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Witnessed Air Defence exercise Al-Bayza-III Armed forces modernizing their systems in line with country's requirements, says Army Chief

RAWALPINDI (Online): General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff, (COAS), witnessed firing of different Air Defence weapon systems during Exercise Al-Bayza-III, 2024 at Sonmiani.

COAS viewed integrated fire and battle maneuvers of Army Air Defence systems which includes High to Medium Air Defence Weapons System (HIMADS), Low to Medium Air Defence System (LOMAD), Short Range Air Defence system (SHORADS) and Extended Short Range Air Defence system (ESHORADS).

In a landmark achievement and milestone in enhancing the Air Defence of the aerial frontiers of Pakistan, HIMAD system in maiden fire was able to successfully engage the target at maximum ranges along with other layered weapon systems which were tested during the exercise.

COAS highly appreciated the remarkable achievement of engaging targets with precision and operational readiness of Corps of Army Air Defence.

While interacting with the officers and troops, COAS highlighted that Armed Forces of Pakistan are modernising their systems in line with our requirements to deter and be able to respond to any threat emanating against Pakistan.

Corps Commander Karachi, Commander Army Air Defence, Inspector General Training & Evaluation and Inspector General Arms also witnessed the exercise.

Earlier, COAS visited Army Air Defence Center. He laid floral wreath at Yadgar e Shuhada and paid homage to martyrs of Armed Forces. COAS installed Lieutenant General Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, HI (M), as Colonel Commandant of Army Air Defence Corps.



Chief of the Army Staff, General Syed Asim Munir interacting with the officers and troops at the occasion of witnessing firing of different air defence weapon systems during Exercise Al-Bayza-III, 2024 at Sonmiani.



Chief of the Army Staff, General Syed Asim Munir interacting with the officers and troops at the occasion of witnessing firing of different air defence weapon systems during Exercise Al-Bayza-III, 2024 at Sonmiani.

Alvi accepts resignation of Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (Online): President Dr. Arif Alvi has accepted the resignation of Supreme Court's Judge Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan.

Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan has tendered resignation under article 179 and 206 (1) of the constitution.

The President has accepted the resignation of Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan on the advice of the Prime Minister.

Rajab Al-Murajab to start today as crescent sighted

ISLAMABAD (APP): The month of Rajab Al-Murajab will commence on Saturday as the crescent for the new Islamic month was sighted on Friday evening.

Chairman of Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Maulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khabir Azad made the announcement in this regard after chairing the meeting of the Zonal Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Lahore at the Awan Awqaf Shah Chirag Building in Lahore.

Maulana Azad informed the media that weather conditions in most parts of the country were cloudy. However, evidences of crescent sighting were received from the cities of Nawabshah, Tharparkar, Umartot, Kunri, Chur, Badin, Hyderabad, Panni, Winder Balochistan, and others, where the sky was clear.

"Consequently, it was unanimously decided that the 1st of Rajab Al-Murajab 1445 will fall on Saturday, January 13, 2024," he added.

Shehbaz Sharif withdraws from election in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): Former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) president Shehbaz Sharif will not contest election from NA-242 constituency in Karachi.

Shehbaz withdrew his nomination papers after Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) refused to withdraw its candidates Mustafa Kamal from NA-242. Meanwhile, PML-N Senator Nehal Hashmi said that Khawaja Shoaib will be PML-N's candidate from NA-242 in place of Shehbaz Sharif as no consensus reached with MQM-P for seat adjustment.

Two terrorists killed in North Waziristan

RAWALPINDI (Online): Security forces conducted an intelligence based operation in North Waziristan District, on reported presence of terrorists.

During the conduct of operation, after an intense fire exchange, two terrorists; Abdullah Khadri and Khalid Janan were killed.

The killed terrorists remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area including target killing of innocent civilians. Sanitization operation is being conducted to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area as the Security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from country.

SC will not interfere in ECP's domain, CJP tells PTI lawyer

Its become tradition in country to level allegation of malafide intent against every one: Justice Isa

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Supreme Court (SC) on Friday said regulating political parties is the job of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

These remarks were made by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa while hearing the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) appeal against the Peshawar High Court (PHC) verdict restoring the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) electoral symbol — bat.

"SC will not interfere in the domain of the Election Commission of Pakistan. However, if ECP commits any unconstitutional act then the court can look into it," the CJP added.

A three-member bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice

Bat symbol case

Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarat Hilali hearing the electoral body's appeal.

The proceedings of the case are being broadcast live on the SC website and YouTube channel.

Barrister Gohar, Shoaib Shaheen, Niazullah and Waleed Iqbal attended court proceedings today. PTI's lawyer Hamid Khan in his remarks said the SC has clarified that no institution can file an appeal against the verdicts.

The ECP can file a review on appeals else there will be no worth of its decisions. The CJP remarked and added if the argument of PTI is accepted then questions will also be raised on its appeal in Peshawar High Court.

The CJP Isa asked Makhdoom whether the

PHC's written order had been issued or not, the latter replied that it had not been.

The lawyer then read out the PHC order that restored the PTI's 'bat' symbol. He said that the ECP had not yet received "any notice" of the PHC order, to which the chief justice said, "I have not read the case file either."

The top judge asked Makhdoom when he would be ready to present the case, at which the counsel urged the SC to adjourn the hearing till Monday. Makhdoom further said that the political parties would be allotted electoral symbols tomorrow.

The top judge observed that to adjourn the hearing till Monday, the PHC's re-

Continued on page 2



QUETTA: A delegation led by Chairman Karawan Lashaar Pakistan Mir Abbas Lashari meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Chairman PkMAP withdraws candidature in favour JUI-F chief from NA-265

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chairman Pashtoonkhaw Milli Awami Party (PKMAP), Mahmood Khan Achakzai has withdrawn his candidature in favour of the central Ameer of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) Maulana Fzlr Rehman from NA-265.

According to the press release of the Party, Chairman PkMAP has withdrawn his candidature in favour of the JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman from the national assembly constituency of Pishin.

Meanwhile, the Chairman PkMAP has formed a five-member committee for seat to seat adjustment and alliance with other political parties. The committee has been formed under leadership of the party's central committee, Nawab Ayaz Khan Jozgezi. Other members of the committee are included deputy chairman, Abdul Rauf Khan, central Secretary General, Abdul Rahim Ziarawal, provincial President, Abdul Qahar Wadhand and senior provincial vice president, Syed Sharaf Agha.

Repatriation of illegal Afghan residents continues

CHAMAN (Online): The repatriation of illegal Afghan residents is continued.

Last day, 958 illegal Afghan residents have been repatriated in which 210 men, 198 women and 550 children are present.

75 families in 51 vehicles have been repatriated to Afghanistan. The total number of illegal Afghan residents who left Pakistan reached 465, 614 till January 11 and the return is underway.

ECP delists 13 political parties over intra-party election failures

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Friday delisted 13 political parties due to their failure to conduct required intra-party elections.

In a reserved judgment announced on Friday regarding 15 political parties, the ECP revoked the registration of 13 parties while permitting two, namely Jamiat Ulema e Pakistan (JUP) and Pakistan Muslim League Jinnah, to participate in the upcoming elections. In the verdict, the ECP expressed disappointment over the lack of seriousness exhibited by political parties regarding the conduction of intra-party elections.

Delisted political parties encompassed All Pakistan Minority Alliance, All Pakistan Tehreek, Awami Party Pakistan, Bahawalpur National Awami Party, Sab Ka Pakistan, National Peace Council Party, Pakistan National Muslim League, Pakistan Aman Party, Pakistan Brabri Party, Masihi Awami Party, Pakistan Quomi Yekjehti Party, Sunni Tehreek, and Nizam e Mustafa Party.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting to review repatriation of illegal foreigners residing in Balochistan

Another resolution to delay Feb 8 polls submitted in Senate

ISLAMABAD (Online): Resolution seeking postponement of general election for three months in view of security challenges in the country has been submitted in Senate.

The resolution has been filed by senator Hidayat Ullah from Independent parliamentary group with his signatures.

The resolution said there is grave concern over the attacks on the candidates. Terror incidents are on rise across the country. The general election be postponed for three months. Protecting life and property of people is responsibility of state.

The growing incidents of terrorism in the country

including armed attacks in North Waziristan, Bajore, Swabi and Turbat where an elderly nationalist leader was injured critically and one candidate was killed have created the environment of fear and insecurity in the country.

The Senate accepts it that holding general election is constitutional obligation. The constitution insists on ensuring free and fair election and protection of life and property of people on equal footing. He senate urges on Election Commission and Supreme Court to consider sympathetically holding of election peacefully and postpone the election for three months in view of security challenges.

Italian envoy pays farewell call on PM Boosting trade, investment ties with Italy in diverse sectors need of hour: PM



ISLAMABAD (Online): The Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan, Andreas Ferrarise, paid a farewell call on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar earlier today.

During the meeting, the Prime Minister appreciated the Ambassador's contributions to strengthening bilateral relations, noting his efforts to foster economic ties and facilitate cooperation in various fields. While acknowledging Pakistan's longstanding friendly relations with Italy, the Prime Minister emphasized the need to boost trade, investment and cooperation in diverse areas including mi-

gration and mobility, agricultural technology, education as well as tourism. The Italian Ambassador thanked the Prime Minister for receiving him and expressed gratitude for the excellent cooperation he received throughout his stay in Pakistan. He also briefed the Prime Minister on key developments during his tenure. The Ambassador praised the valuable contributions of the vibrant Pakistani diaspora to Italy's economic development.

The Prime Minister wished the outgoing Ambassador success in his future endeavours.

BC constable on anti-polio security duty gunned down in Quetta

Independent Report

QUETTA: A constable of the Balochistan Constabulary (BC), Jamil Ahmed was shot dead by unknown armed assailants in the eastern-by pass area on Friday.

According to police, the BC constable was on duty of security of the anti-polio teams in the Eastern-by pass area when unknown armed men targeted him and shot him dead.

The reports suggested that Jamil Ahmed sustained multiple bullets injuries and

shifted by the rescue team to the civil hospital in critical condition. He was provided necessary medical assistance but he succumbed to the serious injuries in the evening and died.

Meanwhile, his funeral prayer was offered at the police lines the same night.

The commandant of BC Chaudhary Salman and other senior police officers attended his funeral prayer.

Later his body was dispatched to his native area Dera Ghazi Khan for burial.

PML-N, PPP opposes taking away bat symbol from PTI

KARACHI (Online): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) opposed taking away the symbol of the bat from Tehreek-e-Insaf.

Speaking on a private TV program, PML-N leader Javed Latif said that his election symbol should not be taken away from any political party.

People's Party leader Nasir Hussain Shah said that we have a clear stand that Tehreek-e-Insaf should be allowed to participate in elections with the symbol of a bat.

Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Naeem Panjtoha said that despite 26 hours of the Peshawar High Court's

(PHC) order, Election Commission Pakistan (ECP) has not allotted the bat symbol to PTI.

Senior PML-N leader Mian Javed Latif said that the resignation of Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan did not create a crisis in the Supreme Court. The crisis in the Supreme Court was created when Saqib Nisar started giving decisions of his own choice. Justice Ejaz-ul-Ahsan Faizabad Dharna Case has been patronizing those who gave references and those who made references against it. When you make decisions under pressure, how was justice done? Well, if the institution wants to wash away the stains of the past, then it is good.

We are contesting elections for public service; we will end unemployment & inflation

JARANWALA (Online): Chairman of PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that PPP is contesting elections for public service. We will end unemployment and inflation. The journey of public service was started by leader of people, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Bibi Shaheed laid down her life for the completion of that and we will continue this public service.

While giving interview to Online after Tandlianwala visit, he said that we were given the manifesto and consciousness by Shaheed Bibi, so if we get win the PPP elections then we will change the destiny of the country and nation by implementing the 10-point agenda.



KABUL: JUI Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman met with Afghan Interior Minister Siraj ud din Haqqani.

CTD arrests terrorists planning attacks on Maulana, Aimal Wali

PESHAWAR (APP): In a successful operation, the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) in Peshawar on Friday announced the arrest of two alleged suicide bombers affiliated with Daesh Khorasan (ISIS) from the Matni area.

CTD Superintendent of Police (SP) Najam-ul-Hussain told the media persons that the apprehended terrorists were planning suicide attacks targeting key political figures.

According to SP CTD, the arrested individuals were plotting a suicide attack on Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman. Furthermore, it was disclosed that the terrorists had intentions to target Awami National Party (ANP) President

Aimal Wali through a suicide bombing.

The arrested suspects had reportedly visited the JUI-F's center and investigations revealed that they had undergone training in the Paktia region of Afghanistan. During the security operation, authorities recovered suicide jackets, three hand grenades, and propaganda material associated with Daesh. The Bomb Disposal Unit (BDU) has successfully neutralized the weapons and explosive devices.

SP CTD Najam-ul-Hussain disclosed that the outlawed ISIS had previously been linked to targeted killings of individuals representing various schools of thought in the region six months ago.

PTI objects to maintainability of ECP appeal against PHC verdict

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Friday objected to the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP's) appeal filed in the Supreme Court against PHC ruling on PTI's intra-party polls and election symbol.

A three-member Supreme Court bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan and comprising Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hilali conducted hearing of the appeal.

ECP counsel Makhdoom Ali Khan and other legal team members were present in the court as the hearing started. PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Hamid Khan, Shoaib Shaheen, PTI Chief Election Commissioner Niazullah Niazi were also present. Barrister Ali Zafar joined the proceedings through video link from Lahore Registry.

The CJP asked whether Peshawar High Court had issued its detailed judgement to which PTI counsel Hamid Khan replied in negative. Makhdoom Ali Khan read out the PHC verdict. Hamid Khan took the stance that his client had not received any notice as yet. The CJP said he had not gone through the case file as yet.

The CJP then asked Hamid Khan how much time he needed to advance his arguments in the case.

Hamid Khan said he would be ready to present argument by Monday. The ECP counsel prayed to the

court to let the commission allot election symbols on Saturday. The CJP remarked that in case of proceedings in the case to start on Monday, the court will have to suspend the PHC decision. He then said the court was ready to conduct hearing of the case even on Saturday and Sunday.

Hamid then sought time till Saturday to prepare himself for the case. The ECP took the stance that PTI held its last intra-party polls in 2017.

The party was bound to hold election in 2022. The ECP issued notice to the PTI for not conducting polls as per party constitution. As the CJP inquired about notification of the chief election commissioner for party's elections, Hamid stated that he needed some time to furnish the required documents.

He then requested the court to hear first arguments regarding maintainability of the ECP appeal. He said he would give arguments that ECP appeal had no legal ground to be heard. The PTI counsel maintained that ECP could not file appeal in the Supreme Court. Only the affected party could go to the apex court and the ECP had no legal grounds to approach the court itself. The CJP asked should the ECP not defend its decision. The PTI counsel then asked could any judge file an appeal to the higher court against any verdict issued against his court.



LAHORE: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visited Gusha Durood, the place of 24-hour Zikr and Azkar at Minhaj-ul-Quran Secretariat in Lahore.



JAFFARABAD: Commissioner Tariq Qamar Baloch enquiring about provision of medical facilities from a patient during his visit to Civil Hospital

LHC reserves verdict on Qureshi's plea against rejection of papers

LAHORE (APP): A Lahore High Court (LHC) three-member bench on Friday reserved its verdict on a petition filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shah Mehmood Qureshi against rejection of his nomination papers from three constituencies.

