government hospitals.

He said that in the next few days, mandatory medicines would be purchased for hospitals at the local level, adding that

## Carrying arms banned in Swat

PESHAWAR (APP): District Magistrate Swat, Dr Muhammad Qasim Ali Khan on Monday under the Section-144 CRPC, imposed a complete ban on carrying firearms including the legal one.

A notification to this effect said a complete ban has been imposed in the jurisdiction of Swat district on exhibition and carrying of all kinds of firearms including the arms having valid license.

It said the violators of this order will face legal action under Section 188 PPC of the law.

# International News

## ICJ ruling may end up in UN Security Council, say experts

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: The International Court of Justice (ICJ) lacks the power to enforce its judgments, but it can seek a UN Security Council vote on its ruling, potentially paving the way for economic sanctions or military action against Israel, legal experts and scholars argue.

Last week, the ICJ issued a resolute order against Israel, emphasising adherence to humanitarian standards. The ruling directs Israel to prevent and penalise any public incitements to commit genocide against Palestinians in Gaza while also mandating the preservation of evidence related to such allegations. Israel is also obliged to ameliorate the humanitarian situation for Palestinian civilians in the enclave.

Commenting on the order, legal experts, think-tank scholars, and the Western media allude to the likelihood of this matter reaching the UN Security Council, where the majority is expected to demand Israel's compliance. They contend that, this time, the United States may face an even greater challenge in defending Israel, and the ICJ ruling may prove difficult for the United States to overlook.

Emphasising the significance of the ruling, former US Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues, Stephen Rapp, noted that Israel's non-compliance may make it difficult for its allies to continue defending the Jewish state.

"The US and all its major allies expect Israel to comply," because "if it defies the orders, the Israeli

government may find itself treated as a pariah," he wrote in an email to The Hill newspaper that covers the US Congress. Human Rights Watch's Israel and Palestine Director Omar Shakir underscored the importance of the ruling, stating, "This is quite a far-reaching order. The court has the opportunity in 30 days to review Israel's compliance or consider other options."

Explaining how this decision could be implemented, Shakir said in interviews to various media outlets that "the UN Security Council could take action to enforce the decision." He acknowledged that the US veto could once again protect Israel in the Security Council but warns that the veto would further weaken the US stance on this issue.

government may find itself treated as a pariah," he wrote in an email to The Hill newspaper that covers the US Congress. Human Rights Watch's Israel and Palestine Director Omar Shakir underscored the importance of the ruling, stating, "This is quite a far-reaching order. The court has the opportunity in 30 days to review Israel's compliance or consider other options."

Explaining how this decision could be implemented, Shakir said in interviews to various media outlets that "the UN Security Council could take action to enforce the decision." He acknowledged that the US veto could once again protect Israel in the Security Council but warns that the veto would further weaken the US stance on this issue.

## US reviewing Venezuelan sanctions policy in wake of court decision

**Monitoring Desk**  
VENEZUELA: The US is reviewing its sanctions policy against Venezuela after a court in that country upheld a ban preventing presidential candidate Maria Corina Machado from holding office, the US State Department said.

The ruling by Venezuela's Supreme Tribunal on Friday means Machado, a 56-year-old industrial engineer, cannot register her candidacy for presidential elections scheduled for the second half of 2024. "The United States is currently reviewing our Venezuela sanctions policy, based on this development and the recent political targeting of democratic opposition candidates and civil society," State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said in a statement. The US eased economically debilitating oil sanctions on the crude-exporting country in October after President Nicolas Maduro's government signed a deal with the opposition.



Palestinians carry bags of flour they grabbed from an aid truck near an Israeli checkpoint, as Gaza residents face crisis levels of hunger, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, in Gaza City.

## Houthi claim missile attack on US warship

SANA'A (Online): Houthi militants fired a missile at a US warship in the Gulf of Aden on Sunday, a spokesman for the Yemen-based group has claimed. He described the incident as the latest response to American "aggression" in the region.

The attack, targeting the USS Lewis B. Puller expeditionary mobile base vessel, took place on Sunday evening, Yahya Saree said in a Telegram post in the aftermath of the alleged incident. The spokesman did not specify if the missile had hit the vessel.

