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# Expels Iranian ambassador; Recalls envoy from Tehran Pakistan suspends diplomatic ties with Iran over completely unacceptable airstrike

Pakistan reserves right to respond, FM warns Iranian counterpart

cided to recall its ambassador from Iran and suspend all high-level visits following the unprovoked violating the unprovoked violating the purposes and principles of the Charter of the The Foreign Minister

person Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, in a televised press statement, said that Pakistan had also conveyed that the Iranian ambassador to Pakistan who was currently visiting Iran might not return for the time be-

this message to the Iranian Government. We have also informed them that Pakistan has decided to recall its ambassador from Iran and that the Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan who is currently visiting Iran may not return for the time being," the spokesperson re-

breach of Pakistan's sovereignty by Iran was a violaon Tuesday night.
Foreign Office spokesthat the said the illegal act was completely unacceptserves the right to respond to this illegal act. The responsibility for the consewith Iran," she said. The ing. "We have conveyed spokesperson said that Pakistan had also decided to suspend all high-level vis-

> ing days. Online adds: Foreign Minister, Jalil Abbas Jilani,

its which were ongoing or

kistan and Iran in the com-

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan on Wednesday deunprovoked and blatant Kampala, Uganda, received a telephone call from the Foreign Minister of Iran,

> firmly underscored that the attack conducted by Iran inside Pakistani territory, able and had no justification on 16 January 2024, was whatsoever. "Pakistan re- not only a serious breach of Pakistan's sovereignty quences will lie squarely law and the spirit of bilateral relations between Pakistan and Iran.

> Expressing Pakistan's unreserved condemnation of the attack, the Foreign were planned between Pa-Minister added that the incident has caused serious damage to bilateral ties between Pakistan and Iran. The Foreign Minister who is currently leading the added that Pakistan re-Pakistan delegation to the served the right to respond



China urges

Iran, Pakistan to

'exercise restraint'

following air strike

BEIJING (INP): China on

Wednesday urged Pakistan

and Iran to show "re-

straint", after Islamabad

denounced what it de-

scribed as the "unprovoked

violation of its airspace by

ment released by the For-

eign Office (FO) after mid-

night, strikes in Pakistani

territory resulted in

'deaths of two innocent

children while injuring three

According to a state-

ANGHAR: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addresses to his supporters during public gathering meeting in connection of General Election 2024 coming ahead, in Sanghar.

#### ion wants someone else to hunt for him', Bilawal takes dig at PML-N

SHAHDAPUR (INP): Amid rising political temperatures ahead of the February 8 general elections, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has thrown shade on Nawaz-led Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) once

Political parties are expediting their electioneering with a series of manifestos, new vows, and past performances. Besides, PML-N and PPP are eyeing the premier's office and desperately swaying voters to elect them to power. jiyalas are present in the electoral field and fully ready to contest [general polls]," said the PPP chairman while addressing a public meeting in

sign] is hiding like a cat and wanting someone else to ing a dig at the Nawaz-led lion who wants blood of labourers, farmers, and the nation. PML-N has an electoral sign of 'lion' in Punjab. (and in Sindh) 'star' - election symbol of Grand Democratic Alliance — is



QUETTA: Security personal examine blast site. Nine people, including a traffic policeman and three children, were injured in a blast on Quetta's Zarghoon Road. Explosive material was planted in a heap of trash that had been lying for some time.

#### 4 children among 11 people injured in hang grenade explosion in Quetta

The injured of blast

According to the Man-

were removed to the

Sandeman Provincial Head-

quarter Hospital for treat-

aging Director Trauma

Center, Dr. Arbab Kamran,

the necessary medical as-

sistance is being provided

to all injured of the blast.

injured is stated to be criti-

cal, remaining are stable, he

Operations, Jawad Tariq

told the media persons that

initially it seems the blast

was occurred using the

hand grenade device, how-

ever, further investigations

are in progress

informed.

While condition of two

Meanwhile, the SSP

Trauma center

**Independent Report** 

OUETTA: As many as 11 persons including four children and a traffic police constable were injured in a hand grenade explosion took place at Zarghoon road here on Wednesday.

According to the police sources, the local made explosive device was planted in the garbage dumped at the Zarghoon road near bridge. As the device went off with a big bang, it caused injuries to some 11 persons.

They were included four children aged between 10-14 besides a traffic po-

The police and rescue teams reached the spot of explosion and cordoned off

Shahdadpur. "On the other hand. 'lion' [PML-N's electoral hunt for him," he said takparty. "It is a bloodsucking

Speaking at a regular briefing on Wednesday, China Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mao Ning said: "We call on both sides to exercise restraint, avoid actions that would lead to an escalation of tension and work together to maintain peace and stability."

'We consider both Iran and Pakistan as close neighbours and major Islamic countries," she

#### **Deadly firing by Coast Guards** triggers protest in Hub

HUB (INP): A furious protest block traffic and paralysed life in Hub city on Wednesday after a man died when Coast Guards opened

firing on his car.
The Coast Guards personnel allegedly opened firing on a car near Customs checkpost in Wandar area of Hub. One of the bullets hit the tyre of the car due to which the driver lost its control and the vehicle fell into a gorge.

The protesters said this resulted in death of the man riding the car.

The family and relatives of the deceased placed the dead body on a road near Dubai Masjid and staged a furious protest demonstration, which caused a huge traffic jam.



Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa has issued a big order for elimination of Kalashnikov culture from Pakistan. The court has sought all details from concerned

authorities on how many arms licenses of prohibited arms were issued all over the country. Supreme Court (SC) has issued notice to interior

secretary, all provincial home secretaries and inspectors general police. While issuing notice to Attorney General (AG) the court has directed to send

copy of the order. This order was issued on Wednesday. The SC approved bail against surety bonds of Rs

50000 in respect of accused

Kashif nominated in theft A three member bench

Wednesday.
The CJP remarked the

police have not even asked about license from the person from whose home the arms were stolen. The owner is pleading the guilty himself that two Kalashnikovs. one pistol and other valuable things were stolen. I have been offered that I should get license of Kalashnikov. Drugs and Kalashnikov ruined Pakistan. Likewise no one wanders in the world by holding Kalashnikov in large vehicles with black glasses. He asked the petitioner from where Kalashnikov reached him.

The CJP remarked If IG is giving papers of Kalashnikov this way then as to why action should not be taken against him. We write to interior secretary all should return of SC presided over by the Kalashnikov and their li-



**OUETTA: Caretaker Information Minister of** Balochistan Jan Achakzai addresses press conference.

Preparations in full swing for 8 Feb general elections:

#### **Govt & security institutions** fully prepared to establish peace in Balochistan: Jan

Says Mah Rang & her pro-Indian agenda exposed further; warns India to refrain from role of international terrorist; claims more "Baloch separatists" joining national mainstream

**Independent Report** QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has stated that the interim government is fully prepared to establish peace in Balochistan as the preparations are in full swing for the upcoming general elections in the country on Feb-

ruary 8, 2024. He asserted that the enemy forces are making attempts of the foreign interference in the country especially in Balochistan, but these enemy forces would never succeed in their nefarious designs. He said that we have the capability to face the enemy forces befittingly everywhere.

The caretaker Minister Information was addressing a hurriedly called press conference at the Sikandar Jamali Auditorium of Civil Secretariat here on Wednes-

Continued on page 2

#### PTI founder among other PTI leaders out of election race

LAHORE (INP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Wednesday upheld the election Appellate Tribunal's decision that dismissed the appeals of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and other party leaders regarding the rejection of nomination papers by the returning officers (ROs) for upcoming general elections.

The former prime minister had submitted his nomination papers from NA-122 Lahore and NA-89 Mianwali for the general elections scheduled for Feb 8, both of which were rejected by the respective ROs. Subsequently, he contested these decisions before the election appellate tribunals, where his appeals were also dismissed

In response, PTI founder Imran Khan filed a writ petition with the larger LHC bench against the tribunal's decision. Similarly, 60 other PTI leaders had submitted petitions in the LHC against the rejection of their nomination papers. Wednesday was the last day to file petitions against the decisions of the election tribunals.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Election Commissioner, Mr. Sultan Raja, presiding over a meeting on General Elections at ECP Secretariat.

#### general election Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday expressed confidence that a stable government would be formed after forthcoming general elections, scheduled for February 8, eventually leading to sustainable eco-

PM optimistic about

political, economic

stability after Feb 8

nomic stability in the coun-"I do see and project that there will be great growth in Pakistan. There will be a sense of stability. The growth will be slow

but it will be sustainable," the prime minister said in an interview with CNBC on the sidelines of the 54th annual meeting of World Economic Forum (WEF). He said that the speculations regarding holding the elections, had been addressed and everyone was certain about the election

date of 8th of February. PM the missile strike of Iran in Kakar said it was the top priority of the caretaker setup to bring economic revival and to focus on cial sources, the caretaker growth and other economic Chief Minister Mir Ali indicators. Mardan Domki has issued directives to the concerned authorities for payment of the financial assistance to

ritory in Panjgur. Similarly, the financial compensation would also be given to the girl children injured in the strike.

the heirs of two women

died in the missile attack

carried out from Iranian ter-

announced financial assis-

tance for bereaved families

of those dead and injured in

Panjgur area of the prov

According to the offi-

The high ups of Chief Minister secretariat informed that the Deputy Commissioner Panjgur ha been issued orders for pay ment of the financial assis tance to the heirs of deceased women and other

It may be mentioned here that two women were killed and three girls were injured in the missile strike carried out by Iranian force in Panjgur.