The bench headed by Justice Ali Baqar Najafi heard the petition filed by the PTI leader and reserved the verdict after hearing detailed arguments of parties.

In the course of arguments, Qureshi's counsel submitted that all legal requirements were fulfilled before submitting the nomination papers. He submitted that it was not mandatory for a candidate to appear in person before the returning officer for filing his nomination papers.

He submitted that fundamental constitutional rights take precedence over legal rights. He submitted that contesting an election was a constitutional right which could not be abrogated under legal requirements, adding that the Sindh High Court had given a detailed decision on this point. He pleaded with the bench to set aside the deci-

sions of the returning officers and tribunal and allow his client to contest election.

However, the counsel for the Election Commission argued that it was mandatory to put thumb impression on nomination papers but the petitioner did not fulfill the requirement, adding that the legal requirement of verifying the affidavit was also not met.

He further submitted that the proposer and endorser could not be changed as per law, adding that the nomination papers could not be modified after their submission to the returning officer.

It is pertinent to mention that Shah Mehmood Qureshi had challenged rejection of his nomination papers for National Assembly constituencies NA-150 and NA-151 and Provincial Assembly constituency PP-218. He submitted that returning officers and appellate tribunal did not properly assess the facts. He pleaded with the bench to set aside the decisions of returning officers and tribunal and accept his nomination papers from the constituencies.

AC gives Rs. 45000 for installation of electrical wiring for Public Library

KAKAT (APP)-Assistant Commissioner Kalat Sagar Kumar has said on Friday said that all available resources would be utilized to provide facilities in the library for development of education in the area.

He expressed these views while visiting to Public Library Kalat.

The AC also gave 45000 rupees cash from his pocket for the installation of new electrical wiring and other electronic items in the library.

He said that in the journey of evolution and development, man has gone far but humanity has remained behind saying that it was necessary that all moderate and progressive intellectuals and writers should come forward and play a full

role in increasing the value and dignity of the book and the author of the book in the society so that both man and humanity could move on the path of development and prosperity.

He said that the district administration was taking special interest in the field of education, the new generation has to become more literate so that we could soon stand in the ranks of developed countries.

Sagar Kumar further said that instead of negative attitudes and misunderstandings, there was a dire need to spread love and unity in the society so that we could all work together like a family to take our province towards development and prosperity and stability.

Journalist Aziz Memon's 'killer arrested' in Khairpur

KHAIRPUR (INP): Police on Friday claimed to have arrested the killer of journalist Aziz Memon from Sindh's Khairpur district.

According to the senior superintendent of police (SSP) Khairpur, the prime suspect, Ameer Hassan, was arrested from the Khairpur Link Road after a 'shootout'.

The police official said Ameer Hassan was planning a robbery at the Link Road when the police party reached after getting information about the presence of the dacoits.

Seeing the police party, the dacoit opened fire and in retaliation, he was arrested in injured condition, the SSP said and added Hassan along with his accomplices killed journalist Aziz Memon. President Mehrabpur Press Club Aziz Memon was strangled to death in Sindh's district of Naushero Feroze in 2022. According to police, the journalist was found dead and initially, the probe found that he was strangled using a wire.

Political parties urged to unveil economic agenda for upcoming elections

ISLAMABAD (INP): President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that that next general elections were to be held in less than on month period but most of the political parties have not announced the economic agenda of their election manifesto as yet, which was very important to guide the voters in electing the next government.

He said that all political parties should unveil the economic agenda of their election manifesto for the revival of the economy that would provide a direction to the business community and the investors and help them finalize their short and long-term business and investment plans for the country.

Khaqan Abbasi declares upcoming election purposeless to contest

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has officially announced his decision not to contest the upcoming election, citing personal reasons and expressing discontent with the current state of Muslim League-N's politics.

During a TV Channel program, Abbasi stated that he considers the election purposeless and believes political leaders have failed to guide the country. Abbasi emphasized that his decision not to contest is personal, disclosed six months ago, but clarified that he remains responsive to calls from Nawaz Sharif. Commenting on the Murree constituency, he mentioned that party recommendations favored a worker for the ticket, leaving the final decision to the people.

Addressing concerns about alliances with other parties, Abbasi acknowledged the need for seat adjustments and asserted that

his stance doesn't involve seeking favors from the party. He touched upon the Mazahir Naqvi case, suggesting resignation due to charges, and questioned the circumstances surrounding Justice Jaz ul Ahsan's resignation.

Expressing skepticism about the government's commitment to investigating the May 9 incident, Abbasi criticized the failure to prosecute through the PDM. He questioned the impact of imprisoning politicians and stressed the importance of political parties presenting their cabinets to the public.

Abbasi lamented the lack of unity among political parties and advocated for collaborative problem-solving. He criticized the hollow promises in party manifestos and urged transparency about ministerial appointments. He concluded by emphasizing the need for parties to negotiate and address issues collectively.

Second round of Election Understanding between PPP, ITP completed

ISLAMABAD (Online): The second round of talks between the central leaders of the two parties regarding the Electoral Understanding between the Islami Tehreek Pakistan and the Pakistan People's Party in the upcoming general elections has been completed.

On behalf of Pakistan People's Party, Central Secretary General Syed Nayer Bukhari, former ministers Syed Nasir Hussain Shah and Mukesh Kumar Chawla, while on behalf of Islamic Tehreek, Central Secretary General Allama Dr. Shabir Hasan Maithmi,

Central Information Secretary Zahid Ali Akhunzada, Central Deputy Secretary Syed Sikander Abbas Gilani and Deputy Secretary Information Syed Altaf Kazmi were included.

Negotiators from both sides reviewed various constituencies regarding the general elections in February and bilateral political issues were settled between the two parties while continuing the series of negotiations for the settlement of other issues, they decided to finalize the matters in the next stage after consultation with their leaders.

Sheikh withdraws nomination papers from NA-56

RAWALPINDI (Online): Former interior minister Sheikh Rashid has withdrawn his nomination papers from NA-56 Rawalpindi.

Sheikh Rashid had filed appeal against returning officer (RO) objections on his nomination papers in this constituency. Election Tribunal (ET) had dismissed the objection raised on his nomination papers. ET had declared Sheikh Rashid eligible to contest election from NA-56.

ET had accepted for hearing appeal pleas filed

by Sheikh Rashid and his nephew Sheikh Rashid Rafiq against rejection of their nomination papers from NA-56, 57.

Justice Mirza Waqar Rauf judge of ET had rejected RO objections on nomination papers during hearing the appeals on January 4.

Sheikh Rashid had said in this regard that conspiracy to get declare him disqualified has failed. I am Khandani, asli and nasli. I have not played with some one honor. I have not given statement against any one.

SC will not interfere in ECP's....

Continued from page 1 cent verdict would have to be suspended, adding that the apex court was ready to hear the case on Saturday and Sunday as well.

The ECP lawyer then sought time till today to prepare for the case. Online adds: Supreme Court (SC) while upholding Election Commission (EC) decision has rejected All Pakistan Muslim League (APML) petition against non allotment of election symbol of eagle.

The Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa said to counsel for APML that neither you held intra party election nor you gave record to EC. Avoid from destroying the constitutional institutions by leveling the allegations of mala-fide intent against them. This has become tradition in the country to level the charge of ill-intent against every one.

A 3-member bench of SC presided over by the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa took up the case for hearing Fri-

day. Counsel for APML appeared in the court.

Justice Musarrat Hilali inquired from him the pictures of Quaid-e-Azam and Liaqat Ali Khan have been found in your nomination papers. Were they members of your party. Political parties work under election act at present. The counsel replied our rival group have filed the pictures of Quaid-e-Azam and Liaqat Ali Khan. We had symbol of eagle. It is mentioned in the documents of EC. EC snatched election symbol eagle with ill intent.

The CJP remarked EC has abolished your party on several reasons. It has become tradition to discredit any one. Efforts are being made to annihilate constitutional institutions by leveling allegations against them. Deputy director law EC issued notice to you but what order was passed was from EC.

The court rejected the petition of APML against non allocation of election symbol of eagle.

Rizwan meets with Egyptian Assistant FM for Asia

ISLAMABAD (Online): Additional Foreign Secretary (Middle East) Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh, who is currently on a visit to Egypt, held a meeting yesterday with Egyptian Assistant Foreign Minister for Asia, Ahmed Shaheen. Pakistan's Ambassador to Egypt, Ambassador Sajid Bilal, was also present in the meeting.

The two sides reviewed the broad range of bilateral relations including political, trade and investment ties. They also discussed ways to further strengthen bilateral relations including by convening the next round of Joint Ministerial Commission meeting and Annual Bilateral Consultations later this year in Islamabad.

Additional Foreign Secretary and the Assistant Foreign Minister for Asia appreciated the successful holding of the Fourth Pakistan-Africa Trade Development Conference and Single Country Exhibition held in Cairo from 9 to 11 January 2024, which coincided with the 75th anniversary celebrations of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Egypt.

Southee hits milestone as Kiwis beat Pakistan in first T20

Sports Desk

AUCKLAND: Tim Southee became the first player to 150 wickets in Twenty20 internationals as New Zealand beat Pakistan by 46 runs on Friday in their series opener here.

Veteran seam bowler Southee claimed four wickets to pass the milestone and help dismiss the tourists for 180 in the 18th over in response to New Zealand's imposing 226-8, handing them first blood in the five-match series.

Southee's figures of 4-25 were the best of a run-dominated encounter at Eden Park and took him to 151 wickets in T20 internationals, 11 more than Bangladesh spinner Shakib Al Hasan.

He finished the job as Pakistan's run chase capitulated after Babar Azam was the seventh wicket to fall in the 17th over, with the former captain having accelerated to 57 off 35 balls to keep his side in contention.

There were starts for openers Saim Ayub (27) and Mohammad Rizwan (25) but Azam struggled to find support from his teammates before being caught at cover by Kane

Williamson off Ben Sears' bowling.

New Zealand's boundary-laden innings was the highest Pakistan had conceded in a T20, surpassing the 221-3 England scored in Karachi in 2022.

Daryl Mitchell blasted 61 off 27 balls and captain Williamson's 57 took 42 balls as New Zealand built on an explosive start from opener Finn Allen (34), who struck 24 runs off the third over, bowled by Pakistan captain Shaheen Shah Afridi.

Pakistan's new-look attack struggled to protect the ground's notoriously short boundaries, conceding 21 fours and 11 sixes.

Seamer Abbas Afridi impressed in his first international appearance in any format with 3-34 off four overs, although fellow-debutant Usama Mir had his leg spin attacked by Mitchell in particular and finished with 0-51.

Shaheen, who took 3-46, led Pakistan for the first time after Babar forfeited the captaincy in the wake of their failure to make last year's 50-over Cricket World Cup semi-finals.



QUETTA: Additional IG & Commandant Balochistan Constabulary Salman Chaudhry attending funeral prayer of Head Constable Jameel Ahmed who was martyred in Eastern Bypass firing during polio duty

Multan Sultans excited to play in front of passionate home fans

MULTAN (APP): Multan is all set to buzz with excitement as Multan Sultans will begin their HBL Pakistan Super League 9 campaign at home.

Mohammad Rizwan-captained team will host all HBL PSL sides from February 18 to 25 at the picturesque Multan Cricket Stadium.

The tournament, as announced by the Pakistan Cricket Board, will commence on February 17 in Lahore and the action will move to Multan the next day as Multan Sultans play Karachi Kings in a night game.

The Sultans will then host Islamabad United (Feb 20), Lahore Qalandars (Feb 21), Peshawar Zalmi (Feb 23) and Quetta Gladiators (Feb 25, day game).

Owner and chief executive Ali Tareen said "I am extremely delighted that Multan Sultans will be playing their all home games in front of their fans in Multan.

Whenever Multan Sultans play at the Multan Cricket Stadium, the stadium oozes with passion and love and the atmosphere there is second to none. That same passion, love, and enthusiasm of the people of Multan will be palpable in the week-long cricket festival in the city and it will make for the perfect beginning for the HBL PSL 9."

People of NA-70 cannot be misled by rumours: Firdous

SIALKOT (APP): Former Federal Minister and Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) Central Information Secretary Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan has said that the people of NA-70 cannot be misled by rumours.

Addressing people of her constituency, she said she would contest the election for the NA-70 constituency and change the destiny of the people after coming to power. "I am convincing my people that I have the key to resolving backwardness, unemployment, poverty and all problems and difficulties of this area. I hope that "political

orphans," who are spreading rumours and misleading people, will stop now. They should listen that I will contest the election and win," she added.

Firdous Ashiq Awan said that those, who were trying to discourage people by spreading baseless rumours and propaganda, that it would not work at all because the people of the constituency had decided that they would get rid of slavery of generations and would not vote for those who could not bring any improvement and change in the constituency.



QUETTA: Quetta Foundation Leader, Rozina Khilji addresses to media persons during press conference, at Quetta press club.

TENDER NOTICE	
The S&GAD invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items: TSE-232401370781 Only electronic bid will be submitted. No physical bid is required. Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. Tender Fee Rs.2000/-	
S.No	Class of Object
1	Clothing & Liveries (Total Item(s) Count: 28)
	Bid Security 5%
Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: 3 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity 9,000,000 in Previous 3 Years. Turn over of at least 4,000,000 PKR in 3 Subsequent Previous Years. Presence in Active Tax Payer List. Sales Tax Certificate. The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. Registration/Certificate from Small Industries Department in Clothing/Liveries. Procedure Of Procurement: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Deposit at Call of 5% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppra.gob.pk Issuance of tender Documents: Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bppra.gob.pk Last Date of bid submission: Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by 29 January, 2024 till 12:00 PM through supplier dashboard. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at 01:00 PM on EPPS System Address: block 1 civil secretariat Queta Phone no: 0081920280 Email: afzalsarparah@gmail.com	
PRQ No.1326/12-01-2024	SECTION OFFICER (B&A) S&GAD
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70 countries leading health experts, diplomats projected Pakistan's image positively: Nadeem Jan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr Nadeem Jan Friday congratulated nation over the successful conclusion of Global Health Security Summit with participation of more than 70 countries leading health experts and diplomats which has projected the Pakistan's image positively.

Talking to a Private news channel, minister said that Pakistan has initiated a platform to boost the health system strongly and it would provide a regular platform for nations to review progress, share insights, and discuss emerging health challenges on a

global scale.

He said that this health summit forum will also boost the confidence of world for Pakistan's health system, adding, Pakistan has a capable pharmacy workforce whom we can export and utilize for other countries in time of any Pandemic like situation.

Collaborative efforts of policy makers, experts, policymakers, and stakeholders from around the world will further improve the health systems of poor countries, he added.

He emphasized the need for continued collaboration, and the implementation of evidence-based

strategies to safeguard global health.

He said the moot had served as a great opportunity of bringing together international and national experts to share expertise and knowledge for a safer world.

Dr Nadeem Jan said holding of the international conference had proved that the country could play a key role in the health sector and it also sustained the dignity of Pakistan globally.

The summit symbolized unwavering commitment to furthering a safer world, where health security knew no borders, he added.



Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaah Hussain Mullick, addressing the inaugural session of Rawalpindi District-level Kashmir Consultative Committee.

