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

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday warned that with a renewed determination and defence capability, Pakistan would befittingly respond if India resorted to any 2019-like aggression, ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

"Pakistan will exactly do the same as it did in 2019. We will hit their planes. We will respond in the same coin... Neither our bullets nor determination are old. Our bullets are new and our determination is quite renewed and fresh," the prime minister said in the podcast with a digital media channel.

He said that no one should be delusional about Pakistan's response as it had an entire defence mechanism in place to protect its people.

He viewed that till the resolution of the Kashmir dispute, the potential for conflict would continue to exist and anything could trigger any sort of exchange.

Coming to the upcoming general elections in Pakistan, he said the threat of terrorism existed especially in the southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and certain areas of Balochistan, posing significant vulnerabilities to candidates and their campaigns. However, the situation had not reached a level to question the legitimacy of the entire electoral process.

He reiterated the government's resolve to respond to any threat, regardless of whether there were elections in the country or not.

Asked about the Senate resolution passed recently

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



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

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

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

This resolve was expressed at the second meeting of Pakistan, KSA and Turkiye Trilateral Defence Collaboration in Rawalpindi on Tuesday.

The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss

prospective collaboration in defence equipment technologies including research and development.

Acknowledging the historical brotherly relations, the three sides reiterated the strategic intent to increase the scope of trilateral cooperation and the need to enhance the pace of collaboration in pursuit of common goals. Three sides agreed to convene next meeting on Trilateral Defence Industrial Collaboration during World Defence Show at Riyadh next month.

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday, while acknowledging that Pakistan and Africa had enjoyed excellent political relations over the years, stressed the need to enhance trade and economic linkages which were yet to realize their full potential.

He also highlighted the importance Pakistan attached to Africa and expressed the desire to strengthen ties with African countries, at the bilateral as well as regional level.

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

The meeting was attended by the Ambassadors

of Algeria and Sudan as well as High Commissioners of Bangladesh, Brunei, Malaysia, Mauritius, and South Africa. Other participants included the Charges d' Affaires of Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe.

The caretaker prime minister mentioned that the 4th Pakistan-Africa Trade Conference was underway in Cairo, Egypt from January 9-11 where Pakistan was represented by a large business delegation led by the commerce minister.

PM Kakar also expressed deep appreciation for Pakistan's historic ties with the Southeast Asian countries, particularly Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia.



QUETTA: Caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai meeting with Deputy Commissioner Quetta Lt. (Retd) Saad bin Asad

Training of polling staff continues: There's important role of polling staff in conducting free, fair & peaceful elections, says PEC

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial Election Commissioner, Balochistan, Ejaz Anwar Chohan has stated that there is very important role of polling staff in conducting free, fair, transparent and peaceful elections.

Therefore, the polling staff should take wholehearted interest in the training process and understand it fully.

The Provincial Election Commissioner was speaking to the polling staff being trained at the training center set up for training of the polling staff here on

Tuesday. The polling staff including Assistant Presiding Officers and Polling Officers are being imparted training at the training centers these days. The Provincial Election Commissioner inspected the process of training of the polling staff at the training center.

He said that the process of training of the polling staff is continued since December 25, 2023 all over the province.

The process would remain continued till January 11, 2024, adding he mentioned.

Pakistan to host 2-day global health security summit today

ISLAMABAD (INP): A two-day global health security summit is commencing in Islamabad on Tuesday (today) with the aim to ensure pandemic preparedness and response on equity basis.

This was stated by caretaker Minister for National Health Services Dr Nadeem Jan and caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi at a news conference in Islamabad today.

Nadeem Jan said Prime Minister Anwaar ul Haq Kakar will inaugurate the moot and more than seventy national and international delegates will attend it.

Minister for National Health Services said we are pursuing a big goal through this conference, stressing it is aimed at ensuring that all the countries have equal access to facilities, human resource, vaccine and financing to cope with any outbreak and pandemic. In his remarks, the Information Minister said it is a matter of great distinction for Pakistan to host the summit.

SC rejects request to stay proceeding of SJC against Justice Naqvi

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Tuesday rejected the request to stay the proceeding of Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) against Justice Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi.

A three-member bench of the top court, headed by Justice Amin ud Din Khan and comprising Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail and Justice Musarrat Hilali, heard the petition of Justice Naqvi. During the hearing, the court rejected the request to stay the proceeding of SJC against Justice Mazhar and instructed him to file the petition with amendment.

The further hearing of the case was then adjourned for indefinite period.

190m pounds case: Court orders to freeze assets, bank accounts of Shahzad, Farah Gogi

RAWALPINDI (Online): Accountability Court (AC) has ordered to freeze assets and bank accounts of 6 accused persons including PTI leader Shahzad Akbar and Zulfi Bukhari in 190 million pounds case.

Order has been issued to freeze the bank accounts of Farah Gogi who is friend of Bushra Bibi wife of PTI founder and other accused persons.

The court has ordered to confiscate the vehicles registered in the names of the accused persons.

Islamabad protest dharna of BYC being supported by facilitators of India

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has charged that those involved in the facilitation of India are supporting the protest dharna being staged by Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) in Islamabad.

He said that those involved in the facilitation of India and terrorists can't develop Balochistan.

He said that no one speak about those innocent people martyred in different incidents of terrorism in Balochistan. He said that some 230 people were martyred by the terrorists in Balochistan last year.

This and similar other views were expressed by the Minister Information while addressing a hurriedly called press conference at the Quetta Press club on Tuesday.

The Minister Information said that one document regime policy has already been enforced in the best interest of the country and its people.

He said that it was the decision of state of Pakistan which was enforced in form of the one document regime.

Jan Achakzai asserted that no one can cross the border either from Pakistan or Afghanistan side without the passport.

He said that more than 60 percent Afghan refugees are included in the protest sit-in being staged in Chaman.

Those part of the Chaman protest are opposing the one document regime.

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

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

Using his social media platform X account, the minister said that the current Chairman of PTI did not endorse its anti-establishment and anti-American content but the PTI overseas, some semi-literate anchors and The Economist were jubilant over AI-generated shenanigans.

INP adds: Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi says caretaker government has no authority to postpone the elections.

Speaking in a PTV programme, he said according to Article 218(3) of the Constitution, it is constitutional prerogative of the Election Commission to give or change the date of elections. The Minister said, however, government will fully support to Election Commission of Pakistan to hold free, fair and transparent elections in the country.

Pakistan seeks \$2bn loan rollover from UAE

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

According to sources in the Ministry of Finance, caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar wrote a letter to the UAE president stating that the loan of \$2 billion from the UAE was maturing in January.

Sources said a total of \$3 billion were deposited with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) by the UAE, of which \$1 billion were going to mature on Jan 17 and another \$1 billion on Jan 23. They said the interest rate was 3 per cent on first amount and 6.5 per cent on the remaining \$1 billion.

Zardari vows to provide sui gas to Dera Bugti if elected

No one can hamper Balochistan to progress under PPP leadership: Sarfaraz Bugti

DERA BUGTI (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Co-Chairman and former president Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday vowed that his party after coming to power would lay a pipeline in Dera Bugti to provide Sui gas to the local people.

If voted to power, the PPP would also ensure the share of local people in gas fields and ample employment opportunities for them, he said while addressing a public meeting here through video link.

Zardari, who was unable to travel to Dera Bugti due to bad weather, promised that he would soon visit the area and meet the workers.

He said that he was well aware of the problems of the people of Dera Bugti in general and Balochistan in particular, and would take concrete steps to resolve

them. The provision of jobs and the establishment of a best hospital in Dera Bugti were part of the PPP's election, he reiterated.

Zardari appreciated Sarfaraz Bugti, who joined the PPP recently and the party workers for organizing such a successful gathering in the cold weather conditions.

Meanwhile Pakistan Peoples Party leader and former caretaker interior minister Sarfaraz Bugti on Tuesday said that no one could hamper the Balochistan province - the land of martyrs, to develop and prosper under the leadership of PPP.

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

Former Balochistan chief minister Sanaullah Zehri, along with other prominent figures were present in the meeting, which was also addressed by PPP Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari via video link. Bugti said the people of Balochistan had made unparalleled sacrifices for the restoration of peace in the region. The PPP would never let them down as it was the party of martyrs and its leadership was the real heirs of those who had laid down their lives for democracy.

"We feel the pain of the families of martyrs and will never leave them alone," he added.

Bugti offered his gratitude to the people of area for reposing trust in the PPP leadership, which was evident from their profound participation in the meeting.

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

KARACHI (INP): The MQM-Pakistan and the PML-N have agreed over seat adjustment on Karachi's seats for the general election next month.

The sources sharing details of the meeting between the committees of two parties said that the PML-N will field its candidates on the national and provincial assemblies' seats of Karachi in NA-229 and NA-230. The MQM-P will field its candidates on NA-231 and its provincial constituencies.

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

Sanaulah Zehri cleared to contest election

QUETTA (INP): Quetta's election tribunals have witnessed a day of dramatic turns, shaping the political landscape for the upcoming 2024 general elections. Benches led by Justices Mohammad Hashim Kakar and Mohammad Amir Nawazrana adjudicated on appeals filed by candidates whose nomination papers were rejected by returning officers.

Establishment of new university in Rakhshan division to promote educational activities: Governor

QUETTA (APP): Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar on Tuesday said that establishment of a new university in Rakhshan division would play an important role in educational development and removal of backwardness in the area.

Concrete steps should be taken to ensure efficient functioning of new university in this area, he expressed these views while talking to former member of the provincial assembly Sana Baloch.

Governor Balochistan said that we are aware of the problems of electricity load-shedding in Rakhshan division and all necessary steps were be-

PTI founder Imran arrested in GHQ attack case

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

The hearing of 12 cases related to May 9 incidents took place against PTI founder in Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Rawalpindi.

Judge Malik Ijaz Asif heard the cases. PTI founder was presented in the court from Adiala jail through video link.

The respective SHO's appeared in the court along with record of 12 cases. RA Bazaar police told the court PTI founder was informed about his arrest in GHQ attack case.

RA Bazaar police requested the court to grant physical remand of PTI founder in GHQ attack case.

The court directed police to investigate PTI founder in jail. It is pertinent to mention here PTI founder is in Adiala jail on judicial remand in Toshakhana and 190 pounds references.



QUETTA: Former MPA Sana Baloch meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Establishment of new university in Rakhshan division to promote educational activities: Governor

QUETTA (APP): Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar on Tuesday said that establishment of a new university in Rakhshan division would play an important role in educational development and removal of backwardness in the area.

Concrete steps should be taken to ensure efficient functioning of new university in this area, he expressed these views while talking to former member of the provincial assembly Sana Baloch.

Governor Balochistan said that we are aware of the problems of electricity load-shedding in Rakhshan division and all necessary steps were be-

ing taken for its solution. In the meeting, the overall situation of the Rakhshan division, functioning of new university and provision of all basic facilities to the people at their doorsteps were also discussed.

Governor Balochistan said that development schemes have been implemented in various sectors so that every person could enjoy the benefits in a proper manner.

He said that the government is also giving priority to educational development and for this, setting up of higher education institutions particularly new university would play a vital role to achieve objectives.



QUETTA: Additional Chief Secretary Home Balochistan Zahid Saleem presiding over a meeting regarding electricity theft

Saudi Arabia records historic 58% surge in Umrah pilgrims: 13.55 million in 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Arabia's Minister of Hajj and Umrah Dr Tawfiq Al-Rabiah announced that the number of pilgrims who have performed Umrah during the year 2023 reached a record number of 13.55 million. The increase in the number of Umrah pilgrims is estimated at five million or 58 percent while compared to the year 2019, he said.

The minister made the remarks while addressing the 3rd annual Hajj and Umrah Services Conference and Exhibition at Jeddah Superdome. The four-day conference is being held under the patronage of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman, Saudi Gazette reported. "Previously, the largest

number of Umrah pilgrims from outside the Kingdom was in 2019, estimated at 8.55 million and this year the number surged to 13.55 million, thanks to the elaborate facilities and arrangements made by the Saudi government. This figure is the largest in the history of foreign Umrah pilgrims," he said. Al-Rabiah said the current edition of the conference witnesses the participation of ministers and leaders from more than 80 countries. The conference will also see the signing of Hajj agreements with each of the participating countries. "More than 35 companies will provide their services during the Hajj this year, compared to 20 companies last year," he said. The minister noted that

Saudi Arabia launched projects worth more than SR5 billion to develop the infrastructure at the holy sites. "Last year, we worked to train more than 40,000 workers in the Hajj and Umrah system, and this year we are working to train more than 120,000 people to serve the pilgrims. We also work to raise the level of awareness among pilgrims and have worked on an initiative to establish an awareness center in cooperation with the General Authority of Endowments." "We visited 13 countries and held exhibitions there with our partners from the public and private sectors, which had a significant impact on improving procedures and understanding the challenges.