The warship in question was providing logistical support to US forces participating in "the aggression" against Yemen, and was targeted as part of Houthi measures to protect the country, Saree stated.

The militant group will continue to strike commercial ships in the region until Israel ends its attacks on Gaza and the blockade of the Palestinian enclave is lifted, the spokesman added.

The US military has yet to officially comment on the alleged attack.

## Seven dead in Brazilian small plane crash

SAO PAULO (INP): Seven people were killed Sunday in Brazil's southeast Minas Gerais state when the small plane they were travelling in crashed, authorities said.

After leaving Campinas, in neighboring Sao Paulo state, the single-engine plane apparently broke up mid-air and crashed at around 10:30 am (1330 GMT) in the mining town of Itapeva.

Firefighters "found seven dead victims (who were) on board the aircraft," the department said in updated statement.

## Several states halt funding to Palestinian refugees

**Monitoring Desk**  
GAZA STRIP: While bad weather hit displaced Palestinians seeking refuge further north in the battered enclave, Israel pressed ahead on Saturday with its aggression in Gaza's Khan Younis area after the failure of UN's International Court of Justice (ICJ) to call for a ceasefire. Aggravating the crisis for Palestinians, the UK, Australia, Canada, Italy and Finland suspended their funding to the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) despite the Palestinian Authority insistence that the organisation needs 'maximum' support.

On the day of ICJ's ruling that Israel must prevent possible acts of genocide, 174 Palestinians were killed during the unabated hostilities. Gaza health authorities said on Saturday some 26,257 Palestinians have been killed and nearly 65,000 wounded so far, including 174 lives lost during the last 24 hours.

The majority of the enclave's 2.3 million population has been displaced. Residents reported heavy aerial and tank fire across Khan Younis, a part of southern Gaza that has become the focus of Israel's ground offensive against Hamas.

## Three US troops killed in Jordan, Biden vows reprisal

**Iran denies links to Jordan drone strike that killed 3 US troops**

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: Three US service members were killed and dozens wounded during an unmanned aerial drone attack on US forces stationed in northeastern Jordan near the Syrian border, President Joe Biden and US officials said on Sunday.

Biden blamed Iran-backed groups for the attack, the first deadly strike against US forces since the Israel-Hamas conflict erupted in October, sending shock waves throughout the Middle East.

It is the first time American military personnel have been killed by hostile fire in the Middle East since the start of the Gaza conflict, and the incident will further raise tensions in the region and fuel fears of a broader conflict directly involving Iran.

Hamas said the death of the soldiers shows Washington's backing for Israel could put it at odds with the whole Muslim world if the Gaza conflict continues and that it could lead to a "regional explosion."

Meanwhile: Iran denied US and British accusations that it supported militant groups behind a drone strike in Jordan that killed three US military personnel, Tehran's official IRNA news agency said on Monday.

"These claims are made with specific political goals to reverse the realities of the region," IRNA quoted foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani as saying.

## Russia's drones, missiles target Ukraine's critical infrastructure, Ukraine says

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: Russia launched drone and missile attacks targeting civilian and critical infrastructure across wide areas of Ukraine, Kyiv's Air Force said on Sunday.

Preliminary information did not show any casualties in the attacks, the air force said on the Telegram messaging app.

Russia and Ukraine have increased their air attacks on each other's territory in recent months, targeting critical military, energy and transport infrastructure.

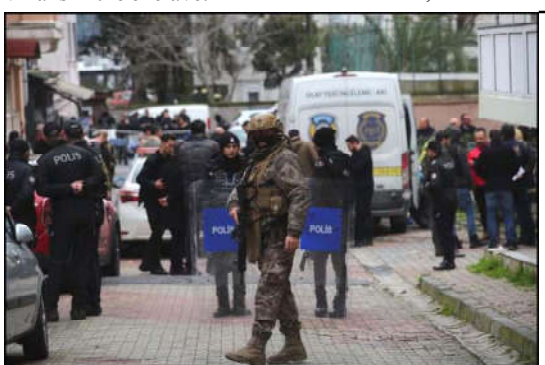
The air force said Russia attacked the central Poltava region with two ballistic missiles fired from the Iskander ballistic missile system, and three surface-to-air missiles over the Donetsk region in the east.