Ministry of IT to launch "Smartphone for All" project on easy installments: Saif

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Dr Umar Saif, on Friday said that the Ministry of IT is set to launch the "Smartphone for All" project, allowing individuals to acquire smartphones through easy installments.

In a statement on his official social media account, he said that the ministry is currently establishing a research and development fund to support mobile phone manufacturing companies and facilitate the growth of the mobile phone manufacturing sector.

Regarding the "Smartphone for All" project, he explained that in the event of failure to pay instalments, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) would block the handset following the pattern of the Device Identification, Registration, and Blocking System (DIRBS).

The minister said that the objective is to encourage responsible financial behaviour and ensure the continued expansion of smartphone accessibility.

Under this policy, he said that telecom companies will have the opportunity

to directly offer smartphones to customers through instalment plans, thereby extending the advantages of mobile broadband, particularly among the low-income segments in Pakistan.

Dr Umar Saif said that Pakistan ranks as the seventh major mobile phone market globally, with 190 million mobile phones in use.

He expressed the government's goal to reduce mobile phone imports by promoting the manufacturing of affordable and high-quality mobile phones within Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: A view of the dense foggy weather in evening of Federal Capital.

PSW introduces Russian language 'helpline' to facilitate Asian trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a strategic move towards advancing international trade facilitation, Pakistan Single Window (PSW) has launched its dedicated Russian language "helpline" to benefit international transit trade with Central Asia.

Introducing this helpline service, would address the crucial language barrier faced by traders particularly from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan using Pakistani ports as transit routes for imports/exports with Central Asia, said a press release issued here Friday.

The helpline is expected to bridge communication gaps and provide guidance and facilitation to foreign traders to ensure compliance with Pakistan's Customs

and trade regulations applicable on transit trade.

In addition to the helpline service, PSW is taking another step by incorporating a Russian language option in the WebOC system's transit module to facilitate traders and their authorized clearing agents in filing of transit declarations, which would further underscore PSW's dedication to providing comprehensive solutions for international traders. Pakistan recently signed transit agreements with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as part of its vision to position Pakistan as a trade, transit and transportation hub and to promote regional connectivity with Central Asia and beyond.

Renowned singer, actor, script writer Inayat remembered

ISLAMABAD (APP): The birth anniversary of the singer, actor, producer, director, scriptwriter, columnist and protagonist of the development of the Punjabi language and literature Inayat Hussain Bhatti was observed on Friday.

Born on January 12, 1928, in Gujrat Bhatti moved to Lahore to pursue further studies. After some time he started singing for Radio Pakistan and subsequently, entered the film industry as a playback singer in 1949 through the Punjabi hit 'Phery'.

He was a multi-talented distinguished singer, actor, director author, social leader and columnist.

He has been interested in Sufi poetry since he was a child.

Inayat sang for nearly 500 films, in both Urdu and Punjabi. His impressive discography includes 2,500 songs.

In 1997, he suffered an attack of paralysis, which impaired his speech and kept him bedridden for most of the time thereafter. He died on May 31, 1999.

IHC issues contempt of court notice to chairman CDA on sale of plot

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued contempt of court notice to chairman CDA Anwar ul Haq and on sale of plot by CDA to a citizen in a grave yard.

IHC has observed the citizen who has got plot from CDA kept on making rounds of CDA office for 10 years in connection with substitute plot outside graveyard.

CDA officers gave statement that they would provide substitute plot to citizen but they did not comply with court's orders.

Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri has summoned CDA officers on January 25 on the application of the citizen.

Contempt of court notice has been also issued to member estate CDA Tariq Salam Marwat and director Tabinda Tariq.

Member Estate CDA Tariq Salam Marwat refused to implement court's orders.

Nationwide anti-polio immunization campaign continues

ISLAMABAD (APP): A massive anti-polio campaign is currently underway across the country to immunize more than 44.3 million children under five years of age who are being administered polio drops.

According to details, the current anti-polio drive is part of an international effort to eradicate the disease from the globe.

The polio workers and teams are diligently going door-to-door, ensuring that no child is left without the vital vaccine to guarantee effective coverage.

Talking to a private news channel, Caretaker Federal Minister for Health, Dr Nadeem Jan said that citizens should cooperate with polio workers who will visit their homes to administer vaccines.

Chairman BISP emphasizes digital literacy, financial inclusion of needy women

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Dr. Amjad Saqib Friday underscored the importance of opening bank accounts for needy women, emphasizing digital literacy and financial inclusion.

He was presiding over a high level meeting to review the progress on the BISP's key initiatives, including enrollment of widows, inclusion of adolescents in Nasonuma, Hybrid Social Protection Scheme and Benazir Social Protection Accounts.

During the meeting, Dr. Amjad Saqib emphasized the BISP's commitment to serving the impoverished.

Secretary BISP, Amer Ali Ahmad provided a detailed overview of the agenda items during the meeting.

The Director Generals (DGs) of various wings also updated the Chairman BISP on the discussed topics. DG NSER/CCT, Naveed Akbar informed the meeting that the target for opening accounts under the Benazir Social Protection Accounts had been successfully achieved, with a total of 9,800 accounts opened.

Furthermore, 6,700 applications were received under the BISP Saving Scheme. Data of 8,900 widows have been identified.

The Financial Literacy program, spanning 13 districts and benefiting 4,000 needy women, has been successfully completed.

Dr. Amjad Saqib urged that field offices receive training to educate underprivileged women about Social Protection Accounts, identifying those who already possess bank accounts as a priority.

He instructed the officials to ensure the operationalization of accounts opened under the Benazir Social Protection Accounts, BISP Saving Scheme, and the Financial Literacy program by the end of January.

Present at the meeting were Additional Secretary BISP, Dr. Muhammad Tahir Noor, DG Finance Wasim Ahmad and DG OM Dr. Asim Ijaz whereas Zonal Director Generals of BISP also virtually participated in the meeting.

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ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Khalid, Muhammad Ali, working in Balochistan and Karachi good transport addressing a press conference at National Press Club.

BJP's undemocratic policies pose serious threat to peace in South Asia: APHC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) and other Hurriyat organizations have said that the undemocratic policies of the Indian Bharatiya Janata Party government, led by Narendra Modi, posed a serious threat to peace in South Asia.

According to Kashmir Media Service report on Friday, the Hurriyat organizations, including Tehreek-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir Muslim League, Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party, Jammu and Kashmir Peoples League, Kashmir Tehreek-e-Khawateen, Shabab-ul-Muslimeen Jammu Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Hurriyat Front, United Resistance Forum, Jammu and Kashmir Youth Social Forum (JKYSF), Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Movement, Jammu and Kashmir

Democratic Political Movement, Kashmir Freedom Front, Jammu Kashmir Employees Movement and Sikh intellectuals Circle J&K in their separate statements issued in Srinagar said muzzling Kashmiris' voice through military might is Modi's brand of democracy, particularly in occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

They, however, maintained that the volume of arrests of political leaders and activists by the Indian forces in the territory testified the fact that the Kashmiris are prepared for a long and arduous fight for the restoration of their rights. The statements said Modi's despotism has transformed India into a fascist state.

They said justice continues to elude the Kashmiris who have been struggling for over seven decades for their right to self-determination.

Avoid committing crime Dahri urges social media users to get knowledge of cyber laws

ISLAMABAD (APP): Human Right activist and advocate Muhammad Nawaz Dahri on Friday urged social media users to get knowledge of cyber laws to avoid committing crime.

Number of social media users are committing crime due to ignorance and lack of knowledge regarding cyber laws, he said while talking to a private television channel.

Nawaz Dahri said that Prevention of Electronic Crime Act (PECA) has already introduced in 2016, to control the increasing cases of cyber crime. Before the PECA act, he said social media users had not been monitored.

Replying to a question, he said, we have five to six million active users in the country.

To another question, he said, Our authorities are well equipped to detect every user committing cyber crime and they could be held responsible through prosecuting, he added. He said that defaming someone on social media is a punishable offence and for this, a heavy penalty could be imposed against the person involved in cyber crime.

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Legendary poet Ahmed Faraz remembered

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 93rd birth anniversary of renowned poet Ahmad Faraz was observed on Friday.

He was born on January 12, 1931, in Kohat as Syed Ahmad Shah.

He started writing poetry with the name of Ahmad Shah Kohati but later adopted the name Ahmad Faraz with the advice of the legendary Faiz Ahmed Faiz.

His first collection of poetry "Tanha Tanha" was published when he was in graduation. Faraz added many colours to Urdu language with his poetry.

Ahmed Faraz is ranked among the greatest Urdu poets of the current era because of his elegant yet simple poetry.

Islamabad police enhances security measures in red zone

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have implemented enhanced security measures in the high security zone and directed officials to remain vigilant during their shifts, keeping a close eye on suspicious vehicles and individuals. In a recent directive, ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan emphasized the need for a proactive approach to ensure the safety of pivotal government and private establishments, diplomatic missions, and other vital assets situated within the high security zone. The directive called for a meticulous focus on effective security protocols to swiftly address any untoward incidents. SP High Security Zone, Saud Khan, led a crucial meeting with police officers and representatives from various government and private institutions

operating within the Red Zone. During the meeting, attendees were briefed on the importance of upholding the highest standards of diligence and professionalism in their duties.

Security personnel assigned to the Red Zone were specifically instructed to remain vigilant during their shifts, keeping a close eye on suspicious vehicles and individuals. The aim is to fortify the security apparatus, ensuring a rapid response to any potential security threats.

SP High Security Zone emphasized the significance of fostering positive relationships with citizens and encouraged security personnel to engage with the community. A special appeal was made to the public, urging them to report any perceived suspicious activity or individuals promptly.

4 members of bike lifter gang arrested; six stolen motorbikes recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police Ramna police team have arrested four wanted members of a notorious bike lifter gang involved in numerous bike theft activities and recovered six stolen motorbikes, cash and number plates from their possession, a public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police had categorically started a crackdown against criminal elements in order to save the precious lives and property of citizens.

Following these directions, the Ramna police team used technical and human resources and succeeded in apprehending four wanted members of a notorious bike lifter gang involved in numerous bike lifting activities in various areas of Ramna police station.

Special Traffic education, enforcement campaign in full swing

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police took prompt action against underage

action against those violating traffic rules. In this regard, Islamabad capital police already formed special



motorcyclists and drivers and imposed fines on them under the campaign of Special Traffic education and enforcement.CTO

Following the directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police launched a special traffic education and enforcement campaign in order to solve the traffic related problems faced by the citizens on roads, a police public relations officer said.

He said that, campaign is underway against underage bikers, those involved in rash driving and violating traffic rules. Under the supervision of chief traffic officer Islamabad, zonal DSP's are ensuring strict

squads to set up special roadblocks in major highways and squares of Islamabad in order to take strict legal action against underage drivers and other traffic rules violators.

Pamphlets and leaflets are being distributed to create awareness among citizens.

While various teams of the education wing are spreading awareness about road safety rules among the road users.

Following the efforts of these measures, several underage motorcyclists and traffic rules violators were fined, while unregistered bikes were also impounded at different police stations.

Parents are also requested to fulfill their responsibility.



ISLAMABAD: A large number of Motorcyclists crossing the bridge at Srinagar Highway in the Federal Capital.

Average 1,700 posts with corporate data surface on dark web: Report

ISLAMABAD (INP): Kaspersky Digital Footprint Intelligence team has over the past two years uncovered almost 40,000 dark web posts about the sale of internal corporate information.

These posts - created by cybercriminals - are used to buy, sell, or distribute data stolen from various companies through cyberattacks. The number of posts offering access to corporate infrastructure has seen a 16% increase compared to the previous year. Worldwide, every third company was referenced in dark web posts associated with the sales of data or access.

Kaspersky Digital Footprint Intelligence ex-

perts observed an average of 1,731 dark web messages per month about the sale, purchase and distribution of internal corporate databases and documents, totaling almost 40,000 messages between January 2022 and November 2023. The monitored resources encompassed dark web forums, blogs, and also shadow Telegram channels.

Another category of data available on the dark web is access to corporate infrastructures allowing cybercriminals to purchase pre-existing access to a company, enabling attackers to streamline their efforts. According to Kaspersky's research, more than 6,000 dark web messages have been advertising

such offers in January 2022-November 2023. Currently, cybercriminals are increasingly offering access, with the average number of corresponding monthly messages witnessing a 16% rise from 246 in 2022 to 286 in 2023.

While the number of messages may not seem high, it doesn't diminish the potential magnitude of the issue. With the looming threat of supply chain attacks in the coming year, even breaches targeting smaller companies could escalate to impact numerous individuals and businesses globally.

"Not every message on the dark web contains new and unique information. Some offers can be re-

petitive; for instance, when a malicious actor aims to quickly sell data, they may post it on different underground forums to reach a larger audience of potential criminal buyers. Moreover, certain databases might be combined and presented as new.

For instance, there are 'combolists' - databases that aggregate information from various previously leaked databases, such as passwords for a specific email address," explains Anna Pavlovskaya, expert at Kaspersky Digital Footprint Intelligence.

To further enhance security of businesses worldwide, Kaspersky Digital Footprint Intelligence experts tracked mentions of

700 random companies related to corporate data being compromised in 2022, providing information about cyberthreats originating from the dark web.

The findings revealed that 233 organizations - one-in-three companies - were mentioned in dark web posts related to the illicit exchange of data. These references specifically involved topics such as data breaches, stolen access to infrastructure, or compromised accounts.

More statistics about dark web discussions are presented on Securelist, while the Kaspersky Digital Footprint Intelligence website provides a comprehensive incident response

playbook for handling leaked incidents.

To avoid threats related to data breaches, it is worth implementing the following security includes Swift identification and response to data breaches is essential.

Essentially, a company must gather evidence to confirm the attack occurred and that data has been compromised.

Continuously monitoring the dark web allows for the detection of both fake and real breach-related posts, as well as the tracking of spikes in malicious activity. Given the resource-intensive nature of dark web monitoring, external experts often take on this responsibility.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Saturday January 13, 2024

Terror wave

A spate of deadly recent terrorist attacks illustrates the grim fact that unless the state takes comprehensive counterterrorism measures, the militancy-related bloodshed witnessed in 2023 is likely to continue in the new year.

Many of the attacks have targeted police personnel, particularly those tasked with guarding polio teams. The week began on a sombre note when at least seven policemen guarding vaccinators were martyred in Bajaur on Monday in an IED blast targeting their vehicle. On Tuesday, two police officers lost their lives in a reported gunfight with militants in Bannu. These personnel were also escorting polio teams.

Wednesday also witnessed significant bloodshed, as three law enforcers were martyred when a police post was attacked in Kohat, while two army men lost their lives in Lakki Marwat. On the same day an election candidate was gunned down in North Waziristan, while another hopeful survived an attack in Turbat.

In the aforementioned attacks, terrorists have struck both 'hard' targets, in the form of security personnel, as well as 'soft' ones, such as election hopefuls. They show just how vulnerable police personnel are, particularly those serving in areas of KP and Balochistan experiencing a renewed wave of terrorist violence.

As mentioned, 2023 was not a good year where terror-related casualties are concerned. According to figures compiled by a think tank, there were over 1,500 violence-linked fatalities last year from nearly 800 terror attacks.