CAIRO: Federal Minister for Commerce Industries and Investments, Dr. Gohar Ejaz meeting the Minister of Public Enterprises of Egypt, H.E. Mahmoud Mostafa Kamal Esmat at the 4th Pakistan Africa Trade Development conference and single country exhibition.

Pakistani student praises China's environmental protection efforts

BEIJING (APP): A Pakistani student visited the Yellow River in Pinglu county, Shanxi province and praised China's efforts to protect migratory birds from Siberia. "The spectacle attracts many tourists and photographers, including Pakistani student Anees Ur Rahman this winter. "These birds fascinate me, and their presence enhances the beauty of our planet," he said.

His passion for birds and nature drove him to travel thousands of kilometers from Pakistan to study wildlife protection at Beijing Forestry University. During his time in China, Rahman has regularly participated in field visits and has conducted research on wild bird habitats across the country, giving him in-depth knowledge of China's ecosystems and bird conservation efforts.

Wang Chao, from Pinglu's forestry bureau, said, "In recent years, the environment of the Yellow River Basin has been continuously improving, and the number of wild swans wintering here has peaked at over 10,000."

China's bird resources are among the richest in the world, with four of the nine major global bird migration flyways passing through the country, according to the National Forestry and Grassland Administration.

The administration's monitoring efforts confirm that the populations of more than 20 rare and endangered bird species in China have increased significantly in recent years. The revival of the crested ibis is especially notable, with its population soaring from just seven in the 1980s to 7,000 last year.

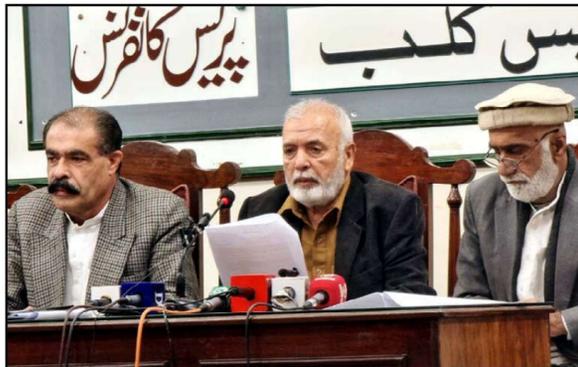
"China's rich biodiversity and its commitment to environmental conservation were key factors in my decision to study here," Rahman said, adding that he saw an opportunity to contribute to and learn from a vibrant research community, particularly given the rapid environmental changes in China.

To better safeguard birds during their migrations, China has set up a comprehensive network to protect them, including breeding, wintering and

resting stations, and wetlands and natural reserves, covering almost every key node of the migratory bird flyways.

"Over the years, I have witnessed positive changes in China's environmental practices," Rahman said. "Stricter regulations, increased investment in renewable energy, and a growing emphasis on sustainable development indicate a significant shift toward a more environmentally conscious approach."

Thanks to a series of effective protection measures to provide migratory birds with safe habitats and breeding sites, migratory bird populations in China have been growing. The International Union for Conservation of Nature has downgraded the extinction risk faced by some rare wildlife in China, including red-crowned cranes and crested ibises. "By continuing my research and engaging in collaborative conservation projects, I aim to contribute to global efforts in wildlife conservation, promoting sustainable practices for the benefit of both wildlife and local communities," Rahman said.



QUETTA: Balochistan Private Schools Alliance leader, Haji Salim Nasir along with others addresses to media persons during press conference held at Quetta press club.

Widespread wheel jam strike hits IIOJK against controversial legislation

SRINAGAR (INP): On the first day of a two day wheel jam, most of the traffic remained off the road in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir against the legislation by Bharatiya Janata Party government imposing stern punitive measures including heavy fine on drivers for traffic accidents.

According to Kashmir Media Service, call for the strike was given by the All Kashmir Transporters' Confederation. Significant absence of public transport was witnessed in key districts such as Srinagar, Pulwama, Shopian, Kulgam, Islamabad, Baramullah and Bandipora, leaving residents grappling

with difficulties. Besides IIOJK, the strike garnered support from several states in India including Maharashtra and New Delhi.

Mohammad Shafi Mir, Chairman of the All Kashmir Transporters' Confederation, stated that all types of passenger vehicles would participate in the protest on January 10 as well.

The controversial law seeks stringent measures including a 10-year jail for drivers over traffic accidents. This legislation has not only sparked concerns but has also prompted coordinated strikes and demonstrations, disrupting normal life in IIOJK and inside India.

Repatriation of illegal foreign nationals continuing

ISLAMABAD (INP): Repatriation of illegal foreign nationals including Afghans to their homeland is continuing in a dignified and safe manner.

In addition to other measures for the dignified return of Afghans to their country, transit camps equipped with all facilities have been established in various districts for their temporary accommodation.

According to latest statistics, 1016 more illegal Afghan nationals returned to their country yesterday. So far, 462,799 illegal Afghans have been repatriated to Afghanistan.



QUETTA: A delegation of BNPI led by Ghulam Mustafa Samalani meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

PTI damaged national institutions: Khawaja

SIALKOT (APP): Former defence minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said that the country's institutions were damaged during the last four years was not hidden from anyone.

He expressed these views at the swearing-in of the Sialkot Municipal Corporation labour union last night. He said the institutions of Sialkot were also destroyed by the PTI. The Sialkot Municipal Corporation could have built a bank balance of Rs700-800 million. Unfortunately, it has gone bankrupt and the responsibility lies with the heads of these institutions during the previous government," he added.

"The condition of Allama Iqbal's city tells

what has happened to it in the last four years. The last one year was spent in recovery. We all have to resolve these problems together and people have to cast your vote after seeing the performance of the last four and a half years. We have to choose our leader by keeping all issues in mind, including roads of this city," he maintained.

"The residents of this city cannot pay back the favour of the Sialkot-Lahore motorway, which is a gift from Nawaz Sharif. Not a single street was built in this city during the previous PTI government, although all the roads of this city were built during our regime. If people give us a chance, I will work day and night for the welfare of the city and its residents," he concluded.

Men's bilateral series b/w softball teams of Sindh, Balochistan from Jan. 20

KARACHI (APP): Dr. Farhan Essa, the President of the Sindh Softball Association, has announced a forthcoming three-match series scheduled between the men's softball teams of Sindh and Balochistan, set to take place in Karachi starting from January 20.

Mohammad Nasir has been entrusted with the role of organizing secretary for this event.

Dr. Farhan emphasized the reciprocal nature of the series, mentioning that in April, the Sindh softball team will reciprocate the visit to Balochistan. This bilateral series aims to strengthen both Sindh and Balochistan teams for the National Men's Championship in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in May.

He highlighted the significance of these matches in nurturing young softball talents, fostering healthy competition at the provincial level, and fostering an environment of mutual understanding and cooperation among players. Dr. Farhan assured comprehensive support, including accommodation, food, and travel facilities, for both visiting and host teams, ensuring they can showcase their skills confidently and equally. Expressing the broader vision, he stated, "Our goal is to elevate the sport of softball uniformly across all cities and districts of Sindh. This initiative aims to spotlight new talents and notably enhance the province's representation at the national level."

9 dead and 923 injured in 879 road traffic crashes in Punjab

LAHORE: The Emergency Services Department (ESD) responded to 879 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. In these RTCs, 9 people died, whereas 923 were injured. Out of these, 395 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 528 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by Rescue Medical Teams thus reducing the burden of Hospitals.

The majority (70%) involved Motorbikes, therefore effective enforcement of traffic laws and lane discipline are essential to reduce the increasing number of road traffic crashes.

Furthermore, the analysis showed those 493 drivers, 27 underage drivers, 104 pedestrians, and 335 passengers were among the victims of road traffic

crashes. The statistics show that 204 RTCs were reported in Lahore which affected 204 persons placing the Provincial Capital at top of the list followed by 61 Faisalabad in with 64 victims and at third Multan with 57 RTCs and 55 victims.

The details further reveal that 932 victims were affected by road traffic crashes including 763 males & 169 females, while the age group of the victims shows that 140 were under 18 years of age, 493 were between 18 and 40 years and rest of the 299 victims were reported above 40 years of age.

According to the data 729 motorbikes, 60 auto-rickshaws, 106 motorcars, 23 vans, 16 passenger buses, 22 trucks and 85 other types of auto vehicles and slow-moving carts were involved in aforesaid road traffic accidents.

South Africa's Klaasen retires from test cricket

CAPT TOWN (INP): South Africa wicketkeeper-batter Heinrich Klaasen has retired from red ball cricket despite the country's test coach Shukri Conrad suggesting he would form part of his plans in 2024.

Powerful middle order hitter Klaasen has become a mainstay of the South African white ball side, with his record-breaking 174 from 83 balls against Australia in a One-Day International in September underlining his ability.

He played four tests between 2019 and 2023, averaging 108 runs at an average of 13.00, but was set to return to the team this year according to Conrad, with current wicketkeeper Kyle Verreynne failing to impress. "After a few sleepless nights wondering if I am making the right decision, I have decided to retire from red-ball cricket.

It's a difficult decision that I have made because it is by far my favourite format of the game," Klaasen said in a statement on Monday.

"But for now a new challenge awaits and I am looking forward to it." The 32-year-old has not elaborated on what that challenge may be, but with confirmed stints coming up in the SA20, Indian Premier League, the Hundred and Major League Cricket in the United States, it appears he will feature prominently in the global leagues in the shortest format.

Cricket South Africa's Director of Cricket Enoch Nkwe confirmed Klaasen was still part of their white ball plans.

"We look forward to seeing him excel in the white-ball arena and continue to make valuable contributions to South African cricket in the years ahead," he said.

JUP's Head announces manifesto of general elections 2024

HYDERABAD (INP): Head of Jamiat Ulama Pakistan (JUP), Sahibzada Abul Khair Muhammad Zubair has announced the election manifesto of the party. The manifesto focuses on Islam, Pakistan and the people. (3) Protection of fundamental rights of every citizen (4) Independent foreign policy (5) Establishment of independent judiciary and abolition of status quo (6) Protection of nuclear assets (7) Protection of legitimate rights of women (8) Uniform education system (9) Protection of rights of workers (10) Effective system of accountability at all levels (11) Special attention has been given to ending the energy crisis.

The JUP has fielded candidates for 15 seats in the National Assembly and 33 seats in the Provincial Assemblies across the country.

Addressing a press conference at Hyderabad Press Club on Tuesday, President JUP and National Unity Council of Pakistan Dr. Sahibzada Abul Khair Muhammad Zubair said that the election 2024 has started and the nation is going to decide its future on February 8. There is economic collapse, inflationary catastrophes, frequent increase in electricity, gas,

petrol prices, factories, factories are deserted and workers are unemployed, the country is tied to IMF loans.

He said that the forces do not want the democratic system to be strengthened in the country and the people to elect their representatives. In order to sabotage this electoral process, acts of terrorism are being done somewhere. Those who enjoyed the power in the past have again entered the field of election to defeat the wounds of the nation and through new slogans and attractive manifesto, Jamiat Ulama Pakistan has the great goal of practical implementation of the system of Mustafa ? in this country and protection of the place of Mustafa ?.

The JUP President said that in order to complete, the whole country is participating in the elections of the national and provincial assemblies on the election symbol of KEY. Today we are presenting our manifesto and list of candidates to the nation through the media. What is being done. (1) The practical implementation of Mustafa's system in every sphere of life and the protection of Mustafa's place (2) The establishment of an Islamic welfare government increase in electricity, gas,

(3) The protection of the basic rights of every citizen (4) Free foreign policy (5) Free Establishment of judiciary, abolition of status quo (6) protection of nuclear assets (7) protection of legitimate rights of women (8) equal education system (9) protection of workers' rights (10) effective system of accountability at all levels (11) Ending the energy crisis (12) Relieving the economy from the domination of global financial institutions (13) Raising the voice of truth on the burning issues of the Islamic world (14) Providing dignified employment to the youth (15) Giving the poor people ownership rights. Provision of houses (16) Abolition of un-Islamic and undemocratic laws (17) Complete abolition of the feudal system (18) Complete protection of the rights of peasant farmers (19) Abolition of undemocratic laws related to press and publication (20) Police Reforms in the system (21) Adapting the youth to the requirements of the modern era.

During the press conference, Nazim Ali Arain, Dr. Younis Danish, Pir Saeed Shah Chishti, Abdul Rehman Rajput, Sahibzada Mahmood Ahmad Qadri, Qari Ghulam Sarwa Amini, Mohammad Rizwan Sheikh were also present.



HYDERABAD: Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP) Noorani President, Sahibzada Abul Khair Muhammad Zubair addresses to media persons during press conference held at Hyderabad press club.

Islamabad protest dharna... Continued from page 1

gime policy for their interest as they don't want it to be enforced, the Minister Information asserted. However, the one document regime has already been enforced and no one can move across the border without the passport and visa, he added.