#### Ban imposed on transfer and posting in Police **Department**

**Independent Report** QUETTA: Ban has been imposed on transfer and posting in the Police Department with immediate

According to an official notification issued here on Wednesday, the ban on transfer and posting in Police Department would remain imposed till the general elections in the coun-

In this regard, the com petent authority has di rected all the deputy in spector generals of police and other commanding officers to implement ban on all kinds of transfers and postings in their respective jurisdictions.

#### **Reko Diq Project,** beacon of sustainable growth in **Balochistan: Bristow**

ISLAMABAD (APP): President and Chief Execu tive of Barrick Gold Corporation, Mark Bristow unveiled an ambitious vision for the Reko Did project and reiterated Barrick Gold's commitment to fostering inclusive economic growth Balochistan

In an exclusive interview with a private news channel, Bristow empha sized the role of the Reko Diq project as a catalyst for transformative change in the

With an estimated investment of \$10 billion over the next 8-9 years, the Reko Diq project was poised to become a gamechanger for the regional economy, he added.

He said that Barrick Gold owns a 50 percent stake in Pakistan's Reko Dig mine, with the remaining 50 per cent owned by the governments of Pakistan and the province of Balochistan

Barrick Gold's investment is not merely in extracting minerals

He said the next government had to follow a clear principle of spending less and earning more to achieve economic stability. "We need to bring back the non-documented economy into the documented economy and transform our state to a more viable economic entity,

He highlighted that the caretaker government would publish a white paper on its 4-5 months performance. "We did introduce and revamp the programme within taxation system, we brought structural changes that would be passed through the Cabinet formerly by the end of the month, after that it would be in place as policy." Further, he said the caretaker government opted for aggressive privatization, it cut its expenditures at the federal level and it was also carrying out talks with the provinces so they could rationalize their expendi-



QUETTA: Vice Chancellor Gwadar University Prof. Dr. Abdul Razzaq Sabir meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

#### Governor stresses need to fully benefit from blue economy for ending economic crisis

**Independent Report** QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stressed the need to fully benefit from blue economy and marine resources for ending economic crisis and

restoring economy. He also called for holding a grand seminar on the blue economy at the national level. He was of the view that Pakistan can meet the requirements of sea food of Japan by exporting the same

He said that the public sector universities can play important role in making research and wise planning based on the modern knowledge besides getting the necessary information in this regard. The Governor was speaking to the Vice Chancellor of Gwadar University, Professor Dr. Abdul Razzaq Sabir who called on him here at the Governor

House on Wednesday. He believed that there

are bright chances of Gwadar's becoming a prominent trade center soon because of the ongoing development process in the coastal areas of Balochistan especially Gwadar.

However, there's a need to inform the world about the profitable prospects of trade development in the coastal areas so as to attract the international community towards the best opportunities and prospects available in the province, adding he stressed

For the purpose, a grand national seminar should be organized seeking guidance and support of the concerned experts regarding trade and commerce activities. He noted with contentment that it is our good luck that high ups and experts of Pak Navy are already performing in this connection. Therefore, we should benefit from their knowledge, observations and expertise.



QUETTA: Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafqaat inspecting Safe City Command and Control Center

#### Elected govt will have to work seriously to cope with challenges: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): the people's responsibility

Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Wednesday expressed the hope that the government coming to power after the February 8 elections would work for the betterment of the country and its people.

The country was facing economic difficulties, coupled with political polarization and the next elected government would have to work seriously to cope with the challenges, Solangi said during an informal conversation with journalists covering the activities of Election Commission of Pakistan at a luncheon.

The minister said it was

to elect an leadership who could amicably tackle the challenges being faced by Pakistan. "We need national consensus to solve the country's problems,' Solangi remarked. The minister said that

the caretaker government was working under the Constitution. "We are try-ing to fulfill our responsibilities in a better way."

He said that many political parties had complaints about the level playing field. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz was complaining of a lack of level playing field in Sindh and the Pakistan Peoples Party had same complaints in Punjab.

# ADR essential to alleviate strain on judiciary: Mushaal

ISLAMABAD, (APP): a large number of aspiring Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick, has said that Alternative Disputes Resolution (ADR) is gaining considerable recognition in Pakistan due to its potential to alleviate the burden on the overburdened court system

She was addressing a Workshop organized by Legal Aid and Justice Authority (LAJA), Ministry of Human Rights. The Workshop was aimed at capacity building and imparting training to ADR practitioners in ADR methods such as mediation, arbitration, and negotiation.

The workshop was addressed by a distinguished panel consisting of Senior Judge Federal Sharia Court Justice Sved Muhammad Anwar, DG National Police Bureau Ehsan Sadiq, DG. LAJA Dr. Rahim Awan, DG HR Ministry of Human Rights Abdul Sattar, and Executive Director PCHR able groups, particularly Choudhary Shafique. The women and children and workshop was attended by

QUETTA (APP): Non-

availability of basic medi-

cal items such as injections,

syringes, cannula, and

blood transfusion sets and

Established each in

Civil Hospital Quetta,

Bolan Medical Complex

and Kidney Centers, the

Thalassemia Centers are

not fulfilling the needs of

the poor and needy pa-

tients hailing from far-flung

tor of the Thalassemia Cen-

ters Quetta, said Irfan

Mohammad Hasni, a father

of three Thalassemia pa-

tients and a resident of Kili

and purchase syringes,

canolas and other basic

medical items myself to

I have to arrange blood

Lalaabad.

"I am the regular visi-

areas of the province.

short opening hours of the some serious patients who

Thalassemia Centers in after every two days.

ADR practitioners.

In her address she said that the Government, legal community, and various institutions had been taking initiatives to promote ADR and integrate it into the legal framework. She further said that ADR had many advantages to benefit from including; efficiency, cost effectiveness, Confidentiality, and Flexibility.

Mushaal underscored the transformative potential of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in alleviating the strain on the judicial system. She emphasized that the core objective of ADR was to complement traditional courts and mitigate the backlog of cases. She pointed out that there were 750 cases per judge in Pakistan rendering the conventional court trial process resource intensive and time consuming.

She said that one of the key functions of LAJA was to provide legal aid/assistance to poor and vulnerenhance public awareness

KARACHI: Caretaker Federal Minister of Religious Affairs & Interfaith

Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed addressing during Conference on Sirat-un-Nabi (SAW) and Contemporary Challenges and their solution at Iqra University.

Ineffective Thalassemia centers in

Quetta add to patients miseries

pital after every fifteen days

for his two daughters aged

13 and 12 and a son of age 3

centes have made the visit Thalassemia Centers Muhammad Hasni, social

When asked, he

RBC, the state-of-the-art

blood collection center is

unable to fulfill the needs

the Thalassemia forcing

patients to beg for blood

current timing of the

Thalassemia center is 8am

to 2pm. Most of the time,

the attendants are asked to

complete the blood trans-

fusion at home, citing the

reason of closing hour of

that, several times, he had

to leave the process incom-

plete. Instead of 500 ml,

Irfan further deplored

In addition, he said that

bag, he lamented.

hospital.

of blood for the patients of tients, have to face difficul-

He said that there are

of legal aid and laws in Pakistan. She further said that ADR if institutionalized would prove to be a valuable tool in empowering women, girls marginalized communities because of its quick dispensation of justice.

Mushaal acknowledged the efforts of the Legal Aid and Justice Authority formed under the LAJA Act 2020 to institutionalize the concept of ADR and establish reconciliatory committees across Pakistan. She further said that these efforts by LAJA would help to prepare a pool of Master Trainers on ADR in the country through capacity building and training sessions on modern ADR techniques and enable the ADR practitioners in dispute resolution mechanisms.

Mushaal emphasized that training ADR practitioners should be our key priority. She further said that the workshop was an important avenue to explore the challenges, opportunities, and new developments in alternative dispute reso-

Hospital Quetta should be

increased immediately and

supply of injection, can-

nula, blood set and other

equipment should also en-

sured, Saadat Khan

remote areas of the prov-

ince to get blood transfu-

sions for thalassemia pa-

ties due to the short hours

issue, instead of 500 ml, 100

ml of blood is injected," he

said urging that issues faced

by the parents of Thalas-

semia patients should be

addressed on priority basis.

Minister Balochistan, Chief

Health to take up the issue

vision of facilities including

shun) therapy, folic acid

supplements to the poor

ECP warns against

false info from

patients of Thalassemia.

Iron chelation (ke-LAY-

Secretary and Secretary

He also called for pro-

He has appealed Chief

On account of timing

of the centers.

immediately.

"People hailing from

activist of Quetta said.



views at the Trade Tech's Trillion-Dollar Promise session of the World Economic Forum.