It is particularly tragic that those protecting polio vaccinators have themselves come in the line of fire. This is not a new development; around a hundred people have been killed in polio-related incidents since 2012.

A recalibration of the national CT strategy is long overdue, particularly in order to protect the lives of soldiers and police personnel serving on the front lines. While military personnel are relatively better equipped, police officers also need to be supplied safety gear that can help save lives.

Moreover, those protecting polio teams should be provided multi-layered security. While the state must keep using diplomatic channels to communicate to the Afghan Taliban that their soil cannot be used by forces inimical to Pakistan, internal efforts are equally necessary to flush out militants from our own territory.

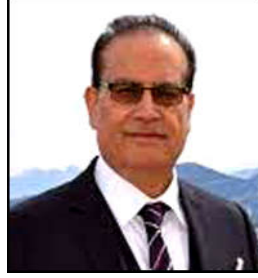
Unless efforts to uproot militancy succeed, the next, and inevitable step, will require military operations that will displace communities, and require more sacrifices from security personnel and dedicated funds.

And as an election looms, candidates and voters in militancy-affected areas need security in order to freely campaign, and cast their ballots without fear, respectively. All security and intelligence agencies need to be on the same page, and together with the civil administration, the militant threat needs to be neutralised.

Two resigned, others may follow...

By Qamar Bashir

Press Secretary to the President(Rtd); Former Press Minister at Embassy of Pakistan to France; Former MD, SRBC



In Pakistan, an atmosphere of palpable excitement and tumult prevails, akin to the thick smog in Punjab and Lahore, where visibility is so limited that even one's own hands become unseen. Every passing moment is laden with significant and breaking news, constantly keeping the public on edge. Unfortunately, this pervasive frenzy is not a harbinger of hope but rather a thick cloud of war alarms that hangs over the nation, casting a shadow on aspirations for a better future. In this relentless struggle to outmaneuver rivals, the foundational pillars of the state and its institutions are engaged in a perilous game of pulling each other down.

The Senate, pitted against the Judiciary, has taken a bold step by passing a resolution calling for an indefinite delay in the upcoming elections. This move, a direct challenge to the Supreme Court of Pakistan, which had firmly set the election date for February 8, 2024, serves as a mockery of the highest court's historic decision.

The Supreme Court, issued a stern rebuke to the Lahore High Court, asserting in no uncertain terms that the court is complicit with those seeking to delay elections for their vested interests.

The PTI's struggle over the BAT symbol has become a legal rollercoaster, marked by conflicting decisions. Despite the

Peshawar High Court's back-and-forth on allocating the symbol, the Election Commission chose to disregard court orders and withhold the emblem. PTI swiftly responded by filing a contempt petition, slated for tomorrow (12th Jan 2024). The Election Commission is all set to file an appeal before the Supreme Court. The deliberate choice of the Peshawar High Court, over the potentially jurisdictional Islamabad High Court, underscores PTI's resolute belief in the latter's compromise.

The two judges of the Supreme Court have already tendered their resignations, with the looming possibility of more following suit. If this trend continues, it could plunge the credibility and impartiality of both the Supreme Court and the Chief Justice into intense scrutiny, potentially rendering the apex court practically dysfunctional.

The rift within the Supreme Court was initiated by an audacious move from an unfamiliar lawyer, Mian Dawood, who, in February 2023, filed a complaint against Justice Mazahar Naqvi. The complaint alleges violations of the code of conduct for judges outlined in Clause (8) of Article 209 of the Constitution. The accusations leveled against Justice Naqvi include misconduct, the creation of illegal assets, and the accumulation of wealth through frontmen. Later, this complaint was turned into a formal complaint. The SJC issued two show-cause notices, demanding that Justice Naqvi explain the apparent inconsistencies in his financial records.

Justice Naqvi, vehemently denied any wrongdoing and labeled the show-cause notices as politically motivated tools wielded against him. He filed a petition with the Supreme Court seeking a stay order. The Supreme Court's dismissal of Naqvi's petition proved to be a turning point.

With the SJC investigation set to move forward, Naqvi opted for a dramatic exit. In a concise resignation letter, he maintained his innocence but acknowledged that continuing under such a cloud of suspicion was untenable.

Justice Naqvi's resignation left more questions than answers. Did it signify an admission of guilt, or was it a strategic retreat from a perceived unfair process? Was it a tacit acknowledgement of wrongdoing or a desperate attempt to escape scrutiny?

As a former Deputy Commissioner of Income Tax with over a decade of experience, I assert with confidence that the allegations against Muzhar Naqvi, revolving around property transactions at significantly disparate values, resonate across civil and military officers, politicians, judges, and business figures. If such practices were absent, and all individuals adhered strictly to legal obligations, our nation might have charted a different course.

The inherent inconsistency in the handling of similar circumstances, particularly the parallel allegations against Qazi Faez Isa, raises questions about the fairness of the entire episode. In a situation where allegations against Isa were dismissed, and accusations of amassing wealth exceeding 12

billion by former Army Chief Qamar Javaid Bajwa only led to the incarceration of those disclosing this information, it suggests a nuanced and potentially unjust dimension to the legal proceedings.

Recalling the allegations against Qazi Faez Isa, pertaining to the acquisition of three London properties leased in the names of his wife and children between 2011 and 2015, raises parallels with the current situation, emphasizing the need for consistency and fairness in addressing such matters across different individuals and institutions.

Let us peruse, the Supreme Judicial Council decision point wise.

The reference to be of no legal effect, non-maintainable whatsoever and stands quashed.

Reference was filed with mala fide intention, prematurity and lack of evidence".

Government agencies including the FIA secretly obtained information about the petitioner and his family in clear transgression of Articles 4 and 14 of the Constitution.

Similar observations can be extended to the case involving Justice Mazahar Naqvi. The petitioner, in this instance, is a lawyer who doesn't bear any direct impact from the alleged property transactions with Justice Naqvi. There is no record of the petitioner engaging in property transactions with the judge, neither as a buyer nor a seller, and therefore, lacks a legitimate basis to possess detailed information about Justice Naqvi's properties or their transactional intricacies.

It becomes apparent that the origin of such detailed information is likely rooted in the historical practices of influential and powerful sectors, known for exerting pressure, offering bribes, and cultivating relationships with judges. It's a recurring pattern that references or complaints are often filed against judges and officials who resist yielding to illegal demands made through proxies. This underscores the challenges and pressures faced by those within the judiciary who choose to uphold their integrity and independence in the face of external influence.

Having reviewed the income tax and wealth tax returns of numerous politicians, bureaucrats, and military officials during my tenure, the reality is that the allegations leveled against Justice Mazahar are likely applicable to the tax returns of many individuals.

The narrative takes a disconcerting turn when defending vested interests led to the sweeping abolition of laws and the abrupt halt of critical surveys. During an economic survey in 2001 that documented previously undeclared immovable properties of numerous army officers, not only was the wealth tax abolished, but the entire survey was abruptly terminated.

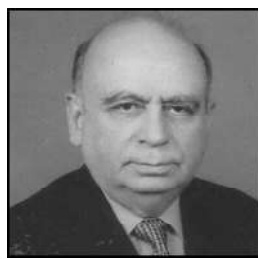
In light of this context, a pertinent question emerges: why was the applicant who filed the reference not summoned for an inquiry into the sources of information within the FBR? Why did the FBR, exclusively vested with jurisdiction over tax matters, escape admonishment for leaking sensitive

information against an honorable judge? Why did the SJC encroach upon the exclusive jurisdiction of the FBR? The inconsistency in arguments, notably the acceptance of similar arguments in the case of Qazi Faez Isa but their rejection in the case of Justice Mazahar Naqvi, raises eyebrows.

These apparent contradictions and discrepancies in the arguments and proceedings of the SJC likely contributed to Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan dissent and subsequent resignation. In his dissenting note, he unequivocally called for the withdrawal of the show cause notice issued to Justice Mazahar Naqvi. Expressing concern over the council's actions, he criticized the hasty and unconventional proceedings, deeming them contrary to established traditions and legal requirements. The looming possibility of other judges with similar reservations following suit in resigning could render the Supreme Court dysfunctional for a considerable period.

A political dimension becomes apparent in what is perceived as part of the London plan, as articulated by spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb. In response to the resignations of Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan and Mazahar Ali Akbar Naqvi, she declared that the alleged conspiracy bench against former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had reached its conclusion. This political interpretation adds a layer of complexity to the resignations, suggesting a connection to broader political agendas and machinations.

Social welfare for GB



Afzal Ali Shigri

Every November, the people of Gilgit-Baltistan commemorate their freedom and accession to Pakistan. The Pakistani state actively promotes the region as the most beautiful part of the country, highlighting its unique and breathtaking landscape to encourage tourism.

However, when a student from Gilgit-Baltistan questions the denial of constitutional rights and the territory's undefined legal status in conversation with the prime minister, the PM simply responds with the assertion that Gilgit-Baltistan is an integral part of Pakistan and will continue to be so.

A harsh reality emerges when the issue of this region's representation in parliament is brought before the Supreme Court of Pakistan. The federal government challenges the court's jurisdiction, asserting that the region is not part of Pakistan but a disputed territory of Kashmir under de facto control of Pakistan. Adding to the complexity, national political parties have extended their influence in this area through local chapters and dominated the limited empowerment granted to locally elected governments.

Despite possessing substantial mineral resources and the potential for hydropower energy, the region suffers from energy deprivation due to this imposed control. The development of infrastructure is solely focused on meeting the strategic needs of the federation. A top-heavy governance structure con-

sumes most of its limited budget grants, exacerbating the neglect.

Amidst the prevailing gloom and adversity, the resilience of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan is a silver lining. They continue to exhibit a unique ability to confront the harshest forces of nature and endure punishing winters with their limited resources. GB's diaspora communities not only thrive outside the region but consistently return, highlighting their unwavering bond with their homeland.

The remarkable resilience of these people, despite the denial of essential resources, finds support in the NGO sector. Over the past four decades, the Rural Support Programme initiated by the Aga Khan Foundation has emerged as a success story.

This visionary initiative, conceived and implemented by Shoab Sultan, a forward-thinking civil servant, has not only flourished in the GB region but has been replicated nationwide, earning international acclaim and adoption in other countries.

Additionally, the Marafie family-funded NGO has played a pivotal role in the development of education, particularly for girls, and healthcare services, predominantly in the Baltistan division. Its impact has now expanded to encompass the entire region. The Marafie Foundation's success is attributed to the active participation of the local community village and women groups organised by the Agha Khan Foundation, signifying a collaborative effort in promoting education and healthcare in the region.

The community's notable achievements, facilitated by the support of these two NGOs, have served as a catalyst for the emergence of numerous NGOs initiated by the locals and comprised mostly

of well-informed, educated youth. This trend ensures sustained grassroots development of community projects, promising macro-economic development for the region despite years of governmental neglect. This same spirit propels GB to explore innovative avenues for poverty alleviation.

Under social pressure from vocal and assertive local community organisations, GB has now embarked on a new and novel scheme for social protection for the vulnerable segments of society and the community at large.

In collaboration with Unicef Pakistan, the government of Gilgit-Baltistan has formulated a forward-thinking and comprehensive Social Protection Policy, whose most interesting aspect is that it expands the frontiers of social protection by pioneering a novel approach. It has adapted the Initial Public Offering (IPO) framework to create a Social Protection Fund (SPF).

But the SPF will do more than just provide services; it will engender a new philosophy of social welfare that is participatory, inclusive, and democratic. By buying into the SPF, investors are not just providing funds; they are taking ownership of the mission to protect and empower the most vulnerable members of society.

The SPF aims to leverage the spirit of public ownership to create a fund that is accountable to its stakeholders — the people. This is a call to action for all who share a commitment to social justice and equity.

The SPF is not just a fund; it is a commitment to the idea that every individual deserves the opportunity to thrive — and that through collective investment, we can make this vision a reality for GB. -- Courtesy Dawn

A pioneer



Zubeida Mustafa

The women's movement in Pakistan has come a long way since its inception. It has assumed different forms and strategies during the course of its development while focusing on the fundamental human rights of women and their empowerment. What was noticeably missing was the female sexuality dimension in the discourse. It was too sensitive an issue to talk about in public in Pakistan's conservative environment that was fraught with controversies.

Ours is a society that is so prudish that an article I wrote on breast cancer in 1978 had prompted a horde of bearded gentlemen claiming to be the guardians of our morality to crash into the editor's office to denounce the fahaashi (vulgarity) the paper was publishing. Being progressive and a feminist himself, the editor had shooed them away saying that breast cancer was a life or death issue for women.

In such a society, it needs guts to write about the female reproductive organs in explicit terms. There are far too many readers whose thinking is misogynistic and patriarchal. Even an innocuous piece of writing becomes pornography for them. Their anger stems from the belief that women are sex objects created to give satisfaction to man's desires.

That would explain why Dr Tahira Kazmi's blogs on the social media have invited the wrath of her critics who are in abundance. Mercifully, the doctor, a gynaecologist by pro-

fession, also has admirers. She has brought enlightenment to many female readers who feel after reading her blogs that they understand their bodies better. Being highly qualified MBBS from Fatima Jinnah Medical University Lahore (1990) followed by a train of higher foreign degrees — Dr Tahira knows what she is writing. She holds prestigious positions in Oman's Ministry of Health and the Sultan Qaboos University.

Four collections of her blogs have already appeared while the fifth is under publication. A fair-minded reader would take them as a scientific piece of prose written in the social context with a strong underpinning of feminism. She describes herself as a 'Gynae-Feminist'.

All the subjects covered are familiar to women reading English-language newspapers but no one has written on them in Urdu so frankly. Childbirth, labour pain, menstruation, menopause, incontinence and prejudice against the girl child have been covered in different social contexts. If the frankness is shocking it is because these issues have been kept under wraps. It is time they were brought into the public space to make them socially acceptable.

But what will continue to shock are the horrendous crimes against women Dr Tahira exposes. How else would one describe the practice of putting a lock on a woman's vagina with the key kept in the husband's pocket for safekeeping to ensure that the wife is not unfaithful to him.

It is the feminist in Tahira that is most striking. She is quick to note an injustice done to a woman. She recalls how observant and curious she was as a child and still is. "You have to convince me with solid arguments if you think I am wrong. If you force me I will hit back. I am not afraid

of what people say," she says boldly. She also has the discretion to know when silence is a befitting way to snub an obnoxious critic.

Her greatest assets have been her medical knowledge and her writing skills that helped her produce blogs with literary elegance. It was motherhood that led her on the road to self-discovery of her latent talent. She wrote her first blog on the night of her mother's death. She was grieving from Alzheimer's. She drove Tahira to write, "I saw my mother melt drop by drop" and the blog went viral. That was 2019. She turned to gynae blogging in 2021 when she saw her daughter in severe menstrual agony. It prompted her to write to explain how the female anatomy makes pain a handicap for a woman needing male understanding. Pain also makes a person creative, with reference to Faiz's verse on his heart attack and the pain he suffered, Tahira wrote, "Kush Faiz ko mahwari aati".

What angers Tahira is the traditional view that women carry the honour of the family — meaning the man's. Hence shame is attached to the woman's reproductive organs that are given derogatory names. Why can't the spade be called a spade one may ask.