Jan Achakzai also said that we had made the decision for the benefit of people and adding he said that few hundred people can't decide the fate of 250 million people of the country.

He said that we would do everything possible what we can do in the limited time and as per the given mandate. Referring the visit of international cricketer Ahmed Shahzad to Quetta, Jan Achakzai said that the caretaker cabinet of Balochistan hailed his visit and the decision about establishing a cricket academy in Quetta.

He expressed concern over the lack of opportunities by the Pakistan Cricket Board for the talented cricketers from Balochistan. He said that we are concerned that PCB is not providing opportunities to the talented players from the province.

He said that more talent would be produced if the desired opportunities were provided to the young players.

PM vows befitting response.. Continued from page 1

calling for the postponement of the elections, the prime minister said, "I do not see any legal implications as the Senate resolution is not mandatory."

He said the government had opposed the resolution in the House, though, as per requirement, it would submit a report on the matter.

To a question, he said the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was the right forum to decide on delaying the polls in certain constituencies considering the security situation.

Regarding grievances and concerns of some candidates and political parties, Prime Minister Kakar said the relevant forums of ECP and judiciary were there to address the situation.

"Our role is not to act as a judiciary or ROs (returning officers), obstructing or constructing opportunities for someone. If someone feels there is unfairness, the appropriate forums are available," he remarked.

Discussing the situation in Balochistan, he mentioned the role of militant groups such as BLA, BRA, and BLF which were considered terrorists even outside Pakistan.

He opposed some segments of the society attributing their actions to underdevelopment and lack of state investment.

Asked about the pre-condition for dialogue, the prime minister referred to the abandonment of violence by militant groups and reiterated that being a nation of 240 million, Pakistan should not surrender to a few thousand individuals.

Discussing the terrorist activities of TTP (Tehreek-

e-Taliban Pakistan) and the Afghan government's reaction following the recent terrorist attack in D I Khan, he said communication with them was going on and some behavioral changes had been observed on the other side.

He reiterated that having sacrificed around 90,000 lives, Pakistan's resolve to fight terrorism was unwavering without seeking any foreign support.

To a question about the repatriation of illegal foreign nationals, PM Kakar said the decision was widely supported by the majority of Pakistanis as non-documented aliens had no right to stay.

He said the factors such as terrorism, organized crime, non-contribution to the economy, and the impact on economic health prompted action from the government.

Highlighting the government's achievements on the economic front, he mentioned the reforms in the Federal Board of Revenue, achieving remarkable tax receivable targets and reducing government expenditure.

He said under the Special Investment Facilitation Council, Pakistan was attracting foreign investments from multiple countries, including the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

He said the SIFC was focused on removing the bureaucratic hurdles for foreign investment, which also encouraged domestic investors to benefit from the opportunity and invest in key areas of agriculture, IT (information technology), mining, human resource training, energy and road infrastructure.

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhi on Tuesday said that the government will provide every possible support to private institutions in order to ensure their delivery of service to the public at large. He said this while chairing a meeting held here with the heads of major private educational institutions of Islamabad Capital Territory, which was also attended by the Chairperson PEIRA, Dr. Sayeda Zia Batool.

Madad Ali Sindhi emphasized on improving equity through fostering a more inclusive educational environment, and to increase the scope of fee concession/scholarships for needy students. The minister was told that on average all private institutions are giving scholarships between 15-25% to all its students. The innovative CSR approaches and sustainable practices were discussed by the representatives of the private educational institutions in detail.

The minister appreciated the CSR initiative and activities that private educational institutions have already adopted. This will open the doors of quality education provision to children from the less advantaged segments of society. These initiatives are pivotal in elevating Pakistan's human development and strengthening the nation's social capital. Madad Ali Sindhi highlighted the importance of teachers' training. He said that not only in the federal territory but in all of the

provinces it should be given the highest importance. The minister was told that CDA has planned to auction plots for schools. He directed PEIRA and the ministry to support CDA in this process. The minister said that his focus has remained to improve the quality of education of public schools and to control the out-of-school children in Pakistan. He said that the federal education ministry has planned to make 2 model schools in every province as well.



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



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

Director EPI urges people to shun propaganda against polio vaccine

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director of Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) Punjab Dr Mukhtar Ahmed on Tuesday urged the masses to counter negative propaganda against polio vaccine which is safe and vital to ensure future of kids. "Parents should get their kids vaccinated against polio virus to keep them safe from life-long disability," Dr Mukhtar told PTV News.

He said government was striving to ensure that maximum children are protected from vaccine-preventable diseases, allowing them to live happier and healthier lives.

"Vaccinations provide long-term immunity to numerous diseases, which is why they are essential for the baby's health, his proper growth and development," he added.

Highlighting the importance of vaccines in polio eradication, Mukhtar

said efforts were afoot to convince the parents to refuse anti-polio vaccines to their children.

To a query, the EPI director said polio cases have declined in the country for the past few years, but still, the virus reported in sewage samples from major cities in the country which is alarming.

He said the Punjab has been polio-free for the last three years, but as long as the virus exists anywhere, it is a threat to children's lives. "To end polio, we must reach every child," he mentioned.

Dr Mukhtar hailed the leadership of all religious scholars, law enforcement agencies and security personnel for showing exemplary support to this national cause.

He said the government has planned to continue anti-polio drives across the year to kill the wild polio virus forever and its transmission.

CG COMSTTECH proposes holding of Pak-Afghan joint health forum

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

The meeting was held at the COMSTTECH Secretariat Islamabad on Tuesday.

This pioneering initiative aims to unite experts from the Ministry of Public Health, Kabul, and COMSTTECH.

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

Prof. Choudhary said that we believe that by join-

ing forces and sharing expertise, we can significantly uplift the healthcare landscape in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

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

Dr. Qalander Ibaad expressed his appreciation for the collaborative spirit, emphasizing the shared commitment to progress in healthcare.

"Together, we can overcome challenges and work towards a healthier and more resilient society. This collaborative effort is a testament to our dedication to the well-being of our citizens."

Senior officials from both sides also attended the meeting.

Security personnel briefed for effective duty at High Security Zone

ISLAMABAD: Following the special directives of



Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the security personnel deputized at High Security Zone were briefed to perform effective duties and be ready to deal with any untoward incident in a timely manner, a police public relations officer said.

He said that SP High Security Zone (HSZ) Saud Khan chaired a meeting with officers of the High Security Zone and briefed them. The high security zone encompasses pivotal government and private establishments, diplomatic missions, and other vital assets, ne-

cessitating an unwavering focus on their safeguarding.

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

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

KSrelief distributes 2,895 food baskets in Pakistan

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

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

Shahera grieved over demise of mother of DG Radio Pakistan

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

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

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

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

Khanna police station arrests accused involved in several drug

ISLAMABAD (Online): Khanna Police Station arrested the accused who was involved in several cases of drug and alcohol selling.

240 bottles of alcohol, heavy quantity of heroin, hashish and ice were recovered from the possession of the accused. Several cases have been registered against the accused. Further investigation is going on. According to the details, the Islamabad Police is carrying out a wide-scale crackdown against drug dealers in the federal capital, Islamabad. Their response should be ensured by making the crackdown more rapid and effective. In this regard, Khanna police station arrested the accused who was involved in several cases of drug and alcohol selling. 240 bottles of alcohol, 1320 grams of heroin, 560 grams of hashish and 210 grams of ice were recovered from the possession of the arrested accused.

The ICCI president briefed the DHO Islamabad about the key issues of the chemists and the druggists and offered useful suggestions to resolve them. He highlighted the impact of online buying and selling of medicines on the genuine business community and urged the govern-

PM orders fast-track privatization of PIA, out-sourcing of airport

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday directed the authorities concerned to pace up the privatization process of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), the national flag carrier.

In a meeting with his Adviser on Aviation Air Marshal (ret'd) Farhat Hussain, the prime minister emphasized ensuring transparency in the process of privatization.

PM Kakar said privatization of state-

owned enterprises was on priority for the government to save the national exchequer from further financial losses.

He said the country's aviation industry had a high scope of growth through investment.

The prime minister also directed the out-sourcing of airport operations in a bid to ensure improvement of services.

The Aviation Adviser briefed PM Kakar about the matters of the ministry and the reform process.

Over 40 vehicles, motorcycles locked in different police stations

ISLAMABAD (Online): Federal Traffic Police has taken legal actions against more than 900 drivers during the last week while continuing to take legal actions against the drivers who drive cars and motorcycles negligently.

More than 40 vehicles and motorcycles were stopped in different police stations.

According to the details, the Islamabad Police is always engaged in keeping the citizens safe from accidents and maintaining the flow of traffic in the federal capital.

In this regard, the Islamabad Police has taken special legal actions against more than 900 negligent and

careless drivers of vehicles and motorcycles during the last one week. While more than 40 vehicles and motorcycles were also locked up in different police stations. In this regard, special squads have also been formed which are taking legal action against negligent vehicle and motorcycle drivers in their respective zones.

On this occasion, Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad said that making Islamabad free from accidents is our first priority. Drivers who drive carelessly cause accidents to themselves and other citizens, legal action will be taken against them in any case.



ISLAMABAD: Workers of Anti-encroachments Cell of CDA seize the pushcarts and other stuff of vendors during Anti-encroachments operation at Faizabad area of the Federal Capital.

PCGA delegation meets DHO Islamabad to discuss chemists' issues

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of Pakistan Chemists and Druggists Association (PCGA) Federal Branch led by Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) President Ahsan Zafar Baktawari on Tuesday met District Health Officer, Islamabad Dr Zaem Zia.

The two sides discussed ways and means to promote ease of doing business for the chemists and druggists in the Federal Capital and facilitate the better growth of their business activities. The delegation comprised PCGA Federal Branch Chairman Mian Tariq Saeed, Secretary General Qaiser Masood, Tariq Mahmood, Arif Yar Khan, Najeeb Abbasi, Abdul Aziz, Malik Ashfaq, Usman Hafeez, and others, said a news release.

The ICCI president briefed the DHO Islamabad about the key issues of the chemists and the druggists and offered useful suggestions to resolve them.

He highlighted the impact of online buying and selling of medicines on the genuine business community and urged the govern-

ment to develop a proper mechanism to monitor such illegal activities.

He lauded the efforts of DHO Islamabad to improve the performance of DHUs and BHUs in Islamabad and assured that the business community would cooperate with him in such good efforts.

DHO Dr Zaem Zia assured the delegation that he would take measures to address the issues highlighted by them.

He said that the online system of pharmacy licenses, medical store licenses, and distribution licenses would be further improved as per suggestions given by the delegation.

He also briefed the delegation about the deployment of new ambulances arranged by the DHO Islamabad for the DHUs in Islamabad, which were equipped with modern equipment.

The PCGA leaders also shared their ideas to further improve the digitization of licences for pharmacies and medical stores to promote ease of doing business.

PM's National Innovation Award initiates incubation phase for awardees

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Prime Minister's National Innovation Award (PMNIA) on Tuesday initiated the incubation phase for Round 1 and 2 awardees with the formal signing of a tripartite contract involving the awardees, Host Incubator, and the Higher Education Commission (HEC).

The signing ceremonies were held at the Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar; Pak-Austria Fachhochschule Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology (PAF IAST); National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad; University of the Punjab, Government College University, and University of Engineering and Technology (UET) Lahore, a press re-

lease said. PMNIA, a cornerstone of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme executed by the HEC, acts as a unique catalyst fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

It empowers young entrepreneurs to transform their ideas into tangible solutions, with 100 startup ideas earning cash prizes, through a rigorous selection process in two rounds, the top 10 startups in each round secured a substantial prize of Rs 1 million each, while the remaining 40 received support of Rs 0.5 million each.

In this next phase, awardees are set to receive a seed grant of Rs 1 million upon consenting to a 6-

month incubation programme at designated incubators.

A network of 18 incubators nationwide, in collaboration with HEC, is poised to deliver comprehensive incubation services, encompassing training, mentorship, and networking opportunities with potential clients and investors.

The Prime Minister's National Innovation Award underscores its commitment to nurturing a culture of creativity, innovation, and a knowledge economy. This initiative provides crucial opportunities and support to young entrepreneurs, aligning with HEC's dedication to scaling innovative ventures through technical and financial backing.

Two killed after car plunged into canal

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

However, the body of the deceased individuals has not been identified yet.

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): The District Monitoring Officer (DMO) in Swat has imposed a fine of Rs 20,000 on Sanaulah, a candidate participating in the PK-05 elections, of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, for violating clause 41 of the political parties' code of conduct. According to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) spokesman, monitoring teams deployed nationwide are currently removing advertisement hoardings that exceed prescribed limits.