Filip Pronin, governor of Poltava region, wrote on Telegram that the attack struck an industrial site in the city of Kremenchuk, sparking a fire. Pictures posted on social media showed emergency crews battling a blaze.

Further southeast in the Zaporizhzhia region, Governor Yuri Malashko said an infrastructure site had been hit in a drone attack. Emergency crews were at the site, Malashko said, but gave no details of damage or casualties.

Ukraine's air defence systems destroyed four of eight Russia-launched drones overnight, the air force said.

Reuters could not independently verify the reports. There was no immediate comment from Russia.



Turkish police stand guard outside the Italian Santa Maria Catholic Church after two masked gunmen were shooting during service, in Istanbul, Turkey.

## China allows Philippines to supply troops at disputed reef

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: The Chinese coastguard said it had made "temporary special arrangements" to allow the Philippines to deliver supplies to troops at a grounded World War Two-era vessel at a disputed reef.

The Chinese coastguard has previously deployed vessels to block missions by the Philippines to supply troops on the transport ship, which has become a military outpost at the Second Thomas Shoal,

190 km (118 miles) off the Philippine island of Palawan. In a statement on its official WeChat account late on Saturday, the Chinese coastguard said it had allowed necessary supplies, but also that it would resolutely defend China's sovereignty and maritime rights and interests at the Second Thomas Shoal and its adjacent waters.

"On Jan 21, a small aircraft from the Philippines airdropped supplies to the illegally beached warship," the WeChat statement said.

## NEC directs priority financial allocations for merged, backward districts

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Economic Council (NEC) Monday here directed that the development targets for all new merged and backward districts should be met on priority basis with appropriate financial allocations in the next budget.

Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar was chairing meeting of the council. Federal ministers Dr Shamsad Akhtar, Sami Saeed, Shahid Ashraf Tarar, Chief Ministers Justice @ Maqbool Baqir, Justice @ Syed Arshad Hussain Shah, Sardar Ali Mardaan Domki and high level officials attended the meeting.

The meeting was told that in the next financial year, instead of including provincial projects in the national development budget, only projects of newly merged border districts of erstwhile FATA and 20

backward districts would be included in the federal development budget.

The proper financial allocations for these areas would ensure provision of jobs to the people and economic progress.

The prime minister directed that the standard for compiling list of backward districts should be reviewed so that inclusion of all such areas should be ensured. Speaking during the meeting, the prime minister said tax money belonged to the people and the focus of all development projects should be welfare and well being of the people. He urged that work on the national level development projects should be speeded up and their completion in the stipulated time should be ensured.

He expressed satisfaction that the caretaker government achieved substantial success in securing de-

velopment targets in its short tenure.

The prime minister said despite immense economic challenges, national progress could only be ensured by completing public welfare projects on priority basis. The National Economic Council comprising the federation and provinces was the highest constitutional body for economic decision making, he said adding the federal government gave vital importance to consultation with provinces while taking decisions about the development projects. In the development budget, the council decided that special importance should be given to the progress of basic communication infrastructure, hydel projects, water reservoirs, industry, information technology and the development of human resources particularly youth.



President Dr. Arif Alvi enquiring after the health of patients during his visit to the Sundas Foundation Karachi Centre, providing blood and hematological services to patients, in Karachi.

## President inaugurates 'Sundas Foundation Karachi Centre'

KARACHI (APP): President Dr. Arif Alvi inaugurated 'Sundas Foundation Karachi Centre' on Monday.

The centre is aimed at providing blood and hematological services to patients.

The President, soon after inaugurating the Centre, visited Blood Transfusion section of the facility

and met patients present on the occasion.

Dr. Alvi enquired about the health of the patients and distributed fruit baskets for them.

Earlier, the President was received by the Sundas Foundation President Yaseen Khan and other management of the foundation. He was also briefed about the Centre.

## PPP's Manzoor Wassan sees country's next prime minister

KOT DIJI (INP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Manzoor Wassan, who is famous for his political predictions, has made yet another prediction, reported on Monday.

Addressing a rally at Kot Diji, Wassan, in his latest prophecy, has claimed that all candidates who will be elected to assemblies as independents, will vote for PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in an election for the seat of prime minister, and that Bilawal will be the country's next prime minister.