#### PM, Belgian counterpart express satisfaction over growing trade, economic ties

ISLAMABAD Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and Prime Minister of Belgium Alexander De Croo on Wednesday, while noting the completion of 75 years of establishment of diplomatic ties between Pakistan and Belgium, expressed great satisfaction at the growing trade and economic relations between the two countries.

the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF), PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

They reaffirmed their commitment to enhance high-level exchanges and bilateral cooperation in all areas of mutual interest, including, trade and investment, migration and mobility and higher education. Important regional and

intries. global developments were also discussed.

#### Free medical camp related to Hepatitis C held in Kalat

QUETTA (APP): Aga Khan Hospital and OGDCL held a free medical camp related to Hepatitis C at District Headquarters Hospital Kalat on Wednesday. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kalat Hafiz Mohammad Qasim Kakar inaugurated the freed medical Camp for Hepatitis C after cutting the ribbon.

Medical Superintendent (MS) Civil Hospital Kalat Dr Nasrullah Longo, DHO Dr Naseem Longo, DS,MPPHI Mujeeb Baloch Regional Coordinator OGDCL Ikramullah Kasi, Senior CSR Officer patients of rural areas.

Muhammad Arshad, Assistant CSR Officer Bahauddin, Senior Admin Abid Khan Hepatitis Focal Person Najibullah Mengal and others present were present on the occassin.

OGDCL Regional Coordinator Ikramullah Kasi gave a detailed briefing to the Deputy Commissioner about the Hepatitis C Free

He said that measures were being taken to control Hepatitis C through examining patients in the free medical camp in the area to provide health facilities to

#### New Zealand clinches T20 series with dominant win over Pakistan

DUNEDIN (INP): In the third and final T20 match l Dunedin, held in New Zealand secured victory over Pakistan by defeating them by 45 runs, thereby claiming the series. Pakistan commenced their batting pursuit with a target of 225 runs set by New Zealand.

Despite a challenging start, opener Saud Ayub couldn't provide a solid foundation and was dismissed after scoring 10 runs. onlv Partnering batsman Mohammad Rizwan contributed 24 runs, while skipper Babar Azam fought valiantly to complete his fifty, ultimately falling at 58

Fakhar Zaman scored 19, Azam Khan Mohammad 10. Nawaz 28, and Iftikhar Ahmed managed only 1 run before being dismissed. Shahin Afridi scored 16.

the institution. In a pro-

gressive step towards ad-

ministrative excellence at

# Azerbaijan declares 2024 as "Green World Solidarity Year": **Amb Farhadov**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov said on Wednesday 2024 has been declared as 'Green World Solidarity Year" in the Republic will host the COP29 International Climate Conference in Decem-

He was addressing as the chief guest at the special session on climate The Center of Climate Diplomacy, in collaboration with COPAIR (Center of Pakistan and International Relations), organized a thought-provoking roundtable conference on the topic "Shaping Tomorrow's

The event aimed to shed light on the urgent and immediate challenges posed by climate change and the need for collective attention and collaborative action.

The guests and experts from various fields gathered to address the conference, emphasizing the pressing nature of climate change and the necessity for immediate



Ambassador Farhadov said President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has signed an Order on declaring 2024 as the "Green World Solidarity Year" in the country. "The focal points of our current energy policy revolve around the development of green energy and the facilitation of its transport to global markets. Liberated Karabakh and East Zangezur, as well as the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, have been declared green energy

The ambassador said the protection of the environment stands as a priority in the extensive restoration and redevelopment processes unfolding in the liberated territories. Innovative approaches such as "smart city" and 'smart village" are implemented in these areas, contributing to ecosystem restoration. Shedding light on the impact of conflicts on the environment, he informed that Armenia's three-decade occupation of Azerbaijani territories extensively damaged the ecosystem, wildlife and

#### **Concerted efforts crucial** for progress, prosperity of Pakistan: Shehbaz

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharifhas said that concerted efforts, coupled with viable policies, are inevitable to put the country on the road to progress and prosperity. Talking to the media

here on Wednesday, he said that 250 million people would use their right to vote wisely on February 8 and decide on the future of the country. He said the PML-N had launched its election campaign vigorously and, under the able leadership of party Quaid Nawaz Sharif, all leaders would actively participate in the campaign. These election are very crucial in determining the fate and future of Pakistan, he said. He recalled that in 2017, Pakistan was rapidly developing under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif, and day and night struggle had been made to end darkness from the country. Every sector of the country was progressing at that time, but the development process was halted. He said that scholarships worth millions of rupees were dis-

N saved the country from bankruptcy and brought about the economic stability. He said survival of the state was a priority during the coalition government, and not politics or staying in power, and he had no regrets over the outcome.

The PML-N president said that his party was working day and night for 16 months, when they were in government, and saved Pakistan from bankruptcy Shedding light on broader consequences, he regretted the damage caused to diplomatic relations, and creation of division in society during the previous government. He admitted that recovery from those damages would take time. "These divisions will not be overcome in a year or two; we will unite the nation by ending hatred," he added.

Shehbaz Sharif stressed the need for skilled development in educational institutions at eight and nine standard to determine the expertise of students, saying that the Punjab Skills Development Authority had been formed during the last tenure of PML-N government to facilitate stuthe previous tenure of dents in choosing their de-Nawaz Sharif. The PML- sired employment.

#### VC urges good governance and administrative excellence at UoT more prosperous future of

Independent Report URBAT: During the clos-

ing ceremony of a two-day training workshop at the University of Turbat, Prof.

sional Development'; was concluded at the University of Turbat. The officers and staff from various administrative units of the Univer-Dr. Jan Muhammad, the Vice Chancellor, highlighted workshop.

UoT, Prof. Dr. Jan Muhammad encouraged each participant to replicate

the essential role of good governance and administrative excellence for the progress of the University of Turbat He reiterated his administration's commitment to conducting capacity-building training workshops at regular intervals for administrative staff and faculty members at UoT.

A dynamic two-day training workshop on 'Secretarial Skills and Profes-

Emphasizing the knowledge in their respecuniversity's commitment to continuous improvement and growth, the vice-chancellor highlighted the significance of key principles such as ethics in the workplace, self-management, trust and relationship building, conceptual and

tive roles. The event covered vari-

ous modules but not limited to file management, conducting official meetings, drafting minutes of meetings, human resource management, time management, effective record management, professional development, governance, and leadership at universities.

#### carrying out responsibilities to ensure a brighter and

#### Continued from page 1

fake CEC WhatsApp account SLAMABAD (APP):The lection Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has cautioned the public to remain rigilant and disregard false information spread through fake WhatsApp account mpersonating Chief Elecion Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja.

According to an ECP spokesperson, the recently identified fake WhatsApp account is being circulated with a picture of the CEC.

#### Lahore Qalandars hit by setback as Rashid Khan ruled out of PSL 9

LAHORE (INP): Afghanistan's leg-spinner Rashid Khan will not be able to participate in the upcoming Pakistan Super League (PSL) Season 9 following surgery on his lower back. Afghanistan's head coach, Jonathan Trot, emphasized the management's cautious approach to handle

Rashid's injury. Rashid Khan, who did not participate in the BBL and the T20I series against India earlier, is currently traveling with the team, but full fitness is yet to be achieved. Jonathan Trot stated, "It's a delicate matter for us to take care of his back cautiously. He is an impactful player, and we need to ensure he is 100% ready and not rush his recovery. He is working hard, and he is with the team.'

# Govt & security institutions..

technical skills, teamwork,

and positive approaches in

# Referring the air strike

from Iran in Pakistan's border area and jurisdiction in Makran, Jan Achakzai maintained that the Foreign Office has already declared that the terrorism is a combined threat for all countries of the region, and there is a need to take coordinated action against it. He said that the violation of sovereignty of Pakistan from Iran side harms the mutual neighborhood relations, trust and trade relations. About the protest dharna being staged by Baloch Yekjehti Committee led by Dr. Mah Rang Baloch in Islamabad, Jan Achakzai said that she (Mah Rang) and her companions have been exposed further. Their pro-Indian agenda has exposed their real face be-

He also referred to the dharna being staged by the heirs of martyrs who embraced martyrdom for the cause of country in Islamabad and said that he witnessed lot of love for people of Balochistan and Balochs in Islamabad.

fore the masses, the Minis-

ter Information maintained.

While on the other hand. the caretaker government of Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar provided full opportunity to the women having association and linkages with the terrorists and separatists to record their protest in Islamabad. Jan Achakzai main-

tained that he himself expressed solidarity with the heirs of martyrs in Islamabad and also made offer of dialogue to the women protestors under banner of Pakistan.

#### He said that he also warned India to refrain from playing the role of interna-

tional terrorist. Now Mah Rang has blamed that if something was happened to her or other families in dharna then he (Jan Achakzai) and caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar would be responsible for it, he mentioned adding that we are political workers and

against every kind of terror-

ism. He also said that the

country's institutions know how to tackle terrorism. Referring the "angry" Balochs, Jan Achakzai said that we are bringing the Baloch brethren who were otherwise playing in the hands of India earlier in the

He told that more separatists are coming in the national mainstream. He said that Mah Rang has started making allegations after she was baffled out following ours' these efforts about bringing the "angry" Baloch people in the national mainstream. He also criticized the so-called intellectuals who, according to him, want to spoil the image of Pakistan through supporting the women supporting the separatists.

national mainstream.