Last day of registration for AIOU convocation

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

Meanwhile, according to AIOU, the eligibility criteria for registration has also been amended and the condition of at least 70 per cent marks has been removed. Now all the graduates from Semester Autumn 2004 to Spring 2022 can register on <http://convocation.aiou.edu.pk>.

The convocation is of great importance in the life of a student. Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood has advised students to take advantage of this opportunity, register themselves and make this convocation a memorable moment of life.

According to PIMA's spokesperson, these have been selected for a two-year term. According to the results, Dr. Asif Mahmood Khokhar assumed the role of President for Central Punjab, Dr. Noor Hussain Malik for North Punjab, Dr. Hafiz Habib ur Rahman for South Punjab, Dr. Fakhar Alam for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Dr. Abdul Rashid Wahab for Sindh,



ISLAMABAD: Advisor to Prime Minister on Aviation, Air Marshal (Ret'd) Farhat Hussain calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

Islamabad police arrests 16 criminal including professional beggars

ISLAMABAD: Federal Capital Police, while continuing effective operations against criminal elements, arrested 16 criminal elements including five professional beggars during the last 24 hours.

Marijuana, heroin, alcohol and weapons along with ammunition were recovered from the possession of the arrested accused.

Cases have been registered against the accused in different police stations and further investigation is ongoing.

According to the details, the Islamabad Police is carrying out indiscriminate operations against the criminal elements throughout the district.

Shams Colony police station arrested accused Noman Ali and recovered 20 bottles of liquor from his possession.

Police station Noon arrested accused Asif Khan and recovered 1,110 grams of hashish from his possession.



ISLAMABAD: Worker busy paint on wall of 7th Avenue Underpass in the Federal Capital.

PIMA members elect office bearers

ISLAMABAD (APP): The election process for Pakistan Islamic Medical Association (PIMA) provincial presidents has concluded, as members voted for presidents and executive council members through confidential balloting in biennial provincial conventions.

According to PIMA's spokesperson, these have been selected for a two-year term. According to the results, Dr. Asif Mahmood Khokhar assumed the role of President for Central Punjab, Dr. Noor Hussain Malik for North Punjab, Dr. Hafiz Habib ur Rahman for South Punjab, Dr. Fakhar Alam for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Dr. Abdul Rashid Wahab for Sindh,

and Dr. Abdul Jabbar for Balochistan.

Simultaneously, PIMA members in Azad Kashmir chose Dr. Muhammad Usman, while members in Gilgit-Baltistan elected Dr. Anayatullah Khan Tahir as their respective Presidents.

Provincial-level medical conventions took place at Faisalabad Medical University/Punjab Medical College in Punjab, Isra Medical University Hyderabad in Sindh, Saidu Medical College Swat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Quetta Press Club in Balochistan, Rawalkot in Azad Kashmir, and Gilgit city in Gilgit Baltistan, drawing participation from thousands of doctors.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Gurdeep Singh, Convener Senate Standing Committee on Narcotics Control presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

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Moving forward

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

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

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

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

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

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

It remains up to an elected government to, either with consensus or two-thirds majority, undo it. All the court has done is ensure it won't be used as Damocles' sword over a condemned politician's neck.

It has long been argued, and by better legal minds, that the eligibility requirements for holding public office as currently laid out in the Constitution contain several provisions that are patently unrealistic or impossible to attain and must, therefore, be reconsidered.

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



Arifa Noor

Elections in Pakistan have become a thriller film, where the clichéd twists just never stop, and those watching do not know whether to be scared or to laugh at the predictability. On Sunday, barely had the palpitations over the Senate resolution asking for a delay in elections subsided when news arrived of yet another press conference.

This time around, no one turned up to denounce May 9 and/or announce retirement from politics (or shake hands with leaders of the Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party). Instead, it was Ijazul Haq, who recently had his papers rejected and then accepted, announcing yet another save-the-nation front.

Haq — who can be described as, at best, a less-entertaining version of

Sheikh Rashid (before the latter discovered the magic of chillas and found inner peace and outer silence) — appeared out of the blue to announce that no one (among his ilk) cared for the people and how he and his companions were now going to be their saviours.

He was flanked by (surprise, surprise) Usman Buzdar, the man for whom the powers that be had had their hearts broken by Imran Khan. There was also Amin Aslam, but he did not really cause any hearts to flutter, either earlier or with his Sunday appearance. The PTI now has as many breakaway factions as there are sequels to Mission Impossible. One can only guess why this latest faction or group has come to the fore, even though it was packaged as a group of independents.

And while Haq may have convinced some about his concern for the hapless people of Pakistan, one can only assume this new alliance had also been dreamt up around the same conference table where the brainstorming for the IPP and PTI-Parliamentarians took place. For why else would Buzzy come out of his self-

isolation? This was his 'press conference', for sure.

The only party which should be worrying about this new political contraption is the PML-N, as it means another lot of Punjabi politicians with some backing are going to be aspiring to win some seats from the province. The sweeping majority the PML-N could have counted on in the absence of the PTI seems to be at risk from these new claimants.

But then, these real-world events would only be worrying the party if it emerged from the conference room it entered some moons ago to decide party tickets. It is hard to tell when its Rip Van Winkle-like leaders will wake up, open the doors and step out into the fog of elections. Campaigning seems to be far from the party's mind.

Interestingly, it is Shehbaz and Hamza (hardly the party's crowd pullers) who are addressing election campaign events, lending credence to rumours that the powers that be are concerned about the PML-N's ab-

sence from the ground. Whether this lack of action is Nawaz's plan of action is hard to say. After all, he has always kept his cards close to his chest.

The PPP is quite active in comparison, but its activity is being led by Bilawal, who just recently was locked in a teeny, tiny confrontation with his father for being a bit too critical of the choosers and shakers.

Those days seem to have passed, because he has now been anointed the party's candidate for prime minister. He must have reassured his father that he will continue to be diplomatic once he is made PM for this decision to have been made. That the son is no longer speaking so loudly about a level playing field may also indicate he has been schooled appropriately.

PTI can barely be bothered about the appearance of Buzzy and Amin Aslam. It doesn't just have its hands full with court cases, but also with new and newer members as the older ones depart quick and fast. It is hard to tell who is run-

ning the party and who is just an enthusiastic, newly appointed member.

Is the mild-mannered Clark Kent, aka Barrister Gohar, the man of the moment, or is it Sher Afzal Marwat, who seems to be the product of the DNA of Amitabh Bachchan and Charles Bronson combined? If TikTok were the political stage, there would be no question about who is in charge. Politics is now the name we give to slo-mo videos of lawyers walking to and fro.

Last but not least comes the Maulana, who says he doesn't know who is targeting him or causing unrest in KP, but he wants elections delayed. Who is targeting him? He doesn't know. How long does he want elections delayed? He doesn't know.

But he does know that he could move around in 2008 and 2013, and hence 2024 is just worse because he now can't, he argued in a recent interview. And so worried is he that he is now willing to support a Senate resolution passed by a dozen

men from BAP. Like them, perhaps, he has also received an offer he can't refuse.

But what is more worrying are accounts that some in the government have advised him to go sort out his problems with the government in Kabul; a tacit admission that the state can no longer ensure his safety and he should figure it out himself.

Once all of this is put together, it doesn't just resemble a Ramsay brothers' horror film, but a conclusion that there is hardly any party out there worried about campaigning just a month before the election. Each one of them is busy dealing with internal politics and managing their critical relationship with the saas (who was never, ever the bahu).

And if there is any politics taking place, it is via television interviews, Senate resolutions and court cases. It's a right horror show, and we are not just the audience but the unsuspecting cheerleader about to be chased through the woods. -- Courtesy Dawn

Sartaj Aziz 1929-2024



Mosharruf Zaidi

Jinnah's Pakistan died last week. His name was Sartaj Aziz. Rather than using my own words to capture just how central a figure Sartaj Aziz was to the idea of Pakistan — and what Pakistan so desperately needs in 2024 — I want to honour his memory by using his words.

I share some excerpts from the second edition of his book, 'Between Dreams and Realities', on issues important for Pakistan, and on which I was able to benefit from his wisdom, most recently in the spring of 2023. There was only one Sartaj Aziz. May Allah bless his soul and grant Pakistan many, many more Sartaj Azizes.

On the East Pakistan Crisis: "I recorded the following in my diary on 28 March 1969: East Pakistan economists are convinced

they would be better off economically if they were separate. They have no large defence burden to carry, they would be responsible for only 10-15 per cent of the total debt, and they could get food under PL-480 from the USA to balance the inter-wing trade.

"They would still be left with Rs100 crores of foreign exchange for development, unlike West Pakistan which will give up all its foreign exchange in debt, defence, barter, and bonus voucher scheme. Whatever the outcome, Pakistan will never be the same again. That Pakistan for which we fought and struggled in 1947, has proved to be unviable and 'our dream come true' is now shattering. I have the feeling of a person whose legs are being chopped, but he will die if his legs are not chopped."

On the 1993 GIK vs Nawaz Sharif Political Crisis: "My meeting with the president was very tense. I told him that political uncertainty was not good for the economy, foreign investments, or aid prospects. With great difficulty, I had lined up additional support from the IMF and World Bank in preparation for a

donor's consortium meeting in Paris on 22 April. Nothing should be done to deprive the country of these resources.

"He said the ball was in the prime minister's court. 'I have already told him what is to be done. So many ministers had resigned. The real issue is not his re-election but the viability of the system?'"

"I told him, his assessment of the government's performance, particularly in the economic field and regarding privatization was not objective or even fair. In fact, the period 1990-93 will be remembered for its far-reaching reforms which were overdue for two decades. He said I didn't know all the facts. I replied, 'You are surrounded by disgruntled elements and defeated politicians, who are giving you wrong advice. He said that he was not so naive as to be misled."

"Finally, I asked what was the object of all this? 'Whom do you want to bring in place of Nawaz Sharif? If the strategy is to bring back PPP, then it is working very well. Otherwise, I don't see the purpose?'"

"He said, 'What is wrong with that?' (bringing

back PPP) and I literally sank in my chair, as I could not imagine he would forget 'Go Baba go' so soon. Before I could say anything, he raised his voice and said, 'You are taking undue advantage of our friendship to ask such questions?' I said I was saying these things because I was his well-wisher and what he was doing would not be good for him or the country. As I got up to leave, I could not restrain myself from saying, 'You have had such an illustrious and spotless career but now you are spoiling your 'aqib' (life hereafter) by diving so deep in politics and dismissing another elected government in less than three years?'"

On the post-1998 nuclear tests crisis: "I was also struck by another paradox. I was the foreign minister of a country that had just become the first Islamic country to possess nuclear weapons. But the price it had paid for achieving that status was rising by the day. In 1990, USA had suspended economic assistance and military supplies by imposing sanctions under the Pressler Amendment."

"Now in 1998 after the nuclear tests, all the G-

7 countries had imposed comprehensive sanctions which also included loans from multilateral agencies like the World Bank, IMF and the Asian Development Bank. Our foreign exchange reserves were only \$1 billion, enough to cover one month's imports. The net flow of foreign assistance had already become negative. Tensions with India were growing after the nuclear tests. My foremost priority would be to end this isolation and enable the country to concentrate on strengthening its economy."

"Pakistan was caught in the middle of this historical tragedy. It genuinely wanted peace and stability in Afghanistan and had been working actively to create a broad-based government in Afghanistan so that after twenty years of war, Afghans could live in peace. But there was enormous mistrust among the Pashtuns of Southern Afghanistan and Uzbek-Tajik-Hazara leaders of the North. 'We are in a real bind, by following a policy that is not sustainable' I said to myself."

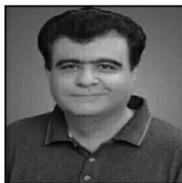
"In the next few days I conveyed the message from ISI to the prime minister and said, I will pur-

sue the subject and revert to him after some time? Meanwhile we were actively engaged with the UN special representative for Afghanistan, Lakhdar Brahimi, to find a political solution between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance under the Six plus Two Group. In preparation for these efforts I also invited the foreign ministers of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to visit Pakistan for in-depth discussion in the months of January and February 1999."

"Keeping the dream of Pakistan alive: 'The national interest of a thriving state is in fact the sum total of its national cohesion, internal and external security, health of its economy, a credible and just judicial system, depth and quality of its education system; a rational and coherent foreign policy, and above all, singularity of the locus of state authority."

"These important ingredients can be harnessed over time only through a broader and inclusive democratic system. That is the only way to ensure that 'the dream of Pakistan is never allowed to die.' -- Courtesy TheNews

Decaying politics



Dr Niaz Murtaza

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

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

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

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

Sindh and Baloch too started with leftist ethno-ideology led by G.M. Syed and Bizenjo. Among the Baloch, establishment ploys have stoked religious and feudal-led politics as older ethno-ideological parties face extinction. Sindh's later switched to PPP's leftist ideology, but then adopted patronage politics. Ethno-ideological Sindh parties now get few votes.