Furthermore, he has said that not only the PPP will make a clean sweep from Sindh in the elections, but the party will also manage to get a sizeable number of seats from Punjab and Balochistan.

## SHC stops police from arresting PTI leader Haleem Adil Sheikh in further cases

KARACHI (Online): Sindh High Court (SHC) has restrained police from arresting PTI leader Haleem Adil from arresting in further cases. The petition against arrest of Haleem Adil in several cases came up for hearing before the court Monday.

The court ordered Haleem Adil Sheikh be not nominated in any new case or challan. SHC ordered to send copy of this order to IG Sindh and jail superintendent.

The court remarked that according to November 02, 2023 police report Haleem Adil is nominated in 21 cases. Justice Naimat Ullah Pulpoto remarked "tell us how many more cases have been registered."

Additional Advocate General (AAG) said overall 21 cases are registered against Haleem Adil Sheikh.

## PPP struggles to improve living standards of poor: Bachal

SUKKUR (APP): Senior politician and candidate from PS-31 Kingri, Advocate Pir Syed Bachal Shah Jilani on Monday said the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) always struggled for the improvement of the living standards of the poor.

Addressing in a corner meeting, he hoped the PPP would win the upcoming elections. Pir Syed Bachal Shah said the leadership of PPP would continue the mission of Shaheed Muhtarma Benazir Bhutto adding that she had the mission of serving humanity and the welfare of the common man.

## Met Office forecast light rain, drizzle in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): The Met Office on Monday forecast drizzle or light rainfall in metropolis with partly cloudy weather during next 24 hours. The mercury dropped to minimum temperature of 13.5 degree Celsius today, while maximum temperature likely to remain between 25 to 27-degree Celsius in the city, the meteorological department said. Humidity level has been recorded 90 percent, while winds blowing with light speed in Karachi, weather department said. Karachi has been the 5<sup>th</sup> most polluted city of the world today with particulate matter has been recorded 212 at the Air Quality Index (AQI).

## EU to provide additional Eur100m to enhance post-flood resilience

ISLAMABAD (APP): The European Union (EU) will provide an additional EUR 100 million to reinforce Pakistan's resilience in the aftermath of the devastating 2022 floods that severely impacted the nation.

According to press statement issued by Economic Affairs Division, EU Ambassador to Pakistan, Ms. Riina Kionka and Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Dr. Kazim Niaz signed five new EU grant agreements in this regard. "These agreements, under Team Europe's response to the 2022 post-flood Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction Framework, signify a substantial commitment of nearly EUR 100 million (equivalent to over PKR 30 billion)," the statement added.

The new EU support package aims to fortify Pakistan's resilience in the aftermath of the floods, bringing the total Team Europe response to the 2022 floods to over EUR 930 million.

The specific focus areas include revitalising the rural economy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and restoring the disrupted livestock value chains in flood-affected Balochistan.

Notably, these activities align with the expansive EU Global Gateway initiative, the largest EU investment program designed to propel the global green transition.

Moreover, the package extends its impact by fortifying Pakistan's long-term resilience through targeted investments in human rights, gender equality, and civil society.



KARACHI: Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM-P) Convener, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui along with others talks with media persons during press conference after attend funeral prayer party activist, in Karachi.

## Mustafa Kamal says PPP wants to conquer Karachi Central

KARACHI (INP): MQM-P senior leader Mustafa Kamal on Monday said a party worker was killed by armed men carrying Kalashnikovs in the Nazimabad neighbourhood of the mega city in the presence of four police vehicles at the time of the incident.

Talking to media, he said the murderers were from the PPP and mentioned that the MQM-P workers had been shot dead in different parts of Karachi in the past in six separate incidents.

He accused Dr Asim — a close associate of former president Asif Ali Zardari — of orchestrating the incident in which Ahmed Faraz — the Manghopir unit of MQM-P — was killed and said they had a video proof of the armed man opening fire while standing next to a police vehicle.

The police didn't arrest the killer but picked up the MQM-P worker who had received bullet wounds, he said, adding that the police, instead of shifting the injured man to a nearby hospital, spent time on the road while driving around in the area, which resulted in his death.