About relations with Afghanistan, the Minister Information said that our stance is very clear about Afghanistan and we believe in mutual relations with the neighbouring country based on respect. However, it is also a fact that some inhabitants of Afghanistan have been involved in the terrorism in Pakistan, adding he regretfully pointed out.

#### Dr Syed Asif appointed new secretary EC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Dr Syed Asif Hussain has been appointed new secretary Election Commission (EC). New Secretary EC

has been appointed on contract basis for one According to EC Dr Syed Asif Hussain has

been appointed new secretary of EC. Chief Election Commissioner has appointed grade -22 officer for one vear. Notification for im-

mediate appointment of Dr Asif Hussain has been issued. According to notification special secretary Dr Syed Asif Hussain has been appointed secretary EC for one year on contract basis.

According to EC sources chief election commissioners of Puniab and Balochistan have also been transferred.

#### Sports dept firmed to promote squash: Secretary

tary Balochistan Sports Dr. Javed Anwar Shahwani has said that the Sports Department is committed to the promotion of squash in the province. Concrete steps are afoot to facilitate youth want to prove their flair in the squash.

tributed among students in

views while talking to reporters on the occasion of along with the Director General of Sports Durra Baloch on Wednesday. President Balochistan

Sauash Association Mohammad Arshad, Kalim Khan Javed Ahmed, Salman Nasir, Dr. Manzoor and others were present. Secretary recalled that

the renowned names of Pa-

QUETTA (APP): Secre- kistan in squash have made the country famous at the international level. There are also squash

players in our province who have no shortage of talent, and who have shown their skills whenever they get a chance. "The purpose of visit-

He expressed these ing squash court was to see the venue so that it can be further improved." the seca visit to the squash court retary said adding "We are in Ayub Sports Complex trying to take steps to promote squash not only in Ouetta but also in other districts of Balochistan.

Steps will be taken to provide opportunities to the players and further tournaments will be organized for them so that the players can get a chance to develop their skills, Shahwani maintained.



TORKHAM: A view of closed Torkham border.

# complete blood transfusion 100 ml of blood is transprocess of my minor kids," "The timing of Thalashe deplored. Irfan has to visit hossemia Care Centers in Civil **QUETTA: Vendor making panaflex of candidates**

#### preparing for general election 2024. China achieves high quality development targets in 2023: CG

Consul General of the pressure resulting from a People's Republic of China in Karachi Yang Yundong has said that China had achieved high-quality development targets in the year 2023 with an estimated Gross Domestic Product of 5.2 percent.

Expediting the pace of work in game changer China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project, major achievements were also made and several high-profile projects were in the completion stage that would benefit the people of Pakistan, he said while addressing the ceremony for awarding certification of recognizing the contribution made by media Friends in Pakistan here at Karachi Consulate on Wednesday.

Yang Yundong said over the past year, China's economy had successfully opment of the Chinese withstood international economy.

KARACHI (APP): The risks and the downward combination of multiple domestic factors. It has continued to rebound and show positive trends, with the solid promotion of highquality development, he added. According to customs statistics, in 2023, the total value of China's goods trade imports and exports reached 41.76 trillion yuan, representing a year-on-year growth of 0.2%. The combined exports of the "new three" products-electric passenger vehicles, lithium batteries, and solar cellsreached 1.06 trillion yuan, reflecting year-on-year growth of 29.9%, Chinese CG said, adding that this indicates a sustained ontimization and upgrade of China's export product structure, reflecting a new trend in high-quality devel-

### **Sherry stresses timely electoral** process, level playing field amid symbol allocation concerns

Senator Sherry Rehman, Vice-President of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), on Wednesday, reiterated her party's commitment to a timely electoral process for a seamless democratic transition and stressed that a level playing field in the polls can only be guaranteed once all PPP candidates receive their electoral symbols on time.

Senator Rehman's statements came in response to concerns raised by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) regarding potential delays in certain constituencies, as revealed in their announcement on Tuesday. While ballot paper printing for the 2024 elections has commenced, apprehensions linger over possible polling delays due to numerous pleas for a change of election symbols in related constituencies

Speaking to reporters, Senator Rehman said: "The PPP is the only party in the active approach to electioneering by launching its formal campaign on December 27, 2023, while Chairman Bilawal Bhutto and Aseefa Bhutto Zardari have been actively participating in campaign activities. Moreover, President Zardari is set to inaugurate Chairman Bilawal's election office in Lahore, too. However, concerns persist regarding the allocation of electoral symbols to some PPP candi-

dates in Punjab. She added that the PPP has time and again stressed the need for streamlined processes, transparency, and a level playing field for PPP in the elections.

Despite our efforts, seven PPP candidates from Punjab faced issues with the designated electoral symbols, out of which the cases of three candidates, including Sajida Abbas Kharral from NA-107, Nosheen Begum from PP-122, and Mujahid Islam from PP-119, remain unresolved.

ISLAMABAD (Online): country that adopted a pro- The PPP demands prompt resolution of these matters without further delay," she said. While addressing concerns about potential election delays, Senator Rehman said that attributing such delays solely to the non-issuance of electoral symbols is not the appropriate approach.
"The PPP firmly

> delays, advocating for a stable and timely democratic process. The party has also demonstrated its commitment to transparency by presenting key points of its manifesto to the public. Amidst the challenges facing Pakistan, the party has stressed the urgency of holding elections on time to ensure stability and address the country's pressing issues. Regarding ongoing economic challenges, Senator Rehman said that the



Khalil George

condemns

suicidal attack

in Quetta

ISLAMABAD (APP)

Caretaker Minister of Hu-

man Rights Khalil George

on Wednesday condemned

the suicidal attack near

GPO Chowk at Zarghoon

road Quetta and expressed

heartfelt grief and sorrow

over the loss of precious

minister termed it a shame-

ful act of terrorism and said

that the elements involved

in such activities were the

prits involved in such ac-

tivities would not be spared

and would be brought to

souls of the martyred in

eternal peace and sympa-

thized with bereaved fami-

lies and also prayed for early

**AIOU offers** 

academic

programs for

intl students

SLAMABAD (APP):

Allama Iqbal Open University(AIOU) has an-

students.

ecovery of the injured.

He added that the cul-

He prayed to rest the

enemies of the country.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Hussein Mullick addressing a workshop on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) organized by Legal Aid and Justice Authority (LAJA), Ministry of Human Rights, in Islamabad.

# NCRC chairperson for discouraging practice of blaming rape victims

Chairperson of the National Commission on Rights of the Child (NCRC) Aisha Reza Farooq on Wednesday, called for widespread awareness campaigns by engaging political leaders. scholars, religious figures support, aiming to collect and social media to discourevidence responsibly to age the blaming practices of

rape victims. Talking to a private news channel, the NCRC chairperson passionately urged the public to rally behind rape survivors for

the cause of justice. Highlighting the key components of the recently established Anti-Rape Crisis Cell (ARCC) in Islamabad, she said it was continuity of Anti-Rape (Investigation and Trial) Act, 2021, which brings survivor support services under one roof, including FIR registration, evidence collection, and a medical examination within six

Aisha Farooq emphasized the importance of collective efforts from stakeholders for effective legislation and policy reforms in that record. The Cell's mission.

she said, extends beyond ensure convictions in such She stressed the need

to instil confidence in families and individuals to report such incidents, which is crucial for justice to pre-

The NCRC chairperoutlined government's ambitious goal of enabling every citizen, especially women, to reclaim public spaces with-

out fear of sexual violence. Islamabad's first antirape crisis cell (ARCC) was established at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims) to provide timely response and expe-



ISLAMABAD: A woman on her way while portraits of national leaders on a school wall attracts people

# FAO, GoS jointly hold Strategic Planning Workshop for SWAT project

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a significant collaborative effort, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in partnership with the Government of Sindh (GoS), organized a two-day strategic planning workshop on

The event aimed at evaluating the progress of the Sindh Water Agriculture Transformation (SWAT) identifying Project, achievements, and strategically planning activities for the year 2024.

The workshop served as a platform for project partners including team leads and subject specialists from the World Bank, Sindh Irrigation & Agriculture Departments, SIDA, Directorate of Sindh Water Sector & Barrages Improvement and Sindh Barrages Improvement Project, to engage in brainstorming sessions, address bottlenecks, and draw valuable lessons from past experiences.

Dr Robina Wahaj, Senior Land & Water Specialist FAO, highlighted the organization's longstanding and successful collaboration with the Government

FAO's commitment to supporting the implementation of various projects including WSIP, SBIP SWAT, and the formulation of crucial policies such as Sindh Agriculture Policy, and Sindh Water Policy. She assured continued support from FAO to enhance water and agriculture productivity in Sindh.

Dr. Aamer Irshad, Assistant FAO representative shed light on alarming statistics regarding the decline in agriculture productivity in Pakistan, emphasizing the need for a transformative approach.