Mohajirs supported Muslim League's rightwing politics initially, swung to religious parties in 1970, then turned to MQM's ethno-populist quasi-fascism after 1980 and PTI in 2018. With both PTI and MQM facing state oppression, religious parties (JI and TLP) are rising again. But like Punjab, the future of Mohajir politics remains unclear though it too may remain rightwing. Mohajir politics is the oldest nationally as despite their high education, income, global links and exposure, urban location (which makes mobilisation easy) and big intellectual pockets, they keep moving from one perverse political form to another.

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

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

The view is not entirely bleak as small pro-poor forces are rising. Strangely, these are mainly in the two poorest and most violent areas: ex-

Fata and Balochistan. The misery from poverty is magnified by terrorism — religious in ex-Fata to conquer the state and ethnic in Balochistan. PTM won two national seats in 2018 in ex-Fata.

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

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

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

Health security



Arif Aziz

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

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

As a rule of thumb, global health security means the presence and development of robust and resilient public health systems that can help prevent, detect and respond to infectious disease threats.

This assumes particular importance in our globalised world, where a disease threat anywhere is a disease threat everywhere. Remember the oft-repeated line during the Covid-19 pandemic: no one is safe until everybody is safe? The Covid pandemic underscored the necessity of global solidarity and working across borders and governments in a whole-of-the-world approach to infectious diseases. In this context, the global health security agenda represents global efforts to strengthen the world's ability to prevent,

detect and respond to infectious disease threats.

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

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

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

capacity in at least five technical areas.

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

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

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

CM Baqar lays foundation stone of interchange to link M9- N5 roads

KARACHI (APP): The Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (R) Maqbool Baqar speaking at the stone-laying ceremony of the M9-N5 Link Road interchange in Kathore said that the Link Road had been completed, but it needed to be integrated with the Motorway to make it fully operational for which he laid the foundation.

The ceremony of the M9-N5 Link Road interchange was held at Kathore on Tuesday, a communique said.

The ceremony was attended by Information Minister Muhammad Ahmed Shah, Secretary Works Muhammad Nawaz Sohoo, DG PPP Unit Asad Zamin, Director PPP Unit Sajjad Gilal, PD M9-N5 Link Road Mr Muhammad Ali Memon, SE Works Khurram Mughal.

He said that he had

laid the foundation of interchange on the M9. He added that the intersection to bridge the final gap in the traffic flow originating from Karachi's industrial arteries through the M9-N5 Link Road Project, extending its reach upcountry.

The CM said that with the culmination of the project, traffic would seamlessly navigate to the M9, streamlining the transportation network. He said that the road leading to this interchange M9-N5 Link Road Project was constructed in record time, and the facility was ready. "With the integration of this missing link, the whole project will be fully operational, effectively realizing the project's objectives," he said. The M9-N5 link road stands as a milestone as the first Public-Private

Partnership (PPP) in Pakistan, awarded solely based on traffic revenue, without any equity, Minimum Revenue Guarantee, or any form of financial support from the provincial government.

The Concessionaire for the M9-N5 Link Road Project not only financed the project independently but also committed to managing operations and maintenance for the next 23 years using its resources. Additionally, the Sindh government would reap the benefits of traffic revenue throughout this period.

Baqar said that due to unforeseen delays in the finalization of interchange construction, our project revenues have taken a hit, leading the Sindh government to step in and compensate the Concessionaire for the incurred loss of revenue.



KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Chief, Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar unveils the plaque during the Foundation Stone-Laying ceremony of the M9-N5 Link Road Interchange, held at Kathore in Karachi.

CM inaugurates desilting drive after 10 years gap

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

be repaired in the second phase, spanning over two months. Water would be available to 3 to 4 lakh acres of land after the desilting of canals; he added and further stated that the desilting drive has been launched after a long gap.

Talking to the media, he said that the silt would be removed from 17000 km long canals in the first phase as services of LIMS (Laboratory Information Management System) have been acquired for round-the-clock monitoring. For this purpose, concerned staff, DCs and commissioners have also

been trained through LIMS as this drive would be continuously monitored through satellite images and NESPAK would also monitor it as a third party, he added.

CM Naqvi mentioned that complaints have been received about the mixing of drainage water in the Lahore canal at some points, adding that a committee comprising MD WASA and DC would probe the matter, as it could not be allowed. He appealed to the citizens to avoid polluting the canal as the government could not do everything all alone.



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

Minister urges prompt activation of Nowshera Aviation Training Center

PESHAWAR (APP): Minister for Technical Education and Industries, Dr. Amir Abdullah has directed the swift activation of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa School of Aviation Training and Services setup in Nowshera.

He emphasized the need to establish this centre as a hub for aviation training initiatives in the region. During his sudden visit to Nowshera, the minister inspected the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa School of Aviation Training and Services, accompanied by Managing Director Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority, Amir Afaq, and Managing Director Small

Industries Development Board, Ghazanfar Ali. During the visit, the officials informed the minister that the school had received new machinery for training purposes in 2019.

On this occasion, the minister expressed regret over the non-utilization of the state-of-the-art training centre and its machinery. He stressed the importance of promptly addressing the required licenses and other impediments to enable the entry of Aviation Services for training courses.

The minister expressed dissatisfaction with the state of the currently unused state-of-the-art training center. Despite having new machinery.

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

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Tuesday extended the interim bail of former federal minister Asad Umar till February 10 in 7 cases related to May-9 violence.

Judge Muhammad Arshad Javed conducted proceedings on the bail applications of the former minister. Asad Umar's counsel submitted an exemption application on behalf of his client, in the course of proceedings, and requested the court to exempt his client from personal appearance for one-day. At this, the court allowed the request and extended the interim bail of the former minister till February 10. The former minister had obtained the interim bail in seven cases, including attacks on Jinnah House and Askari Tower.

Governor stresses to maintain financial discipline in varsities

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali chairing a senate meeting of the University of Swabi (UoS) here Tuesday directed universities of the province to maintain financial discipline keeping in resources of the province.

The senate meeting was also attended by Vice Chancellor UoS, Nasir Jamal and concerned officials of education, establishment, finance and higher education commission.

KP Governor said that the provincial government is paying Rs. 56 billion annually in lieu of salaries stressing that universities should explore new ways to overcome financial difficulties. He desired that varsities devise new plans to improve administrative, educational and financial affairs.

The governor highlighted the need for

research-based education and said that it would help improve capacity building of students and prepare them to meet challenges of emerging world.

On the occasion, meeting also discussed amendments in universities statutes 2016-17, financial resource development plan 2023 and annual performance report of the varsity while matter relating to age relaxation was referred to Standing Committee for Higher Education Department.

Afterwards, Governor also visited Iranian Consulate General in Peshawar and expressed grief over loss of lives in Kirman blasts. He also expressed sympathies with Iran people and prayed for peace of departed souls and early recovery of injured.

The governor was accompanied by caretaker minister for information, Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel.



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

PHOTA organizes awareness seminar

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Health Minister Prof. Dr. Javed Akram participated as special guest in the awareness seminar organized by Punjab Human Organ Transplantation Authority (PHOTA) at a local hotel on Tuesday.

Secretary Auqaf Syed Tahir Raza Bukhari, King Edward Medical University (KEMU) Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof Dr Mehmoed Ayaz, Fatima Jinnah Medical University (FJMU) VC Prof. Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal, Amirud Din Medical College's Principal Prof. Dr. Sardar Al-Farid Zafar, PHOTA Director General Prof. Dr. Shehzad Anwar, Punjab Institute of Neuro Sciences (PINS) MS Prof. Dr. Jodati Saleem, Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute (PKLI) Dean Professor Dr. Faisal Saud Dar and a number of other scholars attended the seminar.

Caretaker Provincial Health Minister Prof Dr. Javed Akram said that Pakistan is facing many problems in the health sector. "We have to adopt a better lifestyle to lead a better life. We are currently paying a heavy price for the habit of eating fast food."

He added that PKLI is an exemplary institution. Recently, three human lives have been saved at the Institute. Indiscriminate action is being taken against the elements involved in the heinous business of illegal transplantation of human organs, he added. "I have already announced to donate all my organs. It is a great charity to save someone's life by donating my organs. According to SOPs, human organs are procured during brain death," he disclosed.

Caretaker Provincial Minister appealed to the scholars to spread awareness about human organ donation in the society. He congratulated the administration for organizing the awareness seminar. The FJMU VC Prof. Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal said that quacks.

Nation commends heroic sacrifices of police: Feroze

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Information and Public Relations Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel on Tuesday paid tribute and expressed the nation's profound gratitude for the unwavering sacrifices made by the Police.

Along with Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry and Inspector General of Police Akhtar Hayat Khan, Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel visited Lady Reading Hospital to personally extend support to the injured policemen following the tragic Bajaur bomb blast. Visiting the surgical emergency ward, he met each injured official and officer individually, inquiring about their well-being and assessing the treatment facilities.

During this occasion, Barrister Kakakhel commended the resilient

spirit and high morale displayed by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police men. He prayed for the swift recovery of the injured, acknowledging their selfless dedication for protecting the nation.

Barrister Kakakhel emphasized the nation's collective admiration for the sacrifices made by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Force. He paid tribute to these brave individuals who have laid down their lives in the relentless pursuit of safeguarding the homeland, contributing significantly to the ongoing fight against terrorism within the province.

Barrister Kakakhel conveyed the unwavering support of both the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government and its people, standing steadfastly by the side of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police and security agencies.

Corps Commander visits SBBWU, interacts with students

PESHAWAR (APP): Corps Commander Peshawar on Tuesday visited Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University (SBBWU) Peshawar and had an interactive session with its students and faculty members.

He applauded the tremendous achievements of women from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in all fields of life, including their pivotal role in nation-building, said a news release.

The students on the occasion paid rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices of armed forces in the line of duty while defending the motherland.

ANF seizes 425kg drugs in seven different operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in its crackdown against drug traffickers managed to recover over 425 kg of drugs and arrested eight accused including a woman, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday.

He informed that 240 kg hashish and 120 kg heroin were recovered from Galimain Ghandi Lakpas, Quetta.

Thirty kilograms of hashish was recovered from Chenab Toll Plaza Gujarat while two accused were arrested.

Eighteen kilograms of opium and 5 kg of hashish were recovered from a vehicle in Othal Lasbela while two accused were netted during the operation. Five kg heroin and 1 kg Ice drug were recovered from an accused in Sambrial, Sialkot.

In the fifth operation, 3 kg heroin was recovered from the possession of a woman arrested near Niazi bus stand in Lahore.

Delegation from Pak Navy War College visits SSU headquarters

KARACHI (APP): The delegation from Pakistan Navy War College undergoing 53rd PN Staff Course and 21st Correspondence Staff Course led by Deputy Commandant Pakistan Navy War College Lahore Ehsan Ahmed Khan, Sitara-e-Imtiaz Military, visited Special Security Unit (SSU) headquarters and appreciated the existing professional standard of SSU and measures being adopted to further improve capabilities of commandos aimed at to fight terrorism and ensure foolproof security.

Commandant SSU Dr. Farrukh Ali welcomed and briefed the delegation about the functions of various sections of SSU and informed them about

the measures adopted to set up the country's first Special Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T) team and advance professional training being provided to commandos.

The Commandant appreciated the contribution and support by the Pakistan Navy for providing modern tactical training to commandos of SSU and hoped that such training would continue in future. Commandant SSU further informed that we are focusing to give maximum attention to provide all possible professional training to our commandos from various specialized training units of the Pakistan Army and Navy to meet the modern challenges, particularly in counter-terrorism.

NCCIA being set up to check cyber crimes: DG FIA

FAISALABAD (APP): The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) is being established to check increasing cyber crimes while stringent measures were being taken to control smuggling, said Rai Ijaz Ahmad, Director Federal Investigation Agency (FIA).

Addressing a meeting in the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI), he advised the business community to switch over to transparent transactions through government channels instead of making payments through "Hawala Hundi" to avoid any financial implication. Rai Ijaz said

that the Financial Management Unit in State Bank of Pakistan was electronically monitoring available financial data and "red-flag" dubious, irregular and out of proportion transactions.

He said that businessmen should take extra care and avoid indulging in illegal traditional practices as the monitoring system was going to be stricter in the coming days. Drawing a line between the jurisdiction of FIA and other departments, he said that generally the tax matters fall in the ambit of the FBR but any forgery or fraudulent transaction invokes the involvement of FIA.

Security official dies, six injured in Tank road mishap

PESHAWAR (APP): A security personnel were died while six others injured when a vehicle carrying them, skidded off the road and met with an accident in Manji khel area of Tank district on Tuesday.

Local police informed a vehicle was on its way to Dera Ismail Khan from Asman Manza area of South Waziristan when it met with an accident. As a result, security officials embraced martyrdom while six others were injured. The injured were shifted to CMH Dera Ismail Khan.