Our society's misogyny is sickening. Pakistan is a place where men fight and attack each other's women to take revenge. Where were these critics when women were paraded naked in the streets of Nawabpur (1984) and when Mukhtaran Mai was gang-raped on the orders of a male jirga (2002)? Presently, 30,000 girls are trafficked every year to be sold into prostitution to satisfy men's lust and not a voice is raised. It is this distortion the good doctor blogger is trying to correct. -- Courtesy Dawn

Women empowerment is very important for gender equality: Baligh

Independent Report

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman attended a ceremony organized by the National Commission on Status of Women, Government of Pakistan, regarding the empowerment of women as chief guest at a local hotel today.

Chairperson National Commission on Status of Women Nilofar Bakhtiar and others were present on this occasion. Addressing the ceremony, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that women empowerment is very important for gender equality. He said that women are contributing to the development of country by working side by side in various fields along with looking after their families and children.

He said that our religion, Islam, and the Constitution of Pakistan guarantee equal economic, social, and human rights for all citizens. In our religion, the example of Hazrat Khadija (RA) is in front of us, who was a successful business woman.

He said that in order to empower women, it is very important to provide them with easy access to educational institutions and facilities in educational institutions. He said that economic independence not only increases the confidence of women but also reduces the burden on other family members.

In our society, women are working in every field and proving their mettle, adding he said that today Pakistani women are aerospace engineers, pilots, police officers. Even

in our villages, women work side by side with men in the fields. Governor Punjab further said that by empowering women, the goals of development in the country's economy can be achieved.

He said that the performance and skills of women are much better than men in many fields. Governor Punjab said that the governments that started institutions like Commission on Status of Women and projects like Women on Wheels to empower women should be appreciated. Governor Punjab said that the Government of Pakistan and many institutions of the Government of Punjab are active for women's welfare, economic independence and poverty alleviation by providing women with easy loans.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur-Rehman addressing the ceremony regarding Women Empowerment organized by National Commission on Status of Women.

KP Govt ready for transparent conduct of elections: CM KP

Launches digital dashboard under Khushal KP program

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Syed Arshad Hussain Shah here on Friday said that transparent conduct of elections was the primary responsibility of the caretaker government and the government was ready in this regard.

Addressing a ceremony, he said that the Supreme Court and the Election Commission had been informed in connection with the free elections, adding that there was a shortage of 56,000 officials to perform the election duty.

The chief minister is also taking steps for the betterment of the province

and the people. He said that the provincial government was actively working for peace, order, better governance and provision of facilities to the people and taking pragmatic steps in this regard.

The CM said that the government was working for the welfare of the people and taking measures to train 500,000 youth to send them to Gulf countries for better opportunities.

After the inclusion of tribal districts, the share of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has increased, adding that the Prime Minister was keen to address the problems here and had established a committee in this regard.

Meanwhile, as an important step towards good governance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Caretaker Chief Minister Justice @ Syed Arshad Hussain Shah on Friday launched a Digital Dashboard under the "Khushal Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" Initiative for real-time monitoring of provincial departments, and other public service delivery outlets at divisional and district levels. A ceremony, for launching the Khushal Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dashboard, was held here at Chief Minister's House Peshawar, which was attended by Caretaker Provincial Ministers Syed Masood Shah.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi enquiring about the health of patient sitting on a wheel chair during his visit to (New Emergency) Punjab Institute of Cardiology.

Naqvi displeased with poor cleanliness in PIC

Independent Report LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi expressed displeasure over poor cleanliness, marks of dust and stains on tiles and counters during his inspection of the newly constructed emergency of the Punjab Institute of Cardiology (PIC).

He summoned the contractor, officials from the C&W department and the medical superintendent for an immediate explanation. He pointed out the signs of neglect in cleanliness arrangements and dust on tiles, expressing dismay over the situation. Inspecting the emergency, the CM questioned why the cleanliness conditions were so subpar. He summoned

the commissioner and directed immediate improvements in cleanliness arrangements. He emphasized that poor cleanliness in the new emergency was unacceptable.

He also enquired about the well-being of a patient in a wheelchair, lifting a fallen file from the floor and placing it back on the wheelchair. The patient expressed gratitude to the CM for his gesture. He also addressed the complaint of a patient from Gujrat about delayed scheduling for angiography. Ordering immediate action, he instructed the MS to expedite the angiography procedure. The health secretary and others were also present.

Dr Javed says: Govt has introduced AI in hospitals

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Punjab Health Minister Prof Dr. Javed Akram said that the government had introduced a historic artificial intelligence systems in government hospitals across the province.

Speaking at a book launch event, he emphasized the need for innovation in daily life and highlighted the pivotal role of technology in the development of powerful economies worldwide.

During his address, Dr. Akram stressed the importance of evidence-based policies in addressing Pakistan's challenges and advocated for local technology development instead of relying on imports. He lamented the absence of biotechnology plants in Pakistan and urged a collective effort, suggesting an all-party conference to enhance the system.

Tight security arranged for DBA election

FAISALABAD (APP): The police department has made tight security arrangements for the annual election of District Bar Association (DBA) Faisalabad scheduled to be held here on Saturday (January 13).

City Police Officer (CPO) Captain (Retired) Muhammad Ali Zia, in a statement here on Friday, said that a comprehensive plan had been devised for the security of DBA elections and more than 1,063 security personnel including 42 SIs, 82 ASIs and 908 constables were deputed.

He said that 5 SPs, 15 DSPs and 16 Inspectors were also monitoring the security arrangements while a special bomb disposal squad and officials.

Six dacoits killed in two police encounters

RAWALPINDI (APP): Six dacoits were killed here as a result of heavy cross-firing during two police encounters in the jurisdiction of Race Course and Morgah Police Stations, said a police spokesman.

He informed that Rawalpindi District Police on Thursday in an important action in the case of the murder of a British citizen during a robbery three days ago, succeeded to kill four dacoits, members of an inter-provincial gang who were involved in the incident.

According to details, the dacoits opened firing on the police party in the

Race Course area late on Thursday night and during cross-firing, four were killed.

The suspects had shot dead a citizen namely Tasaraf Mehmood on his return from the UK in the Race Course area. The gang used police uniforms during the robbery incidents. Members of the inter-provincial gang were also involved in dacoits in Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Rawalpindi.

City Police Officer, Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani had taken notice of the incident of murder of a British citizen during a robbery and formed special teams to arrest the accused.

Naqvi visits Mayo Hospital

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi has directed to install appropriate-sized signboards for the convenience of patients and their attendants at Mayo Hospital, during an inspection of the hospital's emergency block, which is in its final stage on Friday.

He further directed that the finishing touches should be completed expeditiously with high standards.

The CM also emphasized the need for the timely completion of all tasks while maintaining the quality of work. The KEMU principal was also present.

CM Baqar directs Education Dept to provide hard, soft copies of textbooks to students

KARACHI (APP): The Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (retd) Maqbool Baqar has directed the School Education Department to ensure that both hard and soft copies of textbooks are provided to students for online studying. We are in a digital age where children prefer digital content over hard copies and carrying them around, he added.

This he said while speaking at the launching ceremony of the website of the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Mirpurkhas, at CM House here Friday. Secretary, U&B Noor Ahmad Samoo, Chairman Mirpurkhas Board Zulfikar Ali Shah, Secretary Board Anisuddin, Controller of Examination Anwar Aleem and others were also present.

In a simple ceremony, the chief minister punched the key to the computer

and launched the website of the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Mirpurkhas.

The Chairman Mirpurkhas Board Zulfikar Shah, while briefing the CM about the key achievements of the website, said that it would offer an online Enrolment facility / Enrolment Cards, examination forms and Roll Number Slips.

The website will also offer online affiliation facilities, Real-time facilitation for students, online verification facility, online all duplicate documents, online registration of examiners and supervisory staff, availability of informative videos for students and teachers, availability of online results of all examinations, and availability of correction forms, he said.



KARACHI: Caretaker Chief Minister Sindh Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar inaugurates website of Mirpurkhas Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education. Secretary U&B Noor Ahmed, Zulfikar Ali Shah are also present.

Sindh Govt decides to appoint tourist guides for historical sites

KARACHI (APP): In a strategic move to enhance tourism in the province, the Sindh government has announced the appointment of professional tour guides for all tourist destinations across the province.

Provincial Minister for Tourism, Environment, Climate Change, and Coastal Development, Arshad Wali Muhammad emphasized the importance of trained tour guides for creating memorable experiences for tourists visiting historical and cultural sites in Sindh.

Highlighting the rich historical and tourist sites, Minister Arshad Wali Muhammad stated that the presence of professional tour guides is crucial for making the experience of

tourists unforgettable. Trained tour guides possess the knowledge to provide comprehensive information about these historical sites, enhancing the global tourists' overall experience.

In this regard, Secretary of Tourism and Culture, Khalid Chachar, has written to the Finance Department, referencing the directives of the High Court, requesting the release of funds for the recruitment of tourist guides. The decision aligns with the commitment to promote Sindh as a premier tourist destination, ensuring that visitors receive expert guidance, contributing to the overall growth and positive perception of tourism in the province.

Minister underscores urgency to address climate change challenges

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Provincial Caretaker Finance Minister, Ahmad Rasul Bangash here Friday underscored the urgency of addressing climate change challenges, recognizing them as a global imperative that demands collective action.

He was the Chief Guest in a workshop that was organized by UK-Aid-funded Sustainable Energy and Economic Development (SEED). The workshop titled 'Navigating Voluntary Carbon Markets in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa' was aimed to explore how KP can realize its significant capacity for nature-based solutions and renewable

energy projects. Caretaker minister highlighted the adverse impacts already affecting communities and ecosystems emphasizing the need for innovative approaches to mitigate environmental risks and build resilience. He praised the efforts of the SEED programme for its instrumental role in promoting sustainable development and facilitating KP in pursuing climate investments.

He commended commitment of the KP government in addressing climate change challenges and shared the government's proactive measures to integrate sustainable practices.



PESHAWAR: Chairman Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Squash Association Qamar Zaman. Called on Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice (R) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah.

ANF recovers 57 kg drugs in six operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting six operations across the country managed to recover 57 kg of drugs and arrested 10 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday.

He informed that a 2.3 kg Ice drug was recovered from a Bahrain-bound passenger going by Flight No. EK-613 at Islamabad Airport. 1.40 kg of Ice was recovered from a passenger travelling to Doha on Flight No. QR-601 at Bacha Khan Airport. 91 heroin-filled capsules were recovered from a passenger's stomach at Islamabad Airport. The accused was leaving for Sharjah by flight number PK-257. 45 kg heroin was recovered near GT Road Bupi area from the possession of two Afghan nationals arrested.

Ijaz ul Haq for fair, transparent elections

RAWALPINDI (APP): Head of the National Solidarity Alliance and Pakistan Muslim League, Zia (PML-Z), Ijaz ul Haq here on Friday said that the general elections should be fair and transparent.

Addressing a press conference along with Abdullah Gul, Ijaz ul Haq said considering the current situation, the National Solidarity Alliance was established.

He said, "We are inviting all the political parties to join the National Solidarity Alliance as there will be no improvement until all political parties join the charter of

Pakistan." He informed that he met with Pir Pagara, MQM, Sunni Tehreek, and other parties in Karachi. "Soon I will meet with the leaders of other parties including Jamaat-e-Islami," he said. About 20 electable candidates were also contacted and the political situation was discussed with them, he said and informed, "They all are ready to join us."

"Usman Buzdar, Abdullah Gul, Nawab of Bahawalpur, and several others are with us," he added. "We are prepared for the February 8 elections," he said.

LHC orders to grow plants on roof top of hotels, plazas

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has ordered to grow plants on roof top of hotels and plazas to counter smog.

The petitions filed by citizen Haroon Farooq and others on curbing smog came up for hearing before single bench of LHC led by Justice Shahid Karim Friday. The court during the hearing of the case ordered to grow plants on roof top of hotels and plazas besides directing environment department PHA to evolve joint

strategy. The state counsel informed the court a delegation on environment and climate is coming to Pakistan from China. The court directed Advocate General (AG) Punjab to arrange meeting of members of judicial water commission with Chinese delegation. Justice Shahid Karim inquired from SP traffic are the cases being registered against under age drivers. SP traffic replied earlier we were registering cases and now cases are not being registered.

Nawaz nomination papers ET decision on rejecting appeal against acceptance challenged in LHC

LAHORE (Online): Election Tribunal (ET) decision on rejecting appeal plea against acceptance of nomination papers of former PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif from NA-130 has been challenged in Lahore High Court (LHC). The appeal plea has been filed by Ishtiaq

Chaudhry advocate. The petitioner has taken plea in the petition that the ET dismissed appeal plea against the acceptance of nomination papers of former PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif from NA-130 has been challenged in Lahore High Court (LHC). The petitioner requested the court to order for rejection of Nawaz Sharif nomination papers.

The petitioner took decision on the matter of life time disqualification came after acceptance of Nawaz Sharif nomination papers. SC decision is not applicable to Nawaz Sharif case. The petitioner requested the court to order for rejection of Nawaz Sharif nomination papers.



KARACHI: Mayor Murtaza Wahab cut the ribbon to inaugurate the "4th Marigold Festival" at Frere Hall in Provincial Capital.

1st special credit guarantee company for SMEs inaugurated

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministry of Finance and Karandaaz here Friday launched Pakistan's first special credit guarantee company namely the National Credit Guarantee Company Limited (NCGCL), with an objective to provide financial assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the country.

The inauguration ceremony, among others, was attended by representatives from the British High Commission, Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCP), State Bank of Pakistan, and the Ministry of Finance.

NCGCL, the joint venture of Ministry of Finance and Karandaaz aims, to enhance financial accessibility through special credit guarantee facilities, particularly focusing on expanding financial reach for businesses operating at the

small and medium scale across the board.

Speaking on the occasion, Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamsah highlighted the significance of this revolutionary initiative. She said, private credit for SMEs in Pakistan stands at a mere 5.2 percent, declining from 7.7 percent in the last five years in the country.

She said the credit level was significantly lower compared to other South Asia, which has an average of over 17 percent, undoubtedly they do better on exports and they do better on competitiveness.

She said, reality is that SMEs sector accounts 90 percent of formally registered businesses, contributes to around 40 percent of GDP and employees around 80 percent of non-agriculture labour forces, offering an opportunity to low income

strata. She was of the view that inadequate investment in SME sector, globally recognized to enhance competitiveness of countries and industries and value addition as well as employment generation, has hindered Pakistan's sustainable growth and development.

She said launching of NCGCL was a far reaching institutional reform that is being launched, adding the purpose of this transformative step was to facilitate smoother capital investment paths for small businesses.

She said, a well-designed and effectively implemented credit guarantee schemes can create an average 30 to 35 percent financial additionality in the market which translates into economic additionality in terms of higher productivity and innovation, employment generation etc.



ISLAMABAD: Students visiting Annual Exhibition titled "Enchanted World of Art & Creativity" at FG College of Home Economics & Management Sciences F-11.

Envoy Hashmi meets Litong Group to establish food park in Pakistan

BEIJING (Online): Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi, visited Litong Food Group in Chengdu, Sichuan Province of China, and invited the group to establish "Litong Food Park" in Pakistan.

Ambassador Khalil Hashmi stated that the establishment of the food park aims to promote value-added products in Pakistan, tapping into the country's vast agricultural resources.