The decrease from 4% in 1960-2000 to 2% in 2011-2022 underscores the urgency for innovative

stands against any election

attends Urs of Khawaja **Moinuddin Chishti** ISLAMABAD (APP): Charge d' Affairs Pakistan High Commission in New

Pak Charge d'Affairs

Delhi Aizaz Khan and a group of 230 Pakistani Zaireen participated in the 812th annual Urs of Hazrat Khawaja Syed Moinuddin Hasan Chishti (RA) in Ajmer Sharif, India. Aizaz Khan paid obei-

sance at the Dargah of one of the most revered Sufi saints of the subcontinent, who is also known as Khwaja Gharib Nawaz, Pakistan High Commission said in a press release on

After placing the tra-ditional chaddar on behalf

visiting Zaireen offered special prayers for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan.

Earlier, on arrival at the Dargah, they were re-ceived by Syed Bilal Chishti and other prominent members of the Anjuman Moinia Fakhria Chishtia Khuddam Khwaja

The Dargah notables performed "dastarbandi" of the chargé d'affaires and representatives of the Zaireen.

Aizaz Khan, thanked the Sajjada Nashin of the shrine, as well as the local administration for facilitatof the people and the Gov- ing the visit of Pakistani ernment of Pakistan, the Chargé d' Affairs and the occasion.

# **EPI director for** timely Pneumonia vaccination for kids

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director of the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI), Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Awan, has emphasized the importance of timely vaccination against pneumonia for kids below the age of two to keep them safe against this deadly disease.

"Parents should not delay the vaccinations of kids, as it ensures their wellbeing and overall health," said Awan while talking to

He clarified that free pneumonia vaccines were ensured at all health centers

under EPI, with recommended doses at six, ten, and fourteen weeks. Parents may visit major hospitals, Tehsil and District Headquarter Hospitals, as well as centers for the immunization extension program, primary health centers, and rural health centers to get their kids vaccinated. Emphasizing the severity of pneumonia, especially in young children, Dr. Mukhtar stresses the significance of immediate medical attention if symptoms like cough, fever, or



Sadiq Sanjrani exchanging views with Chief Minister Of Gilgit-Baltistan, Gulbar Khan at Parlia-

# **Efficient utilization** of resources in health programmes urged

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Secretary Health Iftikhar Ali Shallwani has emphasized the need for an integrated approach to ensure the efficient utilization of resources in health

nounced admissions in first phase of the spring semesprogrammes. ter 2024 for Overseas Pa-Addressing the meetkistani and international ing at the common management unit for a coordinated The programs offered approach for managing in this phase include Sec-AIDS, TB and Malaria ondary School Certificate grants, he urged for the (Matric) and Higher Secimplementation of eviondary School Certificate dence-based interventions.

Shallwani affirmed the (F.A and I.Com). commitment of the govern-International students can apply for admission in ment and its partners to the these programs until March shared goal of creating and Malaria.

It is pertinent to mention here AIOU is the only university in the country that provides educational opportunities for overseas Pakistanis and international students from all over the world. During the last semester, more than 500 students enrolled in AIOU The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, has set a goal to enroll 10,000 international students in the next five years. He also expressed his pride in the fact that they provide educational opportunities to international students.

All the programs for international students are offered under the online management system.

Parliament Lodges.

healthier communities and preventing the spread of AIDS, TB, and Malaria.

He expressed optimism about the outcomes of the meeting, stating, "By working jointly and harnessing our collective strengths and with the wisdom of National Coordinator CMU, Dr Razia Fatima, we can make significant strides in combating AIDS, TB, and Malaria.'

The meeting was held to ensure a concerted effort to address the pressing health challenges posed by AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB),

#### Refugees land allotment case: Physical remand of CDA employees approved

ISLAMABAD: Senator Muhammad Hamayun Mohmand, Chairman Senate Standing Committee On

National Health Services, Regulations And Coordination presiding over a meeting of the committee at

ISLAMABAD (Online): Physical remand of 3 employees of CDA has been approved in refugees land allotment case.

3 days physical remand has been approved regarding patwari Abid Hussain, Rashid and Assistant Aftab Aslam.

According to FIA revenue staff caused loss to CDA amounting to Rs 1 billion through illegal compensation

CDA patwari and other staff members are

nominated in FIR. The heirs of Akbar Ali received compensation of illegal plots in connivance with CDA revenue staff members.

The original file has to be recovered, therefore, 7 days physical remand of the accused persons be given. Members of land mafia have to be arrested on pointation of the accused.

Judicial magistrate Abbas Shah approved 3day physical remand of the accused persons.

# **Director UNESCO calls on** Minister for Culture Jamal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director and Representative of United Nations Educational Scientific and Cul-(UNESCO) Islamabad, Dr.

ISLAMABAD: PM's Advisor on aviation Air Marshal Farhat Hussain Khan (retd) poses for group photo on the eve of inauguration

of newly established Aircrew examination licensing centre (North) at Islamabad International Airport.

Youssef Filali-Meknassi, met with Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah here at his office.

Humaira Ahmed, Adviser National Heritage and Culture Division Muhammad Kashif Irshad and other senior officials were also present on the occasion. The Federal Minister

and UNESCO Director agreed upon the need for policy and procedural changes to improve coordination and information sharing among various governmental departments working on culture and heritage, Public Relations Officer

#### **SC** dismisses IB employee's appeal against termination

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court on Wednesday dismissed the appeal of an employee of the Intelligence Bureau (IB) against his termination from service.

A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa heard the case.

The petitioner's lawyer informed the court that his client was terminated from service on charges of using a non custom paid vehicle. He had used a friend's vehicle for a day, ISLAMABAD (Online):

Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar noted that the government's number plate was also displayed on the vehicle.

The chief justice remarked that the Bureau did not do its own projection or what it was doing. How the institution would function with such persons as its employees, and the IB had a specific standard in that regard, he added.

The court, subsequently, dismissed the ap-

#### NA Speaker strongly flays breach of Pak airspace by Iran

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf on Wednesday strongly con-demned the breach of Pakistan's airspace by Iran.

The Speaker, in a statement, termed Iran's missile attack into Pakistan territory "an irresponsible and unacceptable act", asserting that the breach of Pakistan's border limits was not acceptable under any circumstances.

This violation of Pakistan's border limits is an attack on national security," he added

Raja Pervez said that Pakistan, as a peaceful nation, had always prioritized friendly and brotherly relations with all neighbouring countries, including Iran. "Pakistan believes in

the policy of non-aggression, but any violation of our border limits will not be tolerated," he added while asserting Pakistan's inherent right to retaliate against any aggression.
The Speaker also ex-

pressed deep sorrow and regret over the loss of precious human lives caused by the the missile attack and sympathized with the af fected families.

Akhter Munir said while talking to APP. The minister said that National Heritage and Culture Division has prepared Organization a comprehensive plan for revival of cultural and literary heritage.

He informed the Director UNESCO about the strategy for preservation Secretary National Heritage and Culture and development of historical sites in federal capital including Mai Qamro Mosque, Muqarab Khan tomb, Rawat Fort and Shah Alla Ditha caves.

Jamal Shah opined that historical sites should be properly documented and conserved, promoting the country's valuable heritage. He said that federal government was taking solid measures for the preservation and development of the national heritage.

The minister praised UNESCO's cooperation in

preservation of Pakistan's heritage sites, adding that the National Heritage Division requires technical and financial support to continue its efforts. He added that preservation of historic sites like the Mehrgarh Archaeological Site is an ur-

gent need to uplift the

country's potential, and at-

tract tourists. In the meeting, UNESCO Director and Representative Dr Youssef Filali-Meknassi reaffirmed UNESCO's commitment to work with NHCD on areas

of mutual interest. He appreciated the Division's ongoing efforts to incorporate cultural content in classrooms for children in schools.

He discussed the development of informational content on culture for children and possible avenues of dissemination.



sion Lt. General (Retd) Hidayat-ur-Rehman meeting with Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhary

#### Toshakhana, Al-Qadir trust references: **IHC** sends the file to CJ for constitution of division bench

ISLAMABAD (Online): Justice Miangul Islamabad High Court Hassan Aurangzeb re-(IHC) while hearing the marked "it seems as if this petitions of former Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan in Toshakhana and Al-Qadir trust references has sent the file to Chief Justice (CJ) for constitution of division

challenging jail trial in Toshakhana and Al-Qadir NAB cases has filed petition in IHC. A single bench of IHC

PTI founder while

led by Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb took up the petitions for hearing Wednesday.

Latif Khosa and the court on behalf of PTI

founder Imran Khan,

court. Latif Khosa counsel for Imran Khan said it is quality of judge Muhammad Bashir that cases of all were fixed in his court. On this remark from Latif Khosa, the court stopped counsel for Imran Khan from talking about

case has come in this court

mistakenly because it is di-

vision bench case. NAB it-

self is a party in this case.

If there had been some em-

ployee then this case could

have been related to this

judge Muhammad Bashir. Justice Miangul Shoaib Shaheen appeared in Hassan Aurangzeb remarked don't talk about judge Muhammad Bashir.



Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah presenting a shield to Director and Representative UNESCO Dr. Yousef Filali-Meknassi after meeting in his office.