DC inspected anti-polio drive

HYDERABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Zahid Hussain Rind visited the outskirts and colonies of Nawabshah city including Mehran Colony, Bhangwar Colony and other areas and inspected the figure marking, record and in-progress process of the anti-polio campaign. Talking to members of polio teams, DC said special attention be given to Polio vaccination to children up to the age of five years side by side with children of mobile families arriving from other districts to achieve the vaccination target. DC appealed to parents to cooperate with polio teams for vaccination of their children to prevent.

Fake bank accounts case: Zardari, Talpur put on notice

KARACHI (Online): Banking Court has issued notice to former president Asif Ali Zardari and his sister Faryal Talpur in fake bank accounts case.

Banking court Karachi took up for hearing fake accounts case against former president Asif Ali Zardari Tuesday. Farooq H Naik appeared in the court.

Farooq H Naik told the court the accused who were issued notices have

appeared in the court. But notices were not issued to Asif Ali Zardari and Faryal Talpur. The court after hearing the arguments of Farooq H Naik issued notices to Asif Ali Zardari and others for February 19. It is pertinent to mention here that fake bank accounts case was shifted to Karachi from Islamabad in August last year.

Earlier the case was shifted from Karachi to NAB court Islamabad.



LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Minister from Health Dr. Javid Akram addressing participants during awareness seminar at local hotel.



SUKKUR: Peoples Party (PPP) Senior Leader, Khursheed Ahmed Shah addresses to his supporters during public gathering meeting in connection General Election 2024 campaign, held at Saleh Pat area of Sukkur.

KU, Sindh Food Authority join hands to promote food safety, hygiene

KARACHI (APP): The University of Karachi and Sindh Food Authority join hands to create awareness of the importance of food safety and hygiene in the public.

The SFA has established a four-tier ambassador program for the whole province during a special ceremony held at the Jinnah Auditorium of Dr A.Q. Khan Institute of Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering, University of Karachi, on Tuesday, said a statement.

On this occasion, the SFA appointed the founder chairperson of the KU Food Science and Technology Department Professor Dr Rashida Ali as the Chief Ambassador of Food Safety and Hygiene and to acknowledge her 50 years of service in the field of food science.

Earlier, the Sindh Caretaker Information

Minister Ahmed Shah said that when the United States was discovered, they built various universities in the states, and now they are ruling the entire world. We have witnessed the development of the West and one of the main reasons for their success is that they also invested in the education and research sectors.

He mentioned that people associated with the food safety and hygiene project should not compromise on hygiene principles because it is a problem of our life and it affects the entire society.

Ahmed Shah shared that our youth need to be revolutionized through pen and writing, although modern technology has made it possible for our youth to have easy access to everything unfortunately our youth lacks focus.

ECC approves mechanism for weighted average price of urea

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



Federal Minister for Commerce Industries and Investment, Dr. Gohar Ejaz meeting H.E. Ahmed Samir, the Minister of Commerce of Egypt and the chief guest of the 4th PATDC & SCE along with Minister of Public Enterprises, H.E. Mahumod Mostafa Kamal Esmat.

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

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

The announcement took place at a special function organized by the Punjab Transport Department at a local hotel on Tuesday, where the chief minister also inaugurated the Qingqi Rickshaw Registration Program across Punjab.

CM Naqvi presented the first license for electric rickshaw manufacturing to the CEO of Sazgar

Company, marking the formal commencement of the electric rickshaw industry in Punjab. At the event, he disclosed plans to provide 10,000 electric bikes to students, facilitated by the Bank of Punjab, while another 10,000 electric rickshaws would be supported by Punjab Bank. Notably, 2,000 electric three-wheeler bikes would be granted to special individuals free of interest. Emphasizing environmental concerns, Mohsin Naqvi declared a ban on government-level purchases of petrol-powered motorcycles across Punjab. He also announced the initiation of the Qingqi Rickshaw Body Standers Program, highlighting the relentless

efforts of the transport department in registering Qingqi rickshaws - a task previously deemed impossible.

Addressing pollution issues in Lahore, the CM stressed the need for collective action. He commended Punjab Bank for its support in the Interest-Free Electric Bikes and Electric Rickshaw Programme, particularly applauding the decision to provide interest free electric bikes to students. Drawing inspiration from China's success with electric vehicles, he envisioned a positive impact on the environment within the next three years if electric bikes gain widespread adoption.

EU Envoy says: Business community take advantage of GSP+ by diversifying exports

KARACHI (APP): Ambassador of European Union (EU) to Pakistan, Dr. Riina Kionka, Tuesday, advised business community of Karachi to broaden and diversify their exports to EU for taking maximum advantage of EU's GSP Plus scheme for Pakistan which has recently been rolled over for four more years up to 2027. The EU envoy, while exchanging views at a meeting during her visit to Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), said that EU's GSP Plus for Pakistan has been rolled over without any changes to the rules framework so everything was going to stay the same up to 2027, said a statement issued here.

"GSP Plus has been extremely positive and useful in economic terms during the last 10 years as it helped in increasing Pakistan's exports to EU by 108 percent while EU imports also ascended by

40 percent since the start of this program", she added.

Riina Kionka termed GSP Plus as tremendously important for Pakistan's economy as it was beneficial not only for textile producers but also through the trickle-down effect of all those people who work in textile factories. While identifying Gems and Jewelry, Tourism, Handicrafts and Auto Parts etc. as potential sectors under GSP Plus, the EU Envoy noted that 28 percent of Pakistan's exports come to European single market which was a good number but it could further be enhanced.

She informed that EU Delegation in Islamabad has been working to enhance Pakistan's exports through better utilization of GSP Plus, diversifying exports, investing in value-addition, using new technologies and IT solutions for better access to EU Market.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Five ships namely, MSC Jemima, MSC Antigua, Yihai, Flex Volunteer and Curacao carrying Containers, Palm Kernel, LNG and Coal, berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Gas Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively on Monday.

Meanwhile two more ships, Blue Bird and Al-Sadd are also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on same day to unload Petroleum Product and LNG respectively.

A total of ten ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them four ships, MSC Jemima, MSC Antigua, Oriental Jasmine and Maersk Tacoma are left the port on today morning and another ship 'Sibulk Tradition' is expected to sail on same day. A cargo volume of 123,382 tonnes, comprising 86,268 tonnes imports cargo and 37,114 tonnes export cargo carried in 1,695 Containers (628 TEUs Imports and 2,067 TEUs export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

Saif launches Startup Fund to catalyze investments for Pak

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

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

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

He said the Fund would provide financial assistance to the startups,

with each receiving 30% support, while venture capitalists would contribute the remaining 70% of the capital.

The minister expressed the confidence that the Startup Fund would play a key role in Pakistan's economic development and expressed the commitment of the Ministry of Information Technology to providing facilities and support to the startups.

He expressed optimism about the Fund's potential impact on the startup ecosystem, expecting it to pave the way for increased technological advancements and economic opportunities.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman ISE - REIT Zahid Latif Khan speaks during a seminar titled Financial Literacy Saving and Investment Awareness organized by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

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

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

The overall exports to Afghanistan were recorded at US \$232.697 million during July-November (2023-24) against exports of US \$213.282 million during July-November (2022-23), SBP data revealed.

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

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

Overall Pakistan's exports to other countries witnessed an increase of 4.99 per cent in the first five months, from US \$11.915 billion to US \$12.510 billion, the SBP data revealed. On the other hand, the imports from Afghanistan into the country during the months under review were recorded at US \$3.187 million against US \$11.523 million last year, showing a decline of 72.34 per cent in July-November (2023-24).



KARACHI: Labors busy in preparing different political parties caps and other related stuff for upcoming Pakistan parliamentary election on 8 February 2024.

E-bikes, rickshaws to revolutionize transport sector: Minister

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

Speaking at opening ceremony of electric bikes registration here Tuesday, he said that 2.5 million three-wheelers were running illegally across Punjab, which are being registered.

He said that today is a historic day for the transport department as e-vehicles will bring

revolution in the transport sector. The Caretaker Provincial Transport Minister said that the license for e-rickshaws has been issued to Sazgar while 10,000 electric bikes will prove to be an important milestone in Punjab. Ibrahim Hassan Murad added that for the first time in history, interest-free electric motorbikes and rickshaws will be provided to the people. He explained that in the first phase, 10,000 electric bikes will be given to students of various educational institutions on easy terms.

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

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

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

Country Exhibition (SCE), said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

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

The meeting, held in the presence of policymakers and business leaders from various countries, facilitated a convergence of diverse ideas and opinions, creating an enriching environment for meaningful discussions.

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

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

Dr. Gohar Ejaz reiterated Pakistan's commitment to making Pakistani markets accessible to the MENA region.

DC for ensuring sale of fertilizers at fixed prices

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bahawalpur Zaheer Anwar Jappa on Tuesday said that the sale of fertilizer should be ensured at fixed rates.

Fertilizer supply should be improved at the tehsil level. He expressed these views in the meeting held in his office. He directed that legal action to be taken against the dealers who sell fertilizer at more than the fixed rates.

Additional Deputy Commissioner General Naem Sadiq Cheema, Assistant Commissioners, Deputy Director Agriculture (Extension) Hafiz Muhammad Shafiq,

BISP conducts E-Kachehri to address beneficiaries' concerns

ISLAMABAD (APP): Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) on Tuesday held an E-Kachehri to engage with the existing and intending beneficiaries to listen and resolve their complaints in real time.

During the E-Kachehri, Additional Secretary BISP, Muhammad Tahir Noor listened to the issues being faced by the beneficiaries especially related to the eligibility status, blockage of cards and registration.

The beneficiaries who were unable to get their payments raised their concerns through this online platform which was

responded to by the officials by assuring them to redress their grievance on an urgent basis.

The majority of the intending beneficiaries checked their eligibility through providing their CNIC numbers to the officials who checked on the spot and informed them about their status after reviewing their poverty score. The officials informed that BISP has a proper digital mechanism to decide the eligibility of the people and "we are committed to ensure transparency in disbursing this assistance to the deserving ones", they said.



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

Rupee gains 06 paise against Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistani Rupee on Tuesday witnessed an appreciation of 06 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs281.22 against the previous day's closing of Rs281.28.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs280.9 and Rs283.4 respectively. The price of the Euro increased by 55 paise to close at Rs308.10 against the last day's closing of Rs307.55, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

Officers of senior management course visit SCCI

SIALKOT (APP): A delegation of officers of the 34-Senior Management Course (Inland Steady Tour) by the National Institute of Management Peshawar on Tuesday visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI). SCCI President Abdul Ghafoor Malik, Senior Vice President Wahub Jahangir, Vice President Amer Majeed Sheikh warmly welcomed

the guests. Addressing the participants at the SCCI, Abdul Ghafoor Malik expressed sincere appreciation to the esteemed National Institute of Management for its unwavering commitment to enhance capabilities of government officials and their working through management courses which would pave the way for improving public service delivery.

CDNS achieves Rs 960b targets in fresh bond

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has achieved a target of Rs 960 billion in fresh bonds in the current fiscal year, from July 1 to January 9th 2023-24.

The CDNS surpassed the annual target and achieved the target of Rs 1.6 trillion in fresh bonds in the current fiscal year, to the senior official of CDNS told APP here on Tuesday. The senior official said this was a Rs 200 billion additional annual target than the target of Rs 1300 billion for the

previous financial year 2021-22.

"The CDNS has set a reviewed saving target of Rs 1.4 trillion for the current financial year (2021-22) which will promote savings culture in the country," he said.

In view of the current market trend in the country, the ambitious target had been set to further improve the savings culture, he said. The official said that work was being done on institutional reforms in CDNS and new reforms and innovations were being introduced.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Syed Muhsin Ali Naqvi inaugurates the ceremony for launching "Electric Rickshaws".

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

Monitoring Desk
GAZA: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, on his latest mission to rein in the Gaza war, told Israeli leaders on Tuesday there was still a chance of winning acceptance from their Arab neighbours, if they create a path to a viable Palestinian state.

On his fourth trip to the region since October in a so far largely fruitless quest to tamp down the violence, Blinken said he would share what he had heard in two days of talks with Jordan, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

His talks would include a meeting with the Israeli war cabinet formed in the wake of the Oct. 7

attacks by Palestinian militants from Hamas, which rules Gaza, that Israel said killed 1,200 people.

The Israeli offensive has killed more than 23,000 Palestinians, destroyed much of Gaza and displaced most of the population of 2.3 million at least once, creating a dramatic and worsening humanitarian crisis.

Blinken had already said he would press Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government on the "absolute imperative" to do more to protect Gaza's civilians and allow humanitarian aid to reach them. His boss, President Joe Biden, said overnight that Washington was quietly pushing Israel to begin

withdrawing some of its forces.