This initiative is expected to create numerous employment opportunities and contribute significantly to the economy, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Friday.

"Glad to meet today and exchange views with Mr. Chen Changwei, Chairman of Puji Group - a subsidiary of which has been growing dry chilies and is now exporting them from Pakistan. We reviewed ongoing cooperation and discussed plans," he stated.

He emphasized that this collaboration would

strengthen bilateral ties between Pakistan and Asian countries, opening up new avenues for trade and economic growth.

The delegation from Litong Group expressed their keen interest in Pakistan's agricultural potential and its strategic location for trade with Asian markets.

As part of their investment plan, the group intends to establish a cutting-edge laboratory in Multan City, Pakistan, focusing on the research and development of dry chili, sesame, broad bean, and sorghum.

The Chinese side briefed that the establishment of the laboratory in Multan will not only facilitate research and development but also provide local farmers with access to advanced agricultural techniques.

This collaboration between Litong Group and Pakistani farmers is expected to result in increased crop yields, improved quality, and enhanced export prospects.



MULTAN: A worker spreading corn product for drying purposes at the field.

Collaborative efforts imperative to rehabilitate economy on strong footing: FCCI

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) acting President Dr. Sajjad Arshad said that collaborative efforts by all quarters including the bureaucracy, politicians, business community and judiciary were imperative to rehabilitate the economy on a strong footing and sustained basis.

He was addressing a meeting of the officers of 34th Senior Management Course (SMC) of the National Institute of Management (NIM) Peshawar who visited the FCCI here. He said that 40 percent of SMEs had been closed due to unprecedented inflation, high energy costs, delay in payment of refund claims, political uncertainty and inconsistent policies.

"Therefore, all quarters concerned must pay heed to this burning issue on an urgent basis for greater national interest," he added.

About the role and functioning of the FCCI, he said that the chamber remained in touch with the government to resolve the issues faced by the business community. "The FCCI played a key role in budget formulation", he said and added that it was for the first time that the FCCI President was picked as chairman of the tax anomaly committee instead of someone from the FPCCI. He said that ministries concerned were always ready to discuss issues but they have their own limitations due to the direct intervention of the IMF.

1st cross-border oil project hits 300,000 tons mark: SCODA

BEIJING (APP): The first international bulk oil trade project, a collaboration between the Pakistan-China Center, Pakistan, and East Sea Group, China, was launched recently in the China-SCO Local Economic and Trade Cooperation Demonstration Area (SCODA), Qingdao, Shandong, China.

Under the project, the initial batch of Malaysia blend crude oil, totalling 300,000 tons, underscores a deepening of investment cooperation between SCODA and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member countries, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Friday.

Fang Yulong, Chief Executive Officer of East Sea Group, expressed confidence in expanding into the SCO member countries' markets, attributing it to the support and assistance received from SCODA.

Leveraging its geographical advantages and openness, SCODA has actively promoted energy cooperation with the SCO member countries and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) countries. SCODA has now emerged as a vital hub for trade and business among member countries of the SCO.

PSX gains 20 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) gained 20 points on Friday, showing a nominal positive change of 0.03 percent, closing at 64,637.64 points against 64,617.57 points the previous trading day.

A total of 643,307,931 shares valuing Rs.20,021 billion were traded during the day as compared to 586,548,829 shares valuing Rs.17,024 billion the last day.

Some 365 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 137 of them recorded gains and 216 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 12 remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were K-Electric with 142,506,004 shares at Rs.6.03 per share, Pak Int. Bulk with 77,950,500 shares at Rs.7.57 per share and WorldCall Telecom with 27,001,294 shares at Rs.1.42 per share.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.299.00 per share price, closing at Rs.22,399.00, whereas the runner-up was Bhanero Textile Mills with a Rs.70.00 rise in its per share price to Rs.1,020.00.



WASHINGTON: Chairman Investment Board Sardar Amjad Jalil met with Pakistan's Ambassador to America Sardar Masood Khan.

Pakistan to be connected with high-speed 'optical fiber network soon: Aisha

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT) Additional Secretary Aisha Humera Chaudhry Friday said that the government is all set to launch a landmark project "optical fibre" to improve broadband connectivity and to boost deployment of digital infrastructure across the country.

Talking to PTV news channel, she said that the government and telecom companies would

strengthen urban and remote areas with high-speed broadband connectivity, adding, that all available resources and facilities were being provided for the digital gateway initiative. She said the government was striving hard to ensure the availability of affordable high-speed Internet service to the citizens, particularly the students, and for that purpose, it was focusing on laying 'optical fibre' across the country. She further mentioned that the

Ministry of IT and Telecom is fully cooperating with the telecom industry.

Replying to a query, she highlighted that said that the provision of broadband services to the residents of the un-served and under-served areas of Pakistan is as much needed as for the big cities.

By increasing the optical fibre cable, the connectivity will be faster, and better internet facilities will be provided to the users, she added.

Weekly inflation up by 1.36 pc

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 1.36 per cent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on January 11, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 317.92 points as compared to 313.66 points during the past week.

As compared to the corresponding week of last

year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 44.16 per cent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 = 100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs. 17,732, increased by 1.20 percent and went up to 312.23 points from last week's 308.53 points. The SPI for consumption groups from Rs. 17,732-22,888, Rs. 22,889-29,517; Rs. 29,518-44,175 and above Rs. 44,175, it increased by 1.34 percent.

Gold rates up by Rs.200

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.200 and was sold at Rs. 216,500 on Friday compared to its sale at Rs. 216,300 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs. 172 to Rs. 185,614 from Rs. 185,442 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs. 170,146 from Rs. 169,989 the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs.2,650 and Rs.2,271.94 respectively.



ISLAMABAD: Customers selecting and purchasing old clothes displayed by the vendor at weekly Bazaar.

IMF tranche: LCCI sees positive impact on economy

LAHORE (INP): Office-bearers of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry including President Kashif Anwar, Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry and Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt on Friday welcomed the approval of a \$700 million tranche by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for Pakistan, hailing it as 'excellent news for the economy'. They commended the present regime for its efforts, acknowledging the approval from the IMF Executive Board after completing the first review of Pakistan's economic reform programme. The LCCI office-bearers anticipated that the approved \$700 million

would invigorate economic indicators, instill confidence in both local and foreign investors, stabilize the rupee, and positively impact the stock market. Highlighting the importance of encouraging expatriate Pakistanis, they urged for increased home remittances and support for export-oriented industries to boost exports.

In the wake of this positive development, the LCCI office-bearers urged authorities to focus on two key areas for economic reform. Firstly, they called for efforts to expand the tax base, contributing to overall economic stability. Secondly, they stressed the need to stabilize the Pakistani rupee.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): APL South-Hampton with Containers, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, shipping activity reported at the Port on Thursday.

Meanwhile, a container ship 'Maersk Nayassa' also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on same day.

A total of five ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, Sea Power-1 and APL South-Hampton are left the port on today and another Bulk cargo carrier 'Kang Hong' is expected to sail on same day. A cargo volume of 117,752 tonnes, comprising 67,789 tonnes imports cargo.



FAISALABAD: Vendor displaying seasonal fruit oranges to attract customers at Fruit and Vegetable Market.

President FPCCI stresses the need to revisit the economic policies

ISLAMABAD: President FPCCI Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh said that the business community is the backbone of the economy and the FPCCI would take all possible measures to address their key issues.

He said that we strongly believe in teamwork, he would ensure maximum participation of the business Community representing different Chambers and Associations of the country for economic

now it's our duty to take steps to resolve the issues and problems of Business Community of Pakistan without any differences for the betterment of Pakistan and for the betterment of Business Community of Pakistan.

He was addressing different delegations of the members of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI), Pakistan Overseas Employment Promoters Association (POEPA) & Rawalpindi Chamber of Small Traders



development of the country, along with welfare of the business community.

He further said that we will play positive role and take necessary initiatives to solve the problems faced by business community of Pakistan and FPCCI will play leading role in development of Pakistan as well as to solve the problems of Unemployment also.

He reiterated that

& Small Industry who visited FPCCI Capital Office for presenting bouquets and felicitations to the whole team of UBG on historic victory in the recent elections of FPCCI.

The newly elected President of FPCCI stressed on the need to revisit of the economic policies, as the economic indicators throughout 2023 remained very depressed including high inflation, low exports.

Zong 4G, ASA Pakistan signs agreement for communication & data connectivity solutions

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Zong 4G, Pakistan's leading digital communication company, has signed a corporate partnership agreement with ASA Pakistan Limited, a leading Microfinance Bank, to provide data and voice services for their customers.

Farooq Raza Khan, Director Govt. & Corporate Sales & Services Zong CMPAK and CEO ASA Pakistan Saeed Uddin Khan signed the partnership on behalf of their respective organizations.

"Zong Business team strives to provide each client with industry-leading tailored solutions that can enhance their business productivity and streamline their processes," a news release said. A spokesperson for Zong 4G said, "Our partnership with ASA Pakistan (MFB) Limited is a testament to our commitment to excellence and innovation. We are dedicated to providing our customers with customized GSM and data products that cater to their communication needs."

China's foreign trade up 0.2 pct in 2023

BEIJING (Xinhua/APP): China's total goods imports and exports expanded 0.2 percent year on year in yuan terms in 2023, official data showed Friday.

In 2023, the country's foreign trade stood at 41.76 trillion yuan (about 5.87 trillion U.S. dollars), according to the General Administration of Customs (GAC).

Exports grew 0.6 percent year on year to 23.77 trillion yuan, while imports edged down 0.3 percent from one year earlier to 17.99 trillion yuan, the data showed.

The data have

demonstrated that China's export products still hold solid competitive advantages. GAC deputy head Wang Lingjun told a press conference.

The total export value of the tech-intensive green trio, namely solar batteries, lithium-ion batteries, and electric vehicles, surged 29.9 percent to 1.06 trillion yuan in 2023. It marks the first time that the figure topped the one-trillion-yuan mark.

The export value of machinery and electronic products, accounting for 58.6 percent of total exports.



KARACHI: Workers prepare different political parties flags and banners ahead of the forthcoming general election in Provincial Capital.

Turkiye deemed gateway to Europe for Chinese companies

BEIJING (AA/APP): The Chinese technology giant Huawei featured Türkiye as a country that offers many advantages in terms of investments and expansion to Europe during the China-Europe Leadership Forum held in Beijing.

The forum, organized by the company's cloud computing branch Huawei Cloud, had a section named "Türkiye: New Destination for Investments," showcasing the country as a gateway for Chinese companies that want to expand their reach to Europe. Huawei Cloud announced "The Two 100s" initiative during the event, which aims to support 100 Chinese

brands and 100 software partners to expand their global market share by investing in Europe.

Zhang Xiuzheng, vice president of Huawei and president of Huawei Cloud China, delivered a speech at the event, emphasizing their aim to provide quality information and communications infrastructure with innovative solutions to companies that want to expand their businesses on a global scale, underlining that cloud computing is the focus. Pan Jie, vice president of Huawei Cloud Europe, said they have developed an advanced cloud computing infrastructure open to global access.

US, British militaries launch massive retaliatory strike against Iranian-backed Houthis in Yemen

Houthi rebels say US-led strikes in Yemen killed 5 of their forces, raising Mideast tensions

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The U.S. and British militaries bombed more than a dozen sites used by the Iranian-backed Houthis in Yemen on Thursday, in a massive retaliatory strike using warship- and submarine-launched Tomahawk missiles and fighter jets, U.S. officials said.

The U.S. Air Force's Mideast command said it struck over 60 targets at 16 sites in Yemen, including "command-and-control nodes, munitions depots, launching systems, production facilities and air defense radar systems."

President Joe Biden said the strikes were meant to demonstrate that the U.S. and its allies "will not tolerate" the militant group's ceaseless attacks on the Red Sea. And he said they only made the move after attempts at diplomatic negotiations and careful deliberation.

Meanwhile, U.S.-led airstrikes on Yemen's Houthi rebels in response

to their attacks on Red Sea shipping pulled the world's focus Friday back on the yearslong war raging there, even as tensions rise across a Middle East already torn by Israel's war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

The strikes killed at least five people and wounded six, the Houthis said, without elaborating on what was targeted.

Associated Press journalists in Yemen's capital, Sanaa, heard four explosions early Friday local time.

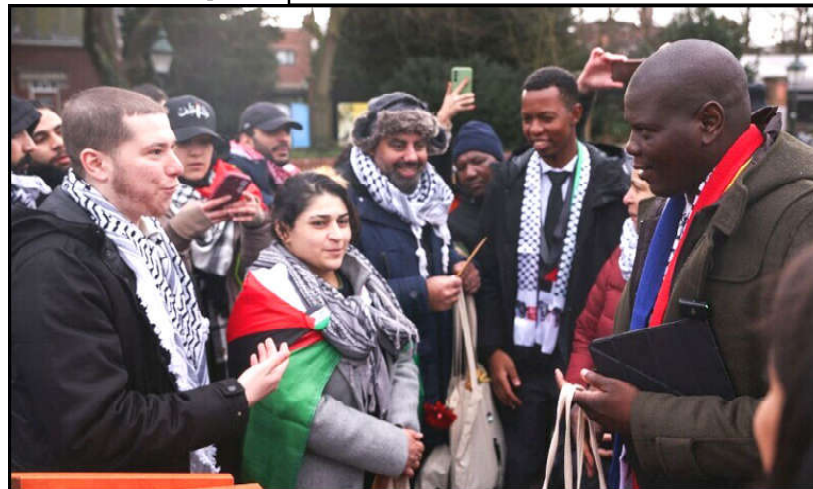
Russia condemns US and UK for 'irresponsible' strikes on Yemen

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russia condemned the United States and Britain on Friday for their military strikes on Yemen, which Moscow said amounted to an irresponsible adventure that risked sowing chaos across the entire Middle East.

The United States and Britain launched strikes from the air and sea against Houthi military targets in Yemen in response to the Iran-backed movement's attacks on ships in the Red Sea since the start of the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.

Russia, an ally of Iran and a partner of key Arab powers, called for an urgent meeting of the United Nations Security Council on Friday to discuss the issue.

"We strongly condemn these irresponsible actions by the United States and its allies," Maria Zakharova, Russia's foreign ministry spokeswoman, told reporters.



South Africa's Minister of Justice Ronald Lamola stands near pro-Palestinian protesters addressing the media near the International Court of Justice (ICJ), on the day judges hear a request for emergency measures by South Africa to order Israel to stop its military actions in Gaza, in The Hague, Netherlands.

Riots over pay cut kill 15 in Papua New Guinea

Monitoring Desk
PORT MORESBY: Papua New Guinea's prime minister declared a 14-day state of emergency in the capital on Thursday, after 15 people were killed in riots as crowds looted and burned shops.

Violence erupted in Port Moresby on Wednesday evening after a group of soldiers, police officers and prison guards launched protests over unexplained deductions to their pay.

Within hours the unrest had also spread to the city of Lae, about 300 kilometres to the north of the capital. "Today we call for a state of emergency for 14 days in our nation's capital," Prime Minister James Marape announced.

More than 1,000 troops were on standby "to contain any situations that may arise going forward", he said. At least 15 people were killed in the unrest in Port Moresby and Lae, said Police Commissioner David Manning.