# Police implement stringent security measures in high security zone

**Independent Report** ISLAMABAD: Islamabad

Capital Police is leveraging all available resources to maintain peace and tranquility within the federal capital and beefed up the security measures in high security zone.

Efforts include rigorous data registration, verification of identification documents, and systematic searches of individuals entering the high-security zone on a regular basis. In the past week alone, police spokesperson said the Islamabad Capital Police took action by removing tinted glasses and improper number plates from 1.511 vehicles, impounding 109 vehicles without proper documentation at various checkpoints within the high-security zone. Police officers and of-

ficials stationed at high-security zone checkpoints have been issued strict directives to perform their duties with utmost responsibility. Safeguarding crucial public and private property, as well as embassies situated in the high-security zone, is emphasized as a top priority. Furthermore, police officials have been instructed to record the data of all citizens entering the high-security zone, thoroughly scrutinize identification documents, conduct searches on suspicious vehicles, and maintain a positive and cooperative attitude towards the public. Citizens are encour-

aged to collaborate with the Islamabad Capital Police and promptly report any suspicious activities through the "Pucar-15"

# Daily soice of Masse. Independent

Thursday January 18, 2024

# Iran's unprovoked airspace violation of Pakistan - a heinous crime

Iran has carried out missile strike violating the Pakistan's airspace in Panjgur area of Balochistan the other day. Undoubtedly, the Iran's unprovoked airspace violation is a heinous attack on Pakistan's sovereignty and integrity, which can have serious consequences in future.

The otherwise unexpected strike has claimed lives of two innocent children and left three girls injured. While Iran is claiming that the missile strike was carried out against a terrorist organization, but death of innocent children in the unprovoked strike is sheer denial of Iran's claim.

There's no denying the fact that the entire responsibility of this attack rests with the Iranian government, IRGC and Iranian intelligence. Despite existence of multiple channels of communication between the two countries, the operation was carried out contrary to international law, which clearly violated Pakistan's airspace. It is also a mockery that a fake press release was also issued from an organization called Jaishul-Adl to justify this incident. Seeing Pakistan's reaction, Iran realized its wrong and foolish action.

Matter of fact remains that the organization namely Jaish-ul-Adl, is being run by the IRGC itself. Now they want to get rid of this problem, that's why a false statement was issued from Jaish-ul-Adl again that these rockets went across the border by mistake and actually the target was Jaish al-Adl camp inside Sistan, Iran.

It is very ridiculous that a terrorist organization itself is giving explanations for rockets fired by the IRGC, accidentally crossing the border. This clearly shows that the accounts attributed to Jaish-ul-Adl are being operated by IRGC and Iranian cantly advancing our underintelligence itself. While on the other hand, there is great anger in Pakistan over this action by Iran.

It is also a reality that the banned derstanding. 'BioMind' – to analyze molecular structures and optimize material developed for medical im-It is also a reality that the banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) have camps inside Iran. The world knows that the Indian spy Kaloboshan Yadav had also been operating from Iran. This unprovoked airspace violation of Pakistan by Iran is a great mistake and no doubt, this incident can never be ignored. As a result of this action, the entire Pakistani nation is now demanding a strong and similar response from the state. Pakistan reserves the right to respond in any way. Foreign office has summoned the Iranian Charge d'affaires and a strong protest has been recorded. The announcement for Iranian ambassador not to return and the recalling of the Pakistani ambassador from Iran came as a very strong response from Pakistan.

Even before this incident, infiltration and terrorist activities took place from the territory of Iran.

In January 2023, in Panjgur District, four security personnel were martyred in terrorist activities from inside the Iranian border, while in April 2023, terrorists from Iranian territory attacked Pakistani forces in Kech. It is worth mentioning here that Iran's security agencies are not on the same page due to which the Iranian government is facing serious challenges at the diplomatic level. This speaks high about the division in Iranian ruling hierarchy as well. After this incident, certain political factions used social media for their political gains and to malign Pakistan Army. Indian accounts also took part in this malicious campaign, helping certain political groups of Pa-

Pakistan will definitely not adopt the approach by Iraq and Syria in responding to such incidents and will take every measure for its national security and integrity that reflects the feelings and sentiments of the Pakistani nation. Pakistan always prefers the principle of co-existence with its neighbors but is not oblivious to its national security requirements and reserves the right to retaliate to this aggression by Iran. What's more frustrating is also that no regret has been shown from Iran on this very cruel incident till ours going to the press. This is high time for Iran to confess the heinous crime and tender an immediate apology to Pakistan over the incident.

# The curse of being busy



Rafia Zakaria

There used to be a time when the ultimate symbol of a good life was being able to have plenty of time for leisure activities. One can still read about it

in literature. The Victorians, for nstance, rich thanks to the wealth looted from India and other colonies, flaunted their leisure time. They took grand tours on the Continent which was essentially slow travel and spending months in a single city or country. They also collected curios that they displayed all over their living rooms, where they hosted everything from afternoon teas to a game of charades.

The enjoyment of such leisure was not just the forte of the British. Before their time in India, the pursuits of Mughal royalty were well known. In fact, art, music and literature flourished because there was a leisure class that was available to consume and enjoy them. Many a Mughal miniature shows ladies in repose, lounging on a dais.

The men of Mughal royalty got around to doing a bit more. For instance, many hunting scenes have been depicted. It might, however, not be very easy to find renditions of the hunting Mughals as academicians.

There was hardly any multitasking for the leisure classes of yore. There were many times that people did nothing at all; when they did do something it would appear as if that was the only thing they did. This idea is going to

be anathema to the next generation; indeed, it probably already is for members of Gen Z and the succeeding Gen Alpha. Turn to any social media platform, and you will be confronted with people who are 'multitasking'.

Many women showcase their skincare routines but it is never just portray the business of they will be full of this

swering texts on their phone. Multitasking is just about everywhere. And the more 'everywhere' it is, the more the rest of us are expected to partake of it.

Inextricably linked to the multitasking epidemic is the more noxious cult of 'busyness'. Nobody shows off like the Mughals or the Victorians anymore by commissioning paintings that depict them as relaxing and doing nothing other than having fun.

Quite the opposite. In the modern era, the order of the day is to be seen as constantly, endlessly 'busy'. It does not matter which big city in the world you may find yourself in; you will run into the same conversation — people complaining about how busy they are, how they have no time for this or that or themselves

busyness that it has generated other trends. Among the more pervasive inclinations, is to

Such is the cult of

taking care of oneself. Indeed, the novel concept of 'self-care' is all the rage. Taking a nap is selfcare, washing your face is self-care, not answering mother who has no option texts for a few hours is self-care. Self-care exists and has to be defended, lest others think you're not busy enough and pile more things on you, or worse still, think you're a nobody and are, in fact, a loser with nothing to do.

None of this is good for us as human beings. In fact, the focus on selfcare can be regarded as a desperate measure in a world in which the individual is overwhelmed with the demands of appearing busy to others.

The worst offenders of the cult of busyness are those who are actually not busy. These may include, for instance, women of leisure, for whom cultivating an illusion of busyness is a social media badge of honour. It follows that these people, and others like them, are invested in further popularising 'busyness'

When novels depicting our times are written,

people busy being too busy. In the meantime, those who are actually busy — say, the working but to juggle her job, her kids, her husband and various other family members — will rarely make an appearance in these catalogues of our moment.

If civilisation were to end tomorrow and Instagram was the only thing to survive, whoever came after us would think that we spent all our time using filtered images of ourselves to show what moisturiser and sunblock we used or the number of designer handbags we had in our closet.

It is entirely possible that the cultural commentators of eras past were similarly disgruntled by the long stretches of free time available to the landlords and the princes while the labourers and peasants toiled throughout their waking hours. It would be seen as an issue of injustice, because the leisure of one was dependent on the toil of an-

The sad truth is that this exploitative loop has not changed over the ages. The exploiters of today are simply cleverer. If you are constantly 'busy', then the people who actually have no time to breathe are denied even the small joy of pointing to your leisure as evidence of their own exploitation. Everyone else who finds it necessary to project their faux busyness should remember that they are aping oppressors and not those who are truly

So perhaps it is time to introspect for those projecting themselves as being 'busy' and using busyness' as a way to exhibit some imagined coolness. If you are truly too busy to not be able to do one task at a time or get some sleep or bathe regularly or take a nap sometimes, you have problems bigger than simply over-commitment.

And if someone else complains about how busy they are, stop them in their tracks or at the very least roll your eyes. We all have time to do that. -- Courtesy Dawn

# The world of AI

#### Atta-ur-Rahman

Artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a huge transformative force that is reshaping the landscape of various fields and industries. Its adaptive and analytical capabilities have led to major advancements in technology, science, healthcare, finance, and many other sectors.

In healthcare, AI has proved to be a game changer. Its myriad applications range from predictive analytics for disease diagnosis to personalized treatment plans. Technologies like 'İBM Watson' for oncology assist cancer specialists in developing tailored treatment strategies based on patient data and medical literature.