Blinken's meetings around the region have focused on trying to chart a longer-term approach to the decades-old Israel-Palestinian conflict, as part of a path toward ending the Gaza war. After his meetings with Arab allies, he said they wanted integration with Israel - a long-term Israeli aim - but only if that included a "practical pathway" to a Palestinian state.

"I know of your own efforts, over many years, to build much greater connectivity and integration in the Middle East, and I think there are actually real opportunities there," he told his Israeli counterpart Israel Katz on Tuesday.



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

25 tourists killed in bus crash in Brazil

Monitoring Desk
RIO DE JANEIRO: At least 25 people are dead and six injured after a minibus carrying tourists from a coastal trip collided with a truck in Brazil's northeastern state of Bahia, local authorities said on Monday.

The crash happened overnight on a federal road between cities of Nova Fatima and Gaviao in inland Bahia, the state's local fire department outpost said in a statement.

Russia detains US citizen on drugs charges

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: A US citizen has been detained in Russia on drugs charges which can carry up to 20 years in prison, a Moscow court said on Tuesday.

Moscow's Ostankino District Court said that on Jan. 6 Robert Romanov Woodland had been remanded in custody until March 5 on charges relating to the illegal acquisition or possession of drugs.

Russian internet news site Mash said that Woodland, 32, was charged with attempted large-scale production and sale of illegal drugs. He was detained on Jan. 5, Mash said.

'Ceasefire now', Biden faces wrath of protesters during speech

Monitoring Desk
GAZA: Pressure grew on Israel on Monday (Jan 8) from its staunch ally the United States and from Middle East powers to ease its assault on Gaza as its forces said they engaged in "tough battles" against Hamas militants in central and southern parts of the enclave.

Following talks with Arab leaders, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken landed late Monday in Tel Aviv on the latest leg of a regional tour aimed at preventing the war - now entering its fourth month - from turning into a wider conflagration.

Israeli officials have said they are entering a new phase of more targeted warfare after mass bombardments that have devastated the Gaza Strip and killed more than 23,000 Palestinians.

There was no respite on Monday, however, with the Israeli military saying a "different mix of forces" was pursuing holdout Hamas fighters in the enclave's north as "intense operational activity" focused on central Gaza and the area of the southern city of Khan Younis.

"Handling tough battles in both the center and south," said Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari, an Israeli military spokesman. "The fighting will continue through 2024."

Lander problem threatens US moon mission

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: A robotic lander built by a private company suffered a propulsion system issue on its way to the moon on Monday, upending the first US soft lunar landing attempt in over 50 years as mission managers scrambled to fix its position in space.

Space robotics firm Astrobotic Technology's Peregrine lunar lander had launched successfully to space at 0718 GMT from Cape Canaveral, Florida, aboard the first flight of Vulcan, a rocket that had been under development for a decade by the Boeing and Lockheed Martin joint venture, United Launch Alliance (ULA).

But hours after separating from Vulcan, Astrobotic said, issues with Peregrine's propulsion system briefly prevented the spacecraft from angling itself toward the sun for power.

While mission engineers regained control, the faulty propulsion system is losing valuable propellant, forcing Astrobotic to consider "alternative mission profiles".



A Palestinian boy queues as he waits to collect drinking water, amid shortages of drinking water, as the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas continues, in Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip.



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

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

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine has a deficit of anti-aircraft guided missiles nearly two years after Russia's full-scale invasion, Air Force spokesperson Yuriy Ihnat said on Tuesday.

Ukraine has relied heavily on military and financial aid from its Western allies since the invasion in February 2022, but political wrangling has delayed the disbursement of major aid packages for this year.

Ihnat told Ukrainian television that Ukraine had used a "considerable reserve" of missiles defending itself against recent attacks, and added: "It is clear that there is a deficit of anti-aircraft guided missiles."

Russia has stepped up missile and drone attacks on Ukraine in the past few weeks, firing hundreds of missiles and drones at Ukrainian cities far behind the frontline, Ukrainian officials have said.

In the latest strike this week, Russia fired 51 missiles of various types, killing at least four people and hitting civilian infrastructure, they said.

Taiwan says China launched a satellite

Monitoring Desk
TAIPEI: Taiwan's Defense Ministry issued an alert Tuesday saying China has launched a satellite and urging caution days before the island's elections.

Taiwan holds presidential and parliamentary elections on Saturday which China has described as a choice between war and peace. The bilingual alert sent to residents' mobile phones cautioned in English that there was a missile flyover.

The Defense Ministry later issued a statement apologizing to the public for the faulty English translation and clarifying that China had launched a rocket carrying a satellite - not a missile.

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

Monitoring Desk
PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron appointed 34-year-old Education Minister Gabriel Attal as his new prime minister on Tuesday, seeking to breathe new life into his second mandate ahead of European parliament elections.

The move will not necessarily lead to any major political shift, but signals a desire for Macron to try to move beyond last year's unpopular pension and immigration reforms and improve his centrist party's chances in the June EU ballot.

Attal will be France's youngest prime minister and the first to be openly gay.

Opinion polls show Macron's camp trailing far-right leader Marine Le Pen's party by around eight to 10 percentage points.

Attal, a close Macron ally who became a household name as government spokesman during the Covid-19 pandemic, will replace outgoing Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne.

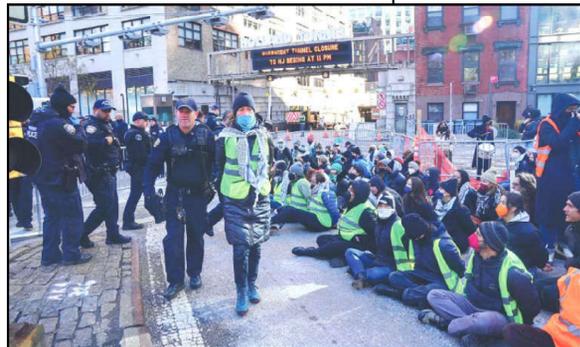
One of the country's most popular politicians in recent opinion polls, Attal has made a name for himself as a savvy minister, at ease on radio shows and in parliament. "Dear Gabriel Attal, I know I can count on your energy and your commitment to implement the project of revitalisation and regeneration that I announced."

US vows to boost Afghan refugees' relocation

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The US State Department has informed Congress of its commitment to enhancing its capacity to process applications of Afghan refugees stranded in Pakistan.

This initiative, which began in July 2023 on a limited scale, aims to address the plight of Afghan refugees seeking asylum in Pakistan.

"The State Department continues to work with Pakistan to expand that processing capacity," said a statement sent to Congress earlier this week.



NEW YORK: Police arrest protesters against the aggression in Gaza at the entrance to the Holland Tunnel.

Maldives suspends ministers after 'clown' jibe against India's Modi

Monitoring Desk
MALE: Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu suspended three deputy ministers on Sunday for making "derogatory remarks" against Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the government said.

Muizzu, who won September elections on promises that included removing a small contingent of Indian troops operating maritime aircraft from his archipelago, banned the ministers from work pending an investigation.

One deputy minister, Mariyam Shiuna, had called Modi a "clown" following the prime minister's visit to the Indian territory of Lakshadweep, a cluster of atolls just north of the Maldives.

The three suspended ministers - ?Malsha Shareef, Abdulla Mahzoon and Shiuna ?- are all from the youth ministry. They criticised Modi on social media, officials said.

Norway parliament votes in favour of seabed mining, as expected

Monitoring Desk
OSLO: Norway's parliament on Tuesday voted in favour of allowing Arctic seabed mineral exploration, in line with a deal reached between the government and key opposition parties last month, overcoming objections from environmental campaigners.

The decision comes as Norway hopes to become the first country to make deep-sea mining happen on a commercial scale and secure critical minerals and jobs despite concerns over the environmental impact and international calls for a moratorium.

Mass killer Breivik to testify in Norway in bid to end prison isolation

Monitoring Desk
TYRISTRAND: Anders Behring Breivik, the far-right fanatic who killed 77 people in a bombing and shooting rampage in Norway in 2011, will testify in court on Tuesday as he presses on with a lawsuit to end his years of isolation in prison.

The 44-year-old, who emailed out copies of an ultra-nationalist manifesto before his attacks setting out his theories, is also suing the state in a bid to lift restrictions on his correspondence with the outside world.

Breivik killed eight people with a car bomb in Oslo and gunned down 69 others, most of them teenagers, on Utoeya island. He has been held in isolation ever since.

He is scheduled to start testifying at 2 pm local time (1300 GMT).

"I want to hear him directly, not via the media," said Freddy Lie, the father of two daughters who were at Utoeya in 2011 - one was shot dead, the other was wounded but survived.

Lie was present at the first day of the legal proceedings on Monday and told Reuters he was planning to attend on Tuesday.

Some journalists had asked Judge Birgitte Kolrud to let them broadcast Breivik's testimony.

South Korea passes bill to ban consumption of dog meat

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: South Korea's parliament passed a bill on Tuesday to ban the eating and selling of dog meat, a move that will end the controversial centuries-old practice amid growing support for animal welfare. Eating dog meat was once seen as a way to improve stamina in the humid Korean summer. But the practice has become rare - largely limited to some older people and specific restaurants - as more Koreans consider dogs as family pets and as criticism of how the dogs are slaughtered has grown.

Egypt rejects Israeli request to monitor buffer zone with Gaza

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Egypt has rejected a proposal by Israel for greater Israeli oversight over the buffer zone on the Egypt-Gaza border and is prioritising efforts to broker a ceasefire before working on post-war arrangements, three Egyptian security sources said.

Egypt shares a 13km (8 mile) border with Gaza which is the only border of the Palestinian coastal enclave not directly controlled by Israel. Along with Qatar, Egypt has also played a leading role in talks to broker a new ceasefire in Gaza and secure a deal for the release of Israeli hostages held by Hamas. The Egyptian sources said that during those talks Israel had approached Egypt about securing the Philadelphia Corridor, a narrow buffer zone along the border, as part of Israeli plans to prevent future attacks.

The current conflict began on Oct. 7 when Hamas launched an incursion during which Israel said 1,200 people were killed and some 240 hostages captured.

Israel has retaliated with an offensive that has killed more than 23,000 people, according to Gaza officials, and driven most of the territory's 2.3 million people from their homes.

An Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said joint monitoring of the Philadelphia Corridor with Egypt was among issues that have been discussed by the countries.

US, UK say Bangladesh elections were not free, fair

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The US and UK on Monday criticized the Bangladesh general election that saw the ruling Awami League retain power as "not free" nor democratic as the polls held a day earlier were boycotted by the opposition after months of violence.

The two Western allies also condemned the incidents of violence and alleged intimidation of opposition members in the months leading up to the election and urged Bangladesh's government to credibly investigate them.

The United States shared the view that the weekend's elections in Bangladesh were not free and fair, the US State Department said on Monday, adding that Washington was concerned by reports of vote irregularities and condemned violence that took place. Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina swept to a fourth straight term in power, with her party winning almost 75% of the seats in Sunday's general election.

But the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) boycotted the vote and turnout was low.

"The United States remains concerned by the arrests of thousands of political opposition members and by reports of irregularities on elections day," a U.S. State Department spokesperson said on Monday.

"The United States shares the view with other observers that these elections were not free or fair and we regret that not all parties participated."

The ruling Awami League party won 222 seats out of 298, according to unofficial results released by the Election Commission. The election was Bangladesh's 12th since independence from Pakistan in 1971.

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

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: Hundreds of protesters calling for an immediate cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas war blocked traffic in New York City at crucial bridges and a tunnel, disrupting the Monday morning commute and leading to more than 300 arrests.

A steady stream of demonstrations have broken out in cities across the United States and in other countries during the three-month war in the Gaza Strip. Protesters interrupted President Joe Biden's campaign speech Monday at a church in South Carolina with chants of "cease-fire now," and were removed from the building.

In Manhattan, people chanting and holding anti-war signs sat in roadways and locked themselves together using zip ties and even cement-filled tires, which at times required officers to use power tools to pry the demonstrators apart.

The New York Police Department said 325 people were arrested, with many facing misdemeanor charges.

Demonstrators had gathered at City Hall Plaza at around 9 a.m. before marching to the protest sites at the Brooklyn, Manhattan and Williamsburg bridges as well as the Holland Tunnel to New Jersey.

Protest organizers included the Palestinian Youth Movement and Jewish-led groups long opposed to Israel's policies toward the Palestinians, such as Jewish Voice for Peace. The groups said they want to see a permanent cease-fire and an end to the U.S. government's arming of the Israel, among other things. "By blocking the city's exits, the protesters created - briefly, imperfectly - a physical analogue for the situation in Gaza, where there is no getting out," the groups wrote in a statement following the protests. At a news briefing Monday, New York City Mayor Eric Adams said he understood "the pain of innocent lives being lost right now."