Port Moresby's largest hospital treated 25 people with gunshot wounds, according to figures, as well as six people with "bush knife" lacerations.

AFP TV footage showed looters in the capital dashing into stores through smashed glass windows, stuffing stolen goods into cardboard boxes, shopping trolleys and plastic buckets. One man was seen lugging an entire chest freezer away on his shoulders.

Hundreds dead as Congo River basin submerged by generational floods

Monitoring Desk
KINSHASA: The Congo River has risen to its highest level in more than 60 years, causing flooding throughout the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Congo Republic that has killed more than 300 people over the past months, according to authorities.

Poor urban planning and weak infrastructure have made some African countries vulnerable to flash floods after intense rains, which have become more frequent due to climate change.

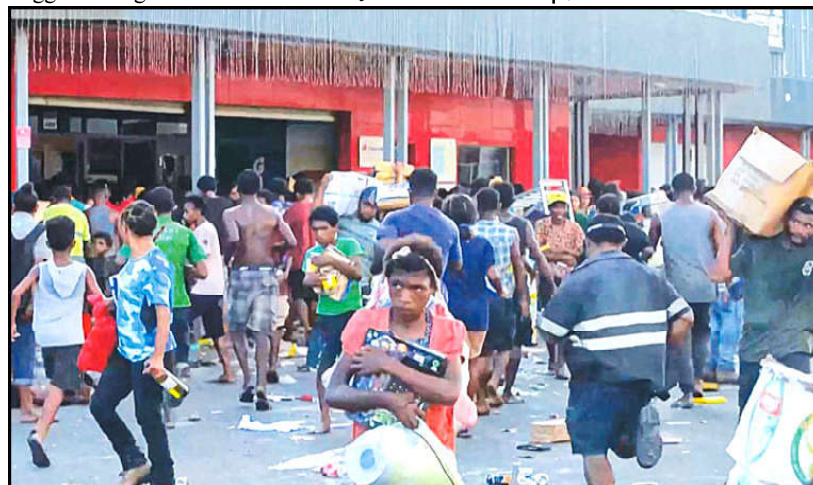
Ferry Mowa, a hydrology specialist at the DRC riverways authority, part of the transport ministry, said his office had flagged the high water level

in late December, warning that almost the entire flood plain of the capital Kinshasa, which sits on the banks of the river, could be affected.

On Wednesday, the river reached 6.20 meters (20.34 feet) above sea level, just shy of the 1961 record of 6.26 meters, he told Reuters, adding that the flooding had followed exceptionally high rains in land.

"It is imperative that people who live around the river move", Mowa said.

Several neighbourhoods in DRC's densely populated Kinshasa have flooded, as well as communities in more than a dozen provinces, the social affairs ministry said.



PORT MORESBY: People carry looted goods from shops amid a state of unrest in Papua New Guinea.

Jordan blames Israel for regional tensions

Monitoring Desk
AMMAN: Jordan said on Friday that Israeli "war crimes" against Palestinians were to blame for heightened regional tension and violence in the Red Sea which it said threatened to ignite a wider war in the Middle East.

Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi also voiced support for South Africa's "genocide" case against Israel at the U.N.'s top court over the war against Hamas in Gaza and said Amman was ready to submit legal documents and appear in court if the case proceeds.

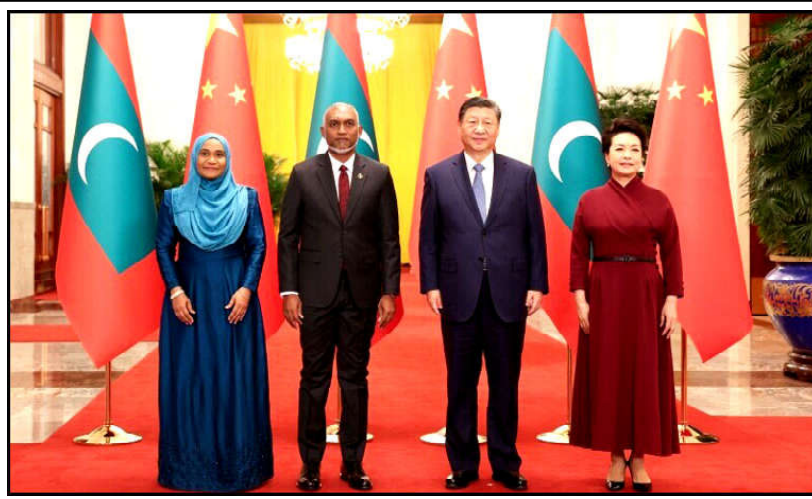
Israel has denied allegations that it has committed war crimes, and rejected as "grossly distorted" the accusations brought by South Africa that the military operation in Gaza is a state-led genocide campaign against the Palestinian population.

Poland to change process for judges' nominations

Monitoring Desk
WARSAW: Polish Justice Minister Adam Bodnar outlined on Friday a bill that aims to correct the way judges are appointed as a first step in rolling back the previous nationalist government's judicial reforms with a view to unfreezing EU funds.

The former Law and Justice (PiS) party government had for years been stuck in a row with Brussels over its court reforms and the rule of law, resulting in billions of European Union's funds for Poland being frozen.

But pro-EU parties won a majority in an Oct. 15 election, ending eight years of PiS rule.



Maldives' President Mohamed Muizzu, his wife Sajidha Mohamed, Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan posing for photos during a welcome ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

Erdogan accuses US, Britain of trying to turn Red Sea into 'sea of blood'

Monitoring Desk

ANKAR: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan on Friday slammed the US and British strikes on Houthi targets in Yemen as a disproportionate use of force and accused the two countries of trying to turn the Red Sea into a "sea of blood". Turkey, a NATO member, has strongly criticised Israel for its war in Gaza aimed at wiping out Palestinian militant group Hamas, and has repeatedly slammed Western countries for supporting Israel's campaign.

Asked by reporters about the overnight air and sea strikes by U.S. and British forces across Yemen in retaliation against Iranian-backed Houthi forces for attacks on Red Sea shipping, the Turkish president said these were not proportionate. "All that has been done is a disproportionate use of force," Erdogan said after Friday prayers in Istanbul.

"At the moment, they are trying to turn the Red Sea into a sea of blood and Yemen, with the Houthis and by using all of its force."

World watches as Israel faces genocide case

Monitoring Desk

THE HAGUE: South Africa accused Israel on Thursday of carrying out genocide in Gaza and demanded that the UN's top court order an emergency suspension of Israel's devastating military campaign in the Palestinian enclave.

On the first of two days of hearings at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), also known as the World Court, South Africa said Israel's attack on Gaza, which has demolished much of the coastal enclave and killed more than 23,000 people, aimed to wipe out "the destruction of the (territory's) population".

"The intent to destroy Gaza has been nurtured at the highest level of state,"

Tembeka Ngcukaitobi, advocate of the High Court of South Africa, told the court. He said Israel's political and military leaders, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, were among "the genocidal inciters".

"That is evident from the way in which this military attack is being conducted," he said.

Israel rejected the accusations of genocide as false and baseless and said South Africa was speaking on behalf of Hamas — which Pretoria said was untrue. Netanyahu said the court had been presented with "hypocrisy and lies".

"Today we saw an upside-down world. Israel is accused of genocide while it is fighting against genocide," he said in a statement.



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (C) offers prayers at the Ramkund (a religious water pond) in Nashik.

North Korea to welcome Russian tourists in February, the country's first since the pandemic

Monitoring Desk

SEOUL: Russian tourists reportedly going on a ski trip to North Korea will be the first international travelers to visit the country since border closings in January 2020 amid the global pandemic lockdown.

The tour, published by the Russian state-run Tass news agency and advertised by a Russian tour agency this week, underscores deepening cooperation between Moscow and Pyongyang. It follows the meeting last September between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin at a cosmopolitan in Russia's Far East.

The trip scheduled for February was a surprise to Asia observers, who had expected the first post-pandemic tourists to North Korea to come from China, the North's biggest diplomatic ally and economic pipeline.

The webpage of the tour agency, Vostok Intur, says the four-day trip is to start on Feb. 9.

Mayor says Texas closed park without permission in border city where migrant crossings had climbed

Monitoring Desk

McALLEN: The mayor of a Texas border city at the center of Republican Gov. Greg Abbott's aggressive measures to curb migrant crossings accused the state Thursday of a new escalation as state troopers closed a large public park along the Rio Grande without asking permission.

The park is a new tension point in Eagle Pass, where large waves of migrant arrivals last month temporarily closed a rail crossing and overwhelmed shelters. U.S. Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas visited Eagle Pass on Monday, days after Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson

toured the border city. Eagle Pass Mayor Rolando Salinas questioned why the state closed the 50-acre park now, since daily apprehensions in the region have fallen in recent weeks. Shelby Park touches the river, includes a ramp for boaters and has been used by the state to stage vehicles and equipment for its border mission known as Operation Lone Star.

Salinas said the state gave Eagle Pass officials no warning and offered no timetable on when the park would reopen. He said a DPS official told him the state was taking custody of the park through a disaster declaration.

Blast kills two in Kabul's Hazara enclave

Monitoring Desk

KABUL: Two people were killed and 12 wounded in an explosion in western Kabul on Thursday, police said, in the third deadly blast to hit the Afghan capital in less than a week.

Kabul police spokesman Khalid Zadran said a grenade was detonated outside a commercial centre in the Dasht-e-Barchi area, an enclave of the historically oppressed Hazara community.

"The initial information shows that unfortunately two civilian compatriots were martyred and 12 others were wounded," Zadran said in a statement. By early evening the road in front of the centre was open but dozens of security personnel.

China urges all parties in Yemen to prevent conflict expansion

Monitoring Desk

BEIJING: Expressing concern over escalation of tensions in the Red Sea, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson on Friday called on all sides to prevent the Yemen conflict from expanding.

"We urge the relevant parties to keep calm and exercise restraint to prevent the conflict from expanding," Mao Ning said during the regular briefing. The spokesperson stressed that the Red Sea was an important corridor for international trade in goods and energy. Ning voiced the hope that all parties concerned would play a constructive and responsible.

China, Maldives upgrade ties with infrastructure deals

Monitoring Desk

BEIJING: China pledged on Thursday to extend funding for infrastructure in the Maldives, after it upgraded ties with the strategic Indian Ocean archipelago.

With Beijing and New Delhi tussling for influence, Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu was elected in September after pledging to cultivate "strong ties" with China and eject Indian troops.

Muizzu embarked this week on his first state visit to China — the Maldives' largest external creditor — and on Thursday, the two sides issued a joint communique detailing the "broad consensus" reached by their two leaders.

China vowed to "continue to provide support within its capacity to the Maldives side in areas of priority concern", the statement published on state broadcaster CCTV said.

That included "infrastructure construction, medical care and health care, improvement of people's livelihoods, new energy sources, agriculture and marine environmental protection", it said.

Muizzu, in turn, thanked China for its "selfless assistance" in providing the Maldives with development funds.

The communique followed a meeting on Wednesday with President Xi Jinping at which Beijing announced the "elevation of bilateral ties".

Finnish presidential frontrunner seeks 'more European' NATO

Monitoring Desk

HELSINKI: Finnish presidential frontrunner Alexander Stubb said on Thursday NATO should become "more European" and that his country would remain an important partner for the United States whether or not Donald Trump is re-elected.

In an interview with Reuters, Stubb promised unconditional support for Ukraine and ruled out an improvement in Finland's relations with Russian President Vladimir Putin until Moscow stops the war against Kyiv.

Stubb, 55, leads opinion polls before Finland's Jan. 28 presidential election, which precedes presidential elections this year in neighbouring Russia and the United States.

The former prime minister hopes to succeed Sauli Niinistö, who is retiring at 75 after two six-year terms, having been nicknamed "the Putin whisperer" for his role in keeping lines open with Russia's leader before the 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Helsinki's relations with Moscow deteriorated after the invasion and sank further when Finland, in a historic break with tradition prompted by the invasion, joined NATO last April.

Stubb signalled clearly that he would lean towards the West if elected president and said it was "very important that we in Europe take care of our own defence."

"So in that sense, I'm very much along the lines of the current Finnish president, Sauli Niinistö, who said that we need a more European NATO," he said in the interview.

"I think the Americans will not leave us alone (on our own), but it's always useful to be prepared in the situation whereby we have to take more responsibility for our own defence."

Serbia says it is disappointed with possible US sale of anti-tank missiles to Kosovo

Monitoring Desk

BELGRADE: The United States has received Kosovo's request to purchase Javelin anti-tank missiles, the U.S. ambassador to Serbia on Thursday told President Aleksandar Vučić, who expressed "deep disappointment."

The U.S. State Department said later Thursday that it approved the possible sale of the 246 missiles and related equipment to Kosovo for an estimated cost of \$75 million.

"This proposed sale will support the foreign policy goals and national security of the United States by improving the security of a European partner which is an important force for political and economic stability in Europe," the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs said.

A statement by Vučić's office said U.S. Ambassador Christopher Hill told him that the U.S. State Department will send Kosovo's request to Congress, which reviews foreign arms sales.

Kosovo is a former Serbian province which declared independence in 2008. The U.S. and most Western nations recognize Kosovo's statehood, while Serbia as well as ally Russia and China do not.

Serbia's president said that "for us, it is of great importance that the peace in the region is not broken and that Serbia will continue to act responsibly and contribute to stability in the Balkans."

The proposed sale of the missile system to Kosovo comes during tensions in the region. Several times in recent months, Serbia has moved its troops to the border that is guarded by NATO-led peacekeeping troops and Kosovo's armed forces, in what were seen by the West as hostile actions.

Vučić asserted this month that Serbia has one of the strongest armies in the Balkans, noting the "great number" of tanks it had received from Russia before its invasion of Ukraine.

The Myanmar military says it and ethnic guerrilla groups have agreed to an immediate cease-fire

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Myanmar's military has reached a cease-fire agreement with an alliance of ethnic minority guerrilla groups it has been battling in the country's northeast, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said Friday. Myanmar's military government confirmed the development.

The agreement was brokered at talks mediated by China on Wednesday and Thursday in Kunming, a Chinese provincial capital about 400 kilometers (250 miles) from the border with Myanmar, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said.

"China hopes the relevant parties in Myanmar can conscientiously implement the agreement, exercise maximum restraint toward each other and solve the issues through dialogue and consultations," she said at a daily briefing in Beijing.

Advertisement
Maj. Gen. Zaw Min Tun, the spokesperson of Myanmar's ruling military

council, said in an audio note to journalists that the two sides had met in Kunming and after talks, agreed on a temporary cease-fire agreement.

"We will continue discussions. We will continue to work for the strengthening of the cease-fire," Zaw Min Tun said.

A previous cease-fire pact reached in mid-December was not honored by either side.

Chinese spokesperson Mao said the military and the Three Brotherhood Alliance — which comprises the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army and the Arakan Army — agreed to an immediate cease-fire, the disengaging of military personnel and the settlement of their disputes through negotiations.

"The two sides promised not to undermine the safety of Chinese people living in the border area and Chinese projects and personnel in Myanmar," she said.

Mushaal Mullick says Kashmir Consultative Committees to raise awareness at grassroots level

RAWALPINDI (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick, on Friday, said that the primary objective of the district-level consultative committees was to address the Kashmir issue at the grassroots level for comprehensive understanding, engagement with the community and to create a platform for meaningful discussions, advocacy, and actions that resonate with the local population.