'AlphaFold'predicts protein folding, signifistanding of biological structures. It is now being widely employed for drug discovery and disease unage analysis, particularly in neurology – assists in diagnosing neurological disorders by analyzing medical imaging data, such as MRI

conditions. 'DeepMind Health' is finding applica-tions for medical image analysis, patient monitoring and predicting patient deterioration.

AI is transforming education too through adaptive learning platforms, like 'DreamBox', which personalize learning experiences for students. Additionally, AI tools aid in automating administrative tasks, allowing educators to focus more on personalized instruction.

Lawyers can now benefit from 'ROSS', an AI-powered legal research tool that utilizes natural language processing to find relevant legal information. 'GPT-3', developed by OpenAI, is a powerful language model that has applications in natural language understanding, translation, and content generation.

'AtomNet', developed by Google subsidiary DeepMind, is an AI tool that employs deep learning and improving overall opdesign for various applications. 'Eureqa', developed by Nutonian, automates the process of data modeling. The combinatorial and highscans, and identifying pat- throughput experimental

terns indicative of specific and efficient tool for materials science (CHEETAH) is being used to accelerate the discovery of new mate-

> The 'Allen Integrated Cell' developed by the Allen Institute for Cell Science analyzes high-content cellular images, identifying and tracking cellular structures over time. This helps researchers understand cell behavior and dynamics. TensorFlow and

'PyTorch' are popular open-source machine learning frameworks used for image classification, natural language processing, and creating custom machine learning models tailored to specific scientific applica-

In the manufacturing sector, AI is optimizing processes through predictive maintenance, quality control, and supply chain management. 'Siemens' Industrial AI', for instance, predicts equipment failures, reducing downtime erational efficiency.

AI-driven robotics also contribute to automation, enhancing precision and speed in manufacturing processes. In the automotive industry, AI is at the forefront of the develop-

ment of autonomous vehicles. Companies like Waymo' are employing deep learning and computer vision to enable vehicles to navigate safely, making decisions in real-time. AIdriven predictive maintenance also enhances the efficiency of vehicle management, reducing downtime

and maintenance costs. Retailers can now utilize AI for inventory management, personalized marketing, and customer service. Recommendation engines analyze customer preferences, thereby in-creasing sales through personalized product suggestions. 'Salesforce Einstein'. an AI platform for customer relationship management, enhances retailers' ability to understand and engage with their customers.

'HireVue' uses AI in talent assessment, analyzing video interviews to help companies make informed hiring decisions. 'IBM Watson for Media' is entertainment industry by adjust prices for maximum analyzing content using AI.

and with the profitability. This allows another than the profitability. This allows are the profitability and the profitability. This allows are the profitability and the profitability and the profitability. It helps media companies understand audience preferences, optimize content creation and enhance overall audience engagement.

analyze customer behavior, preferences, and historical data to suggest products or services tailored to individual users. AI has revolutionized financial services, powering algorithmic trading, fraud detection, and personalized financial advice. Quantitative analysis tools, such as QuantConnect, leverage machine learning to analyze market trends and optimize investment strategies. Chatbots and virtual assistants handle routine customer queries, enhancing customer service in the finance sector. AI tools are crucial for detecting and preventing fraudulent activities in commerce. Machine learning algorithms analyze transaction patterns, user behaviour, and other relevant data to identify potentially

gines use AI algorithms to

AI-driven price optimization tools analyze market dynamics, competi- network of many other such tor pricing, and customer centres has been approved helping to transform the behaviour to dynamically businesses to stay competitive, respond to market technology driven knowlchanges, and optimize pricing strategies in real time

fraudulent activities in real-

Al is extensively uti-Recommendation en- lized in cyber warfare for tesy TheNews

both offensive and defensive purposes. Automated tools can identify vulnerabilities in enemy systems, launch sophisticated attacks, and protect military networks from cyber threats. AI enhances the speed and efficiency of cyber operations, making it crucial in the modern battle space. Artificial intelligence therefore stands as a powerful force, permeating virtually every facet of human endeavour. In Pakistan, a major project was prepared to establish AI centres across the country. Two such centres are now being established in the International Centre for Chemical and Biological Studies (ICCBS) at the University of Karachi and in the Pak Austrian University of Applied Science and Technol-(Pak-Austria Fachhochschule) in Haripur, Hazara.

The concept of a Rs40 billion project for a through our efforts by the important initiative of the edge economy task force and it needs to be imple-

# Ready to shift?



**Tougir Hussain** 

Nearly three years have passed since the announcement regarding Pakistan's pivot from geopolitics to geo-economics. So far, this policy shift has proved nothing more than rhetoric.

A country's geopolitical value signifies its relevance in international relations beyond its own region, especially its capabilty as an ally or partner in Great Power rivalry. The country has a place in geoeconomics if, by virtue of its geopolitical location, infrastructure, or resources, it can play a meaningful role in the global economy perhaps as a manufacturing base or a link in supply chains. Or it could be a source of energy, or serve as a hub for transit trade or energy flows.

Pakistan is relevant to both geopolitics and geoeconomics. But its policy planners should ask themselves if they really have to choose between the two. Or whether such choice is indeed possible. Also, is geopolitics the problem and geo-economics the solution to Pakistan's economic woes? The truth is, Pakistan did not prioritise its people's socioeconomic well-being. Its governance model preferred the elite over the people, security over development, dependence over self-reliance, and status quo over progress. The system is now damagng more than the economy. Pakistan may be eligible for geo-economics but is not yet qualified for it.

Geopolitics is only partly to blame. It remains important to Pakistan's

extent of its relevance has changed. Situated between South Asia, Central Asia, Iran and the Middle East, and living in the strategic shadow of China and Russia, Pakistan has geopolitical salience, putting it at the crossroads of geopolitical rivalries and ambitions it can take advantage of. But geopolitics can only be an asset if Pakistan is stable. For an unstable country, it is a liability and poses risks. For instance, if a big power loses, its ally loses too, as has happened to Pakistan

Washington's war aims have always been different from Pakistan's, and its strategy often flawed. If the pivot to geo-economics means Pakistan would no longer be part of such highrisk geopolitics, this is to be welcomed. America's wars also incited Pakistan's own geostrategic ambitions, that brought it as much harm as did US policies. If Pakistan has relinquished this policy, it is a good step.

Geopolitics remains a guiding principle for US-Pakistan ties except that it now provokes conflict in the context of US-China rivalry. Pakistan is seen as advancing China's geopolitical aims. It will have to rea-ch some understanding with Washing-ton on strategic and security issues, otherwise these will keep colliding with prospects of cooperation with the US, a crucial economic partner, and thus limit Pakistan's economic role.

Even in the Gulf countries, Pakistan's traditional friends, economics now beats to the rhythm of geopolitics as these states navigate between the US-Europe-India axis and China's geopolitical outreach. Geoolitics will figure in Pakistan's relations with them, too.

Pakistan thus must rethink not only geopolitics but also geo-economforeign policy, though the ics. The fact is, its real

value in geo-economics won't be evident until Afghanistan stabilises, ties with India improve, and it becomes a hub for pipelines and trade with Central Asia. However, given its structural economic weaknesses, poor governance, and lack of political stability, Pakistan's economy is not quite prepared for geo-economics. The change will not come easily, as there is a clash between elite interests and sound economic policies.

Pakistan's poor economic policies have been a way to safeguard its elite-led syst--em. Policies, es----pecially those related to taxes, subsidies, tarif---fs, and exports, were designed so as not to lead to the erosion of the social structure that maintains the feudal system, or collide with the financial interests of the business/ industrial elite, not to mention the extraordinary allocation of resources to the defence sector. The system must reform.

Pakistan might be able to improve the economy on the margins without changes, and have a higher growth rate. But what good is the growth rate if it makes little difference to poverty, social indicators and human security? A population with poor education and healthcare is hardly productive economically. Martin Raiser, World Bank regional vice president for South Asia, recently spoke Pakistan's "poor human development outcomes and increasing poverty", and underlined the necessity of addr-essing the

Pakistan cannot abandon or escape geopolitics. And geo-economics will remain beyond its grasp if it fails to make the necessary reforms. The alternative: Pakistan will be stuck where it is, at best. -- Courtesy Dawn

"acute human capital cri-

# Lenin's legacy



Mahir Ali

An intriguing triptych included in Iqbal's second volume of verse, Baal-i-Jibreel, envisages Vladimir Lenin in the presence of God, explaining why the state of the world prompted his disbelief and wondering when divine intervention would rectify global ills. In rhythmic verse, the angels sent to investigate report back, corroborating the Russian revolutionary's narrative.

known of the three poems, the angels are commanded to instigate the overthrow of the existing order, kicking off with a verse that echoes The Internationale — in Victor Kiernan's translation, "Rise, and from their slumber wake the poor ones of my world!/ Shake the walls and windows of the mansions of the great..