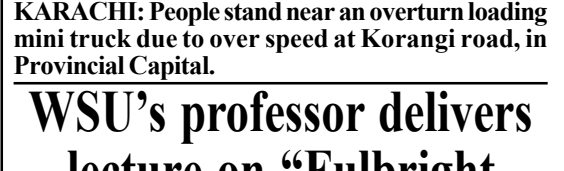
## Teaching license exam successfully conducted, sets national benchmark

SUKKUR (APP): The caretaker Minister for Education and Women's Development, Sindh, Ms Rana Hussain has said that another milestone in the educational landscape of Sindh as the province successfully conducted the teaching license policy exam, setting a precedent for educational reform nationwide.

He said this during her visit to the examination centre in Sukkur, said a release here on Monday. Addressing the occasion, Minister Rana Hussain emphasized that Sindh has become the first province in Pakistan to complete the phase of conducting the teaching license exam following the implementation of the Teaching License Policy. She highlighted that Sindh not only formulated policies to enhance the standard of educators but also initiated practical measures to implement them effectively.

Chairman of the Sindh Teachers Development Authority (STEDA), Syed Rasool Bukhs Shah, Director Elementary, Shihabuddin Indhar, Director Primary Sukkur Region, Muhammad Haji Barro, Principal of IB Public School Sukkur, Dr Ali Gohar Chang, Atif Hussain Vighio and others were present on the occasion.

Minister Rana Hussain was briefed that to maintain merit and transparency, third-party testing procedures were adopted, and exams were conducted in three cities of Sindh including Karachi, Hyderabad, and Sukkur.



KARACHI: People stand near an overturn loading mini truck due to over speed at Korangi road, in Provincial Capital.

## WSU's professor delivers lecture on "Fulbright scholarship, Fellowship opportunities" at SMU

KARACHI (APP): Professor Emeritus at Washington State University (WSU) Dr. Mushtaq Memon has said that Pakistan was the largest Fulbright programmes beneficiary in the world, which sends annually 200 faculty members, post-doctorates, PhD students and others to the USA.

He said this while delivering a lecture on "Fulbright Scholarship & Fellowship Opportunities for Students, Post Doctor-



KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Senior Leader and Former Provincial Minister, Saeed Ghani addresses to media persons during press conference held at PPP Media Cell Bilawal House in Karachi.

## ECP promised to conduct fair, transparent elections: Saira Bano

HYDERABAD (APP): The Grand Democratic Alliance's candidate for NA-210 (Sanghar-II), Saira Bano has said that no matter how hard the opponents try, the Election Commission has promised to conduct fair and transparent elections.

She expressed these views in various areas of Shahdadpur during her election campaign.

She said that only fair and transparent elections are the solution to all problems. If the people come forward and support us, we will ensure the rights of the people of the province and lead Sindh to progress under the leadership of Pir Sain Pagara. She said that

we do not believe in hollow slogans and promises, we love the people and are well aware of their sufferings.

The Sanghar district is the stronghold of the Pakistan Muslim League Functional (PML-F) and will remain so.

She said that the previous provincial government had done nothing for the welfare of the people, which has made the people of Sindh suffer.

The people should vote for us and we will ensure to address their issues in the assemblies. On this occasion, GDA candidate for PS 44 Muhammad Bux Khaskheli, former MP Mahi Khan Wasan and others were also with her.

## ECP warns of nullifying elections over women voter suppression

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has warned that elections might be annulled in constituencies where women face obstacles in voting or disruptions in the election campaign.

A spokesperson for the ECP stated that the Election Commission may invoke Section 9 of the Elections Act, potentially leading to the nullification of the entire election process if women are impeded from casting votes.

The ECP took immediate action on reports circulating in certain media outlets on Monday, claiming that a group of scholars in the Kohistan region has purportedly issued a fatwa prohibiting women from participating in election campaigns.

## DIG Sukkur vows to tight security arrangements for general elections

SUKKUR (APP): Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Sukkur Region, Abdul Hameed Khoso on Monday said that security cameras would be installed at sensitive polling stations established across the division for General Election 2024.

Chairing a meeting of police officers at his office here, he said that police would make tight security arrangements for general elections. He said that the government has imposed a ban on the display of weapons under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPc).