Speaking at the inaugural session of the Rawalpindi District-level Kashmir Consultative Committee, she highlighted the significance of such meetings and emphasized that similar gatherings would be organized in various districts.

Mullick announced that the inaugural sessions

of the District-level Kashmir Consultative Committees in Lahore, Faisalabad, and Gujranwala were in the preparation phase and would be convened shortly. She further said that District-level Committees comprise intellectuals spanning various age groups and diverse backgrounds.

Mushaal emphasized that these gatherings would play a pivotal role in organizing and propagating the Kashmir cause at the grassroots level. She underscored that Kashmir stood as a symbol of unity for Pakistan, transcending diverse beliefs and affiliations.

The SAPM further said that people from all walks of life hold profound reverence for the Kashmir cause, and through these district-level consultations, the aim was to solidify this unity further.

She urged students and academics to contrib-

ute by writing articles, research papers, and essays on the Jammu and Kashmir issue to raise local and global awareness. She expressed her commitment to personally lead door-to-door campaigns to unite people for the Kashmir cause and promote collective efforts to advocate for justice and the rights of the oppressed people of IIOJK. Mushaal voiced deep concern over the ongoing demographic changes being implemented by India in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). She highlighted the persecution faced by peaceful leaders of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and emphasized that such actions were intended to demoralize the Kashmiri people. She asserted that these tactics employed by India would never diminish the unwavering zeal and courage of the Kashmiri people.



KARACHI: Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir inaugurating the second chapter of National Aerospace Science and Technology Park Silicon.

Martyrs rendered sacrifices of lives remembered in Chaman

Independent Report
QUETTA: The martyrs rendered sacrifice of their lives for cause of country remembered at a ceremony in Chaman on Friday.

The district administration of Chaman and social organizations celebrated the Martyrs' Day at the ceremony.

A grand rally was also taken out marking the Martyrs' Day.

The social activists belonging to different social organizations, leaders and members of the traders' community participated in the rally.

The participants paid homage to the martyrs for their sacrifices rendered for defence of the country and protection of life and property of the masses.

The rally was led by Additional Deputy Commissioner Arif Khan Kakar, SP Shahid Jamil Kakar,

Muhammad Ali Achakzai, Saeed Ali Shah and Malik Barat Khan Durrani.

The participants of rally were carrying the placards and banners inscribed with the slogans marking the Martyrs' Day.

They also chanted slogans of long live Pakistan and in favour of the martyrs.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Commissioner Chaman, Captain (Retd) Raja Athar Abbas appreciated Muhammad Ali Achakzai and district administration for organizing the Martyrs' Day in Chaman.

He said that we have to be proud of the sacrifices of martyrs who rendered sacrifices of their lives.

He also said that the martyrs have sacrificed their lives for defence of the country and nation.



HARIPUR: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Sirajul Haq addressing Workers Convention

CPDI urges effective regulation of trans-fats in all foods, banning unhealthy foods

QUETTA (APP): The Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) has issued an urgent appeal to the Chief Secretary Balochistan, Secretary Food Balochistan and other key officers of the provincial government to address the increasing incidence and prevalence of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in Pakistan.

According to the latest health statistics, around 60 percent of deaths are attributed to NCDs such as cardio-vascular diseases, diabetes, obesity and hypertension. In addition, the NCDs are a leading cause of not only premature mortality i.e., before the age of 70, but these are also increasing burden of disabilities and unhealthy life years causing people huge financial losses as well as reduction in life years. The three dietary risk factors that the CPDI letter warns against include the excessive use of unhealthy oils and fats, added sugar in foods and drinks, and high content of sodium in food items.

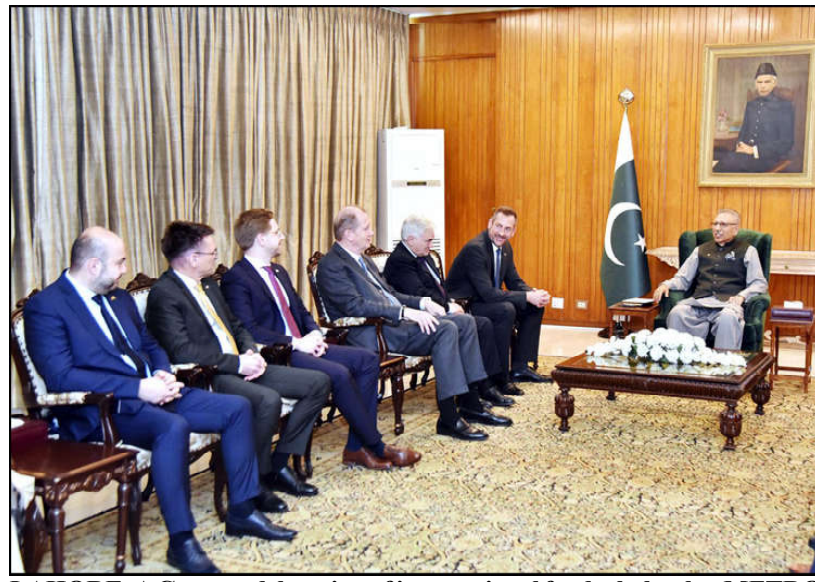
In a letter, the CPDI, a non-partisan civil society

organization, has urged the Balochistan Government to implement concrete measures banning such unhealthy food and beverages from public procurements, official meetings, and functions. Highlighting the rising numbers of diabetes and cardiovascular diseases in Pakistan due to the unregulated consumption of food containing harmful ingredients like sugar, sodium, and trans-fatty acids (TFAs) in fats, CPDI emphasizes the urgent need of proactive official policies and regulations aimed at mitigating dietary risk factors and improving public health.

Studies reveal that approximately 33 million people in Pakistan suffer from diabetes, additional 10 million are pre-diabetic, and 918 cases per 100,000 individuals are affected by cardiovascular diseases.

The CPDI has also urged the provincial government to engage with the Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA) to expedite the formulation of mandatory and enforceable standards for all food items to regu-

late unhealthy content, for example, the quantity of TFAs should not be more than 2 percent. Moreover, CPDI has urged to restrict the availability of unhealthy food in schools, hospitals, and public parks; eliminate government subsidies on harmful products such as sugars and banaspati ghee; and implement public awareness campaigns to inform consumers about dietary risk factors. CPDI has suggested the government to "provide subsidies to healthy foods so that people enjoy better health status and contribute more to the GDP as mentally and physically active citizens". Mukhtar Ahmad Ali, Executive Director, CPDI, expressed the hope that these measures will significantly and positively address the NCDs related public health crisis in the country. "Medical research shows that the national burden of diseases, deaths, and disabilities in Pakistan is changing, and we need to take serious measures to control dietary risk factors so that our healthcare system does not cave down.



LAHORE: A German delegation of international food wholesaler, METRO Group, led by its CEO Dr Steffen Greubel, calls on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

COAS terms NASTP a project of national, strategic significance

RAWALPINDI (Online): General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff, (COAS) attended inauguration ceremony of the second chapter of National Aerospace Science and Technology Park (NASTP) Silicon, held at Karachi. COAS was Chief Guest at the occasion.

COAS termed NASTP a project of national and strategic significance that would yield manifold benefits for the country since it would spur technological progress and foster self-reliance by offering a platform for the nation's youth and future generations.

COAS praised the efforts of PAF, its leadership and its skilled personnel in the achievement of yet another milestone of NASTP Silicon.

Chief of Air Staff

shared the vision for NASTP to become one of the best Aerospace, Cyber & IT Clusters and transform national landscape with design, R&D and innovation centers for emerging and disruptive technologies to accrue maximum social, economic, security and scientific dividends for the country.

On his arrival at the venue, COAS was received by Air Chief Marshal, Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff.

Later, COAS also visited Corps Headquarters Karachi. Corps Commander Karachi Corps welcomed the COAS and briefed him about operational preparedness, training matters and administrative measures being taken for the welfare of the troops and Shuhada families.



QUETTA: A delegation of Joint Action Committee University of Balochistan led by Nazeer Ahmed Lehri meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Pakistan wants good, equal relations with countries: Hamza

QUETTA (APP)-Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)'s Balochistan President's Political Adviser Hamza Khan Nasir on Friday said that Pakistan's economic interests were linked with America.

Pakistan is a dream of good and equal relations with all countries, both the countries are working for the elimination of nationalized terrorism and the establishment of peace and harmony, he mentioned.

In a statement issued here, Hamza Khan Nasir said that Pakistan was a free and independent country, Pakistan wanted good relations with all countries including America on the basis of equality.

He said that America has had friendly relations with Pakistan for 75 years,

which would become stronger with passage of time.

He said that the economic interests of Pakistan and America were connected with each other, both countries should further strengthen and stabilize economic relations so that the people and businessmen of both countries could be benefited.

He said that America has always supported Pakistan in difficult times and the relations between the two countries would become stronger with passage of time adding that America was also cooperating fully with Pakistan to end terrorism.

He said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf has always tried to establish relations with all countries on the basis of equality.

Muhammad Asif Tareen says: Role of BLEP exemplary in development of Agri. & farmers in Balochistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: There is an exemplary role of BLEP in development and growth of agriculture sector and farmers in Balochistan.

This would bring improvement in the economy besides creating opportunities of livelihood for the people.

The Pishin Chamber of Commerce would work together with BLEP for development of the agriculture sector and wellbeing of the farmers.

This was stated by the Patron-in-Chief of PCCI and Executive Member of Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and

Industry (FPCCI), Muhammad Asif Tareen in a statement issued here after his visit to the BLEP on Friday.

He said that the source of income of majority of the people is associated with the agriculture.

He said that the loss in agriculture in Balochistan means the loss of people and their livelihood in the province.

He regretfully pointed out that the agriculture sector and farmers have suffered a lot rather reached at the brink of destruction because of the drought, lack of electricity and attention of the government.



QUETTA: Muslim League (PML-N) Provincial General Secretary, Jamal Shah Kakar addresses to media persons during press conference.

Government taking steps to boost FDI: President Alvi

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday said the government was taking steps to promote Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Pakistan.

Talking to a German delegation of international food wholesaler, METRO Group, led by its CEO Dr Steffen Greubel here at Aiwan-e-Sadr, the president said Pakistan was an attractive destination for the foreign investment and business.

The president also appreciated the METRO Group for their investment in Pakistan.

The delegation briefed the president about business and investment of the METRO Group in Pakistan.

The delegation told that keeping in view the conducive environment for the foreign investment in Pakistan, the METRO Company desired to further expand the business activities in the country.

Besides, the delegation was of the view that Pakistan was an attractive destination for business, investment and tourism.

Steps being taken to improve law & order situation

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Hamood-ur Rahman on Friday said that measures were being taken to improve the law and order situation in the Ziarat district.

He shared these views while chairing a meeting of Levies Force Officers regarding the law and order situation.

In the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner was given a detailed briefing about the law and order situation in the Ziarat district.

The meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioner Ziarat Muhammad Hanif Noorzai, Assistant Commissioner Sanjavi Moeem Baloch and in-charge of police stations.

PTA conducts raids against illegal issuance of SIMs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Zonal Offices in Lahore and Sukkur, in collaboration with the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Cyber Crime Circles, successfully conducted raids against franchises of two mobile phone companies in Sharaqpur Sharif and Kandhkot. The aim was to curb the illegal issuance of SIMs, which is often associated with criminal activities such as fraud, identity theft, and other illicit operations said a news release issued here on Friday.

One-day workshop organized on Disaster Risk Management Plan & Data Collection

"Services of engineering consultants & experts hired for disaster risk management plan in Balochistan"

Independent Report
QUETTA: One-day workshop was held on the District Disaster Risk Management (DDRM) and Data Collection in Sibi on Friday.

Organized by the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), the workshop was attended by the Deputy Commissioner Sibi, Dr. Khuda-e-Rahim Mirwani, Additional Deputy Commissioner General, Ali Asghar Magi and officers of other concerned departments including PDMA.

The General Manager Project, PDMA, Ahmed Ali and DDRM Expert,

Pakistan, Egypt agree to continue working together to enhance cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Egypt on Friday agreed to continue to engage further and work together to advance mutually beneficial cooperation and dialogue between the two countries.

The bilateral relations were discussed in a meeting between Additional Foreign Secretary (Middle East) Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh with Egyptian Assistant Foreign Minister for Asia Ahmed Shaheen.

Pakistan's Ambassador to Egypt, Ambassador Sajid Bilal was also present in the meeting.

The two sides reviewed the broad range of bilateral relations including political, trade and invest-

ment ties.

They also discussed ways to further strengthen bilateral relations including by convening the next round of Joint Ministerial Commission meetings and Annual Bilateral Consultations later this year in Islamabad.

Additional Foreign Secretary and the Assistant Foreign Minister for Asia appreciated the successful holding of the Fourth Pakistan-Africa Trade Development Conference and Single Country Exhibition held in Cairo from January 9-11, 2024, which coincided with the 75th anniversary celebrations of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Egypt.



Demo of Anti Narcotics Operation being conducted during Exercise Sea Guard 24.

Bilawal, Tarar to lock horns' as PML-N announces candidates from Lahore

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Attaulah Tarar are set to lock horns as PML-N on Friday released list of its candidates for the National Assembly and Punjab Assembly from Lahore District for the Feb 8 general elections.

As per the PML-N's released list issued on X, it has fielded veteran politician Sheikh Rohail Asghar for the NA-121 constituency in Lahore.

The PML-N has issued the ticket to Ayaz Sadiq for NA-120, who was earlier planning to contest the polls from NA-121.

The biggest contest of country would be witnessed in Lahore between PML-N fielded former

minister Attaulah Tarar against Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal-Bhutto Zardari in NA-127.

Meanwhile, the PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif will contest from NA-130, President Shehbaz Sharif from NA-123, Hamza Shehbaz from NA-118, Maryam Nawaz from NA-119 and NA-159 and Khawaja Saad Rafique from NA-122.

For the provincial assembly seats, Shehbaz Sharif will also contest polls from PP-164 and PP-158, while Hamza and Maryam from PP-147 and PP-159 constituencies, respectively.

Earlier, it was reported that differences among the PML-N ranks emerged as the party could not decide on its ticket holder from NA 143.

PML-Q announces not to forge any seat to seat adjustment with PML-N

LAHORE (Online): PML-Q has announced not to forge any seat to seat adjustment with PML-N.

PML-Q has made it clear that party has played its role for the development and prosperity of the country always and it will not accept any seat to seat adjustment to the extent of interest of some person.

The emergency meeting of PML-Q was held under Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain here Friday.

The party spokesperson said in a statement after meeting that PML-N has issued tickets to its candidates against other candidates. We will not allow our candidates to become victim to double standard and will not forge seat to seat adjustment with PML-N. Chaudhry Salik Hussain said PML-N has issued tickets to its candidates against him and his brother Chaudhry Shafay Hussain in Gujarat. We are ready to contest election without seat to seat adjustment.

PML-Q had sought 14 seats of National assembly from PML-N but PML-N has agreed to give maximum 3 seats.



QUETTA: Additional Chief Secretary Home Zahid Saleem and Inspector General of Police Balochistan Abdul Khaliq Sheikh presenting memorial shield to Additional IG & Commandant Balochistan Constabulary Salman Chaudhry upon transfer