In the last and best

That's a reflection of the extent to which the Russian upheavals of 1917 affected the rest of the world, not least the vast expanse of the colonised Global South. The direction Russia took towards the end of World War I inspired shock and awe. The overthrow of the tsar and the prospect of replacing absolutism with bourgeois democracy was dramatic enough, but by the time Lenin returned in April from his exile in Switzerland, he realised the meagre gains were unsustain-

Even some of Lenin's closest comrades were taken aback by his enthusiasm for a takeover, but the prospect of 'all power

elected bodies of workers', soldiers' and eventually peasants' representatives that shared power with the post-tsarist government - and the promise of land, bread and peace resonated with the proletariat of Petrograd (as St Petersburg had been re-

named to banish the German influence). The takeover was eventually almost painless, but the survival of the new regime was unlikely. The tsarist White Army, assisted by American, French and British forces (among others), joined hands to bury the Bolsheviks. But a late recruit to the Bolshevist cause, Leon Trotsky, turned out to be a formidable commander despite his military inexperience and, after much death and

destruction on both sides,

the nascent Red Army ul-

timately triumphed. The Russia that emerged from this maelstrom was a far cry from what Lenin had envisaged, and he set about trying to rectify its wayward course. And he made no secret of it. Laid low by an assassination attempt in 1918 and subsequently stricken by strokes that led to bouts of paralysis, Lenin was just about well enough to speak at the fourth congress of the Communist International in November 1922, in what turned out to be his last public speech, acknowledging that "we have done, and will still do, a host of foolish things"

He knew by then that his days were numbered, but from his sick bed later that year he still sought to alter the revolution's trajectory with a series of dictated notes that focused on reorganising both the Communist Party and the economy, banishing the tsarist bureaucracy that had survived the revolution, and sidelining Joseph Stalin, who had ac-

to the soviets' — the quired too much power within the party and could not be trusted to use it wisely. He obviously could not have known at that stage that Stalin's absolute power would lead in the 1930s to the execution of Lenin's closest comrades.

misperception shared by both friends and foes of the transformative Bolshevik endeavour is that Stalinism seamlessly Leninism. There can be little doubt, though, that the Soviet Union would have emerged as a rather different entity if Lenin had survived for another decade, or been succeeded by a collective leadership. Lenin was adamant that accession to the USSR must be voluntary.

It didn't quite work out that way, but the relatively peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union nearly seven decades later testified to his relentless opposition to the 'great Ruschauvinism' epitomised by Vladimir Putin's stupid invasion of Ukraine. Gorbachev remained an admirer of Lenin, and his glasnost and perestroika in the 1980s-1990s were partly echoes of what Lenin sought to achieve in the 1920s

Even the most strident enemies of Bolshevism acknowledged that Lenin's death on Jan 21, 1924, stripped the Soviet Union of an invaluable

The worship of Lenin thereafter, with little understanding of what he stood for, was a travesty he would have detested.

Notwithstanding the USSR's fate, if a different world is to emerge in the 21st century, the triumphs and tragedies that embellished or thwarted Lenin's audacious project cannot be ignored. Courtesy Dawn

# Sindh, Fed govt to sign **MoU** for implementation of Urban rebuilding plan

KARACHI (INP): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar in order to implement his Urban Rebuilding Plan under which high rises would be constructed at the vacant plots of old quarters -Matrin, Claton, and Jahangir Quarters, has decided Memorandum Understanding (MOU) with Federal Ministry of Housing & Works.

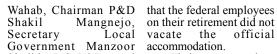
This emerged in a meeting the chief minister held with the Federal Ministry of Housing & Works through a video link. video link from Islamabad. The CM was assisted by Mayor Karachi Murtaza

Secretary Government Manzoor accommodation.
Shaikh, DG P&D Asad Their next g

has worked out an urban rejuvenation/rebuilding plan under which high-rise plazas would be constructed at the empty plots of Matrin, Clayton, Jahangir Quarters and Pakistan Quarters which are in dilapidated condition.

Justice Baqar said that these old quarters were established over an area of 240 acres at the junction of for Housing also shared a Federal Secretary of Housing & Works Dr Shahzad Bangash along with his team participated in the meeting through a District East and District similar plan and finally, it has been made by the federal government.

It was pointed



Their next generations and some other people Zamin and others. and some other people
The CM said that he have encroached upon the open spaces around the houses.

The CM said that the

key objective of the urban rejuvenation project was to housing improve conditions, infrastructure and public services, increase economic activity in the areas and create new jobs and economic opportunities.

The federal secretary was agreed upon that a MOU should be signed between the Sindh government and the federal government so that the project could be carried forward.



KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister, Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar and Federal Secretary for Housing preside over a meeting to discuss the construction of high rises in place of Old Quarters-Jahangir etc through video link, held at ČM House in Karachi.

# Naqvi visits Ring Road Southern Loop-3 project, inspects construction work

**Independent Report** LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi paid a detailed visit to the Lahore Ring Road Southern Loop 3-project, here on Wednesday.

He inspected the 8km long whole route from Maraka Multan Road up to Adda Plot and reviewed asphalt laying work and shook hands with the labourers. Mohsin Naqvi also checked the temperature of asphalt along with construction of the walls. He while gave a briefing about ordering to expedite asphalt laying work directed to increase the

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Human Capital Investment

Project (KP HCIP) Health

Wednesday conducted a

day long workshop to

Healthcare Services (PHS)

in selected districts of the

province. The workshop

focused on the assessment

availability, utilization and

services. The workshop

Primary

Department

upgrade

whole government's team stands with you," the CM said that hopefully, this project would be completed at the earliest. Mohsin Naqvi in order to accelerate pace of work on the project, issued directions to the Provincial Minister Bilal Afzal and Secretary Communication & Works in this regard. He inspected ongoing construction activities on the project. FWO officials progress being made on the

The CM underscored resources so that the that people would be project could be completed provided excellent

information about existing

training manuals or modules, evaluating their

strengths and weaknesses,

aligning them with on-ground needs and

identifying potential improvements in a clear

Chief Minister for Health,

would play pivotal role in

within the health system.

Advisor to Caretaker

and concise manner.

**KP HCIP conducts** 

workshop to upgrade

primary healthcare services

PESHAWAR (APP): aimed to gather crucial

of stakeholder needs for Dr. Riaz Anwar

quality of healthcare fostering positive changes

within the stipulated time transportation facilities with the completion of Ring Road Southern Loop-3 Project, adding that 8-km long Southern Loop-3 project would be opened for traffic soon. It was informed during the briefing that 6 out of 8 main structures have been completed while 20 small structures have also been completed. Approximately, 70 per cent work of the project has been completed. Provincial ministers Azafar Ali Nasir, Bilal Afzal Secretary Commissioner Lahore/DG

LDA, Chairman Lahore Ring Road Authority, MD NEŠPAK, Project Director LESCO and FWO official were also present.

#### 3-day 'Unique **Art & Craft** Exhibition' begins

LAHORE (APP): The opening ceremony of the 4th annual 'Unique Art and Craft Exhibition' of the Unique Group of Institutions was held in collaboration with the UGIs and Lahore Arts Council at Alhamra Arts Council. The ceremony was chaired by Unique Group of Institutions (UGIs) Chairman Professor Abdul Manan life with principles and development of training commended KP HCIP and modules improving the said that the initiative guests were well-known critic, artist and principal of Punjab University Art

and Design College Prof.

# **Sindh information**

the inauguration ceremony of a library in memory of former Principal of City College and father of former DG ISPR Major General ® Athar Abbas at the College Auditorium Renowned journalists Mazhar Abbas, Azhar Abbas and Zafar Abbas were also present on the occasion. The minister said we have made wrong persons as our heroes in present times and forgotten the real heroes and well wishers of Hyderabad. He said that in the past, intellectuals educationists were the torch bearers of the society

become our leaders and now our society had been converted into a capital

He lauded the efforts of the College Principal for organizing a programme to remember our past heroes and well wishers adding that in future, suc programmes would be organized to remember other heroes of Hyderabad were going to organize a

Renowned literary poets and writers like Anwar Maqsood and Iftikahar Arif will participate in the fastival, he said adding that this festival would be organized

Renowned journalist and son of Abid Abbas, Mazhar Abbas while addressing at the ceremony, said that unfortunately our assemblies were decorated



Yundong addressing a ceremony of awarding the certification to media friends at Consulate General

# Learning process for teachers never ends

HYDERABAD (APP): Caretaker Sindh Minister for Education and Women Development Rana Hussain has said that in the past educational institutes were established with the objective and spirit to secure the future of the young generation however preservation of such buildings and related

views on the occasion of the conclusion ceremony of the faculty professional development Programme at Government College University Hyderabad on

Wednesday.
Vice Chancellor of Government College of University Prof. Tayyab Zareef, Pro Vice Chancellor

Campus Dr. Rafique, Director of Professional Development Dr. Amjad Ali, Teachers and other

officers were also present. The minister said that the learning process for teachers never ends and in this connection Sindh Government keeping in view the need for professional development at the School and College level has prepared various training programmes so that the teaching standard of the teachers could be improved.

She said that it was a moment of immense pleasure that Government College University has taken responsibility for the professional development of its teachers and also accomplished its goal in

#### Arabia's ambassador Noor Al Lamki during Haramain al-Shareefain conference at local hotel. **Govt making efforts to** facilitate pilgrims:

LAHORE (APP): Special Representative to the between Pakistan and Prime Minister on Saudi Arabia is strong, and Interfaith Harmony and has no precedent in the Middle East Hafiz Tahir world