India eyes doubling cash handout for women farmers ahead of vote

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is considering doubling the annual payout to landowning female farmers to 12,000 rupees (\$144), three sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters, a move likely to appeal to women voters ahead of a general election.

The plan is likely to be announced in the budget on Feb. 1 and could cost the government an additional 120 billion rupees (\$1.44 billion), said two of the sources, all of whom declined to be named discussing a budget proposal.

It will build on an existing programme that Modi, who will be seeking a third term in elections due by May, announced before the last national election in 2019.

"The expansion of the existing scheme may find more support from women, a key demographic," Barclays Investment Bank economist Rahul Bajoria said. Under the "Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi" programme, the government transfers 6,000 rupees annually to both men and women farmers. It had disbursed more than 2.81 trillion rupees to more than 110 million farmers in 15 installments up to last November, according to government estimates.

The plan to double the cash support and target it toward women has not been previously reported. It would be presented as a move to empower women in rural India, one of the sources said.

The agriculture ministry declined to comment and the finance ministry did not respond to an email seeking comment.

There are more than 260 million farmers in India and along with their families, they are a massive voting bloc in the country of 1.4 billion people. Women account for 60% of all farmers but fewer than 13% of them own the land they sow, according to government data.

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

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

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

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

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

The prime minister appreciated UNICEF Pakistan for successfully launching several projects

for public welfare. Terming UNICEF's role in the anti-polio drive in Pakistan as of special importance, he said a positive change in the anti-polio vaccination drive was being seen among the masses due to mutual collaboration of the government of Pakistan and UNICEF.

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

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

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

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



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

President for implementing job quota for persons with disabilities

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday underscored the need to implement employment quota for persons with disabilities (PWDs) at all levels of the government for their financial empowerment.

He suggested that the government departments should identify jobs for PWDs and provide them employment as per their skill sets to increase their inclusion in the workforce, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

The president expressed these views while chairing a meeting on imple-

menting employment quota for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Secretary Ministry of Human Rights Allah Dino Khwaja, Secretary Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) Syed Hasnain Mehdi, Special Secretary Establishment Division Ali Tahir and senior officials of the government attended the meeting.

Highlighting the need to make PWDs productive members of society, the president said that they made up almost 12% of Pakistan's population and affirmative actions like job quotas could help overcome

existing barriers to their employment.

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

The president emphasized the need for attitudinal change towards PWDs by the society to encourage them to actively participate in socio-economic activities. He recalled that he had been urging private schools to admit children with disabilities and take measures to promote inclusive education in main-

stream educational institutions.

Secretary FPSC briefed the meeting about the steps taken by them for the facilitation of PWDs.

He informed that PWDs were eligible to appear in CSS exams against all occupational groups and FPSC was especially facilitating them by providing them additional time and writing assistants during the exams.

It was also apprised that PWDs were being given two-year relaxation in the upper age limit under the CSS Competitive Examination Rules.



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

Minorities have constitutional protection for rights including religious freedom: Governor

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that all the minorities have the constitutional protection of all rights including the religious freedom in Pakistan.

The Governor also noted with pleasure that all minorities including Christian community are play-

ing positive and effective role in construction and development of the province and country.

Malik Abdul Wali Kakar stated so while speaking to a delegation who called on him under leadership of head of Darul Amal Welfare Organization, Adnan Arif Jahangir here on Tuesday.

The members of del-

egation apprised the Governor about the issues being faced by the minorities.

They also made certain demands for resolving the issues.

The Governor gave patient hearing to the issues as mentioned by the members of delegation.

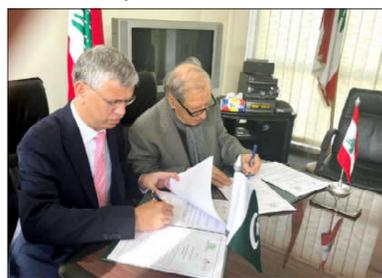
He assured of his every possible cooperation to resolve the issues.

Pak, Lebanon sign accord for media regulatory bodies' cooperation

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

strengthen the bilateral relations.

The MoU is aimed at fostering friendly relations and cooperation between the two regulatory bodies of Pakistan and Lebanon.



ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Pakistan to Lebanon Salman Athar signed the MoU with President of the National Audiovisual Council of Lebanon Abdul Hadi Mahfouz on behalf of PEMRA.

Balochistan cabinet decides to build cricket academy for youth in Quetta: Jan

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Caretaker Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai on Tuesday said that Balochistan cabinet has decided to build a cricket academy for youth in Quetta.

He expressed these views while addressing a press conference here.

Jan Achakzai said that youth of this province had made bright names in sports field.

He said that the cricket academy will run under the supervision of a well-known cricketer Ahmed Shahzad who would share a road map with cricketers of provincial areas of Balochistan. He further stated that Ahmed Shahzad would play a role

in hunting talented players from this region. He said that young athletes would be encouraged by training and for this, the establishment of a cricket academy would provide opportunities to the young people to show their professional skills in the field of sports.

In reply to a question about the Afghan issue, he said that Afghan patients could come to Pakistan for medical treatment with valid documents.

He, however, said that no illegal foreign person could enter this country without valid documents. To another question, he said that Pakistan is a democratic country and everyone has the right to protest peacefully.

Ex-PTI chairman, wife indicted in Toshakhana case

RAWALPINDI (INP): An accountability court indicted on Tuesday Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi in the Toshakhana reference.

Accountability Court Judge Muhammad Bashir announced the decision during a hearing in the case today which was conducted in Adiala jail. National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Deputy Prosecutor General Sardar Muzaffar Abbasi and Amjad Pervez, Special Prosecutors Irfan Bhola, Sohail Arif and others appeared in the court.

DC reviews anti-polio drive steps in Sanjavi

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ziarat Hamood-ur Rahman chaired a meeting to review on the second day of anti-polio campaign at Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Sanjavi area of Ziarat on Tuesday.

The meeting was attended by DHO Dr. Badar Nadeem Ansari, Assistant Commissioner Sanjavi Moin Khan Baloch Tehsildar Majeed Khan, MS, Dr. Abdul Rahim and Paruddin UCMO.

In the meeting, a briefing was given to the Deputy Commissioner regarding the anti-polio campaign. Deputy Commissioner Ziarat Hamood-ur Rahman said that anti-polio campaign was a national campaign and everyone has to play a role to make this campaign successful, media and civil society could play an important role in this regard.

Polio-free Pakistan is our vision, if even one child is left with drops, this campaign will not be successful, he said.

Maritime Security Exercise SEA GUARD-24 commences at Karachi

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

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

The session which includes Pakistan National Shipping Corporation,

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

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

Commander Coast Vice Admiral Raja Rab Nawaz applauded the efforts of all stakeholders.

Khattak unveils party manifesto for elections

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

He recounted the feats of his five-year tenure as KP chief minister. Khattak expressed concern over the discontinuation of health cards, highlighting its injustice to the needy. He outlined plans to engage with the federation for electricity and gas revenue for the province, citing the establishment of 250 small hydro projects during his tenure.



QUETTA: A delegation of Darul Amaal Welfare Organization led by Adnan Arif Jahangir meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar.

Steps being taken for improving power supply situation in GB

GILGIT: The steps are being taken to pay the utility bills well in time. In this regard, the Chief Engineer Power, Ghulam Murtaza has stated that steps are being taken to reduce the duration of electricity load shedding in the Gilgit Division. He expressed the hope that the electricity supply would be improved as a result of commissioning of new projects in the power sec-

tor. The Chief Engineer said that the Power Department is working round the clock to reduce the load shedding despite reduction in the water quantity due to the lack of raining and snowfall this year. He also said that the Power Department is extremely busy in ensuring the electricity supply to the respectable consumers mainly because of the special interest taken by Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan.

According to the spokesman of ANF, the ANF team raided in the Mian Ghundi area and recovered some 240 kilogram of charas and 120 kilogram of heroin from there.

Corruption case: Court hands over co-accused of Pervaiz Elahi to NAB

LAHORE (APP): An accountability court on Tuesday handed over Asif Mehmood, a co-accused of former chief minister Punjab Chaudhry Parvez Elahi in a corruption case, to National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on 7-day physical remand.

Earlier, the NAB officials produced co-accused Asif Mehmood before Accountability Court Judge Zubair Shahzad Kiyani.

The investigation officer submitted that the custody of the accused was required for investigations.



KARACHI: 'Commander Coast Vice Admiral Raja Rab Nawaz addressing opening brief of Maritime Security Exercise SEA GUARD-24

Tribunal dismisses appeals against acceptance of papers of Maulvi Sarwar & Hamal

QUETTA: The Appellate Tribunals headed by two judges of Balochistan High Court (BHC) continued hearing of the appeals against acceptance and rejection of the nomination papers of the candidates by the respective Returning Officers, here in Quetta on Tuesday. The Tribunals comprising Mr. Justice Muhammad Hashim Kakar and Mr. Justice Muhammad Amir Nawaz Rana heard the appeals.

The Tribunal comprising Mr. Justice Hashim Kakar dismissed the appeal that challenged the acceptance of nomination papers of JUL candidate, Maulvi Muhammad Sarwar.

The Tribunal upheld the judgment of concerned Returning Officer regarding acceptance of the nomination papers of Maulvi Sarwar. Similarly, the Tribunal headed by Mr. Justice Kakar also dismissed the appeal filed against acceptance of nomination papers of the BNP-M leader, Mir Hamal Kalmati.

Meanwhile, the division bench of High Court comprising Mr. Justice Rozi Khan Baraich and Mr. Justice Ejaz Swati heard the constitutional petitions filed against the judgments of Appellate Tribunals.

The court deferred hearing of the constitutional petition of the BNP leader Sanaulah Baloch against acceptance of the papers of PML-N leader and candidate, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani for today (Wednesday). The BNP's leader had challenged the decision of Tribunal about allowing Nausherwani to contest the elections.



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

Politics of dynasties, master-slave division no more acceptable: Siraj

TALAGANG (INP): Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Sirajul Haq has said that politics of dynasties and the master-slave division are no longer acceptable to the people of Pakistan.

The JI chief said that the former rulers failed to address the economic challenges, burdening the country with heavy debts. He criticized the rulers for neglecting the people of Occupied Kashmir facing Indian forces' brutalities and for choosing silence over Israeli forces' genocide in Gaza. He emphasized that the ruling elite aimed to please Washington, considering it crucial for their rule in Pakistan. He pledged that JI would advocate for the causes of Kashmir and Palestine and implement the laws of the Quran.

Addressing an election campaign rally here on Tuesday, he asserted that the people would bury the status quo on February 8.

Sirajul Haq highlighted that the country was still under the influence of a colonial system, as past rulers failed to implement reforms. Instead, they focused on looting resources, building personal factories, and investing in foreign properties through shell companies.

He said there was no significant difference among the policies of the three

ANF seizes huge quantity of narcotics from Mian Ghundi area of Quetta

QUETTA: The Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) recovered huge quantity of narcotics from Mian Ghundi area in Quetta suburb on Tuesday.

According to the spokesman of ANF, the ANF team raided in the Mian Ghundi area and recovered some 240 kilogram of charas and 120 kilogram of heroin from there.

The huge quantity of narcotics' consignment was concealed for smuggling

purposes from the area to the interior parts of the country. No arrest, however, was reported in the seizure.

Meanwhile, ANF also recovered 18 kilogram opium and 5 kilogram charas from a vehicle on way in Uthal area the same day.

During the operation, two accused were arrested by the ANF team, the spokesman mentioned.

The cases have been registered against the culprits under the Anti-Narcotics Act.



QUETTA: Balochistan Grand Alliance Senior Leader, Nawabzada Haji Lashkari Raisani along with others addresses to media persons during press conference held at Quetta press club.

Qambrani withdraws for BGA candidate: Lashkari vows to wage struggle for transparent system in country

QUETTA: The head of Balochistan Grand Alliance (BGA), Nawabzada Lashkari Raisani has made a pledge to wage struggle for bringing transparent system in the country.

He said that there has always been disappointment in the country's system or at least the affairs have been uncertain in the system. This was stated by Nawabzada Lashkari Raisani while addressing a press conference here at Quetta Press Club on Tuesday.

Other leaders of BGA including Mir Humayun Aziz Kurd, Raza Rehman and others were also present. The tribal personality and candidate for NA-264, Mir Nasir Qambrani, who was also present on the oc-

casions, announced to join the BGA.

Qambrani also announced to withdraw his candidature in favour of the BGA's candidate Mir Humayun Aziz Kurd from NA-264.

Nawabzada Lashkari Raisani welcomed Mir Nasir Qambrani and hoped that the candidates of alliance would play their role for resolving the public issues.

Referring the series of seminars held on the title of re-imagining Pakistan in the past, Lashkari Raisani said that he had made an attempt of highlighting the issues outside the parliament under the Re-imagining Pakistan.

Then, we had not decided to form a political party, Nawabzada Lashkari Raisani maintained.