He directed the police officers including all SHOs to take strict action against the law violators in addition to taking surety bonds from those who were found involved in any kind of brawl. He said that CCTV cameras would be installed at all sensitive polling stations while the police officials would remain alert on February 08 to ensure free, fair and transparent elections under a peaceful atmosphere.

## Filipino Envoy urges businessmen to explore trade opportunities in Philippines

KARACHI (APP): Ambassador of the Republic of Philippines Maria Agnes Cervantes highlighting the huge bilateral trade potential between Pakistan and the Philippines urged businessmen to look at the Philippines which could serve as a hub for distributing goods to the ASEAN region.

She, while speaking at a meeting during her visit to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), said that the Philippines-Pakistan trade volume stood at US\$209 million which was very low as compared to other members of ASEAN region like Malaysia and Thailand with whom Pakistan's trade volume was almost US\$2 billion and US\$1.65 billion respectively.

She stated that KCCI and met patients present on the occasion.

## PDMA holds one-day capacity building training on disaster risk, preparedness

HYDERABAD (APP): Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) organized a one-day capacity building training on disaster risk resilience, preparedness and response for the officials of districts Dadu, Hyderabad, Jamshoro, Naushero Feroz, and Khaipur at a local hotel on Monday.

The training was held under the backdrop of the United Nations Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs as the training was organized for the District Disaster Management Authority to meet head-on challenges during natural disasters.

Humanitarian Affairs Officer of United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) Samin ad-different government departments, said that OCHA worked to assess and create coordination and mobilize resources among all the



HYDERABAD: Mayor Hyderabad, Kashif Shoro presides over the district council meeting, at Mehran Arts Council in Hyderabad.

## Shikarpur Police foiled the attempt of kidnapping

SHIKARPUR: Shikarpur Police succeeded in saving the two persons of Punjab from kidnapping on Monday. According to Press Release issued from SSP Office Shikarpur that on tip of information, Shikarpur Police foiled the attempt of Kidnappers who wants to kidnap the two persons of Narawal of Punjab Province identified as Muhammad Salman Ameen Bhatti and Muhammad Nouman Bhatti who were going towards Katcha area on the phone calls of Kidnappers.

On the spy information while seeing the suspected motorcycle on Faizoo Laaro to Cheeman Bridge and police checked them for identification who told the police they are selling/spreading the Holy Quran in villages and it came to know that the two motorcyclists were going towards Katcha area on the call of Kidnappers who continuously calling them to come their village for getting Holy Quran.

## CTD arrests street criminals linked to robbery-related murders

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) apprehended two suspected street criminals on Monday, accused of fatally shooting citizens who resisted robbery attempts.

The arrests, made within the Model Colony police station's jurisdiction, resulted in the recovery of two pistols and ammunition.

As per the CTD Sindh spokesperson, the detainees, identified as Waleed and Raheem Babar, have admitted to their involvement in numerous street crimes.

They confessed to the murder of Fahad during a robbery altercation on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, within the Tipu Sultan police station's jurisdiction.

Additionally, they confessed to the killing of Allah Ditta during a street crime in the PIB Colony on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Both incidents had been formally documented by the respective police stations.

Before their recent apprehension, the accused had a history of criminal activity and had previously served jail time.

A case has been filed at the CTD police station, and the recovered weapons have been dispatched for forensic analysis. Investigations into the matter are ongoing.



NOWPDP (Network of Organizations Working for People with Disabilities), Pakistan. This strategic alliance marks a significant step in Jubilee Life's ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusivity (DEI) within its workforce.

As an equal opportunity employer, Jubilee Life is committed to a robust DEI strategy,

setting tangible targets to promote a more diverse and inclusive workplace. A major focus of this agenda is to recruit persons with disabilities (PWDs), thus integrating them into

in the identity, welfare, education, skill-building, and economic empowerment all of which fall under the umbrella of Rozgar (Employment).

Mr Javed Ahmed,

Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of Jubilee Life Insurance stated, "Embracing diversity and inclusion is not just a moral imperative but a business necessity. By hiring PWDs, we are not only diversifying our talent pool but also enriching our organizational culture and enhancing our business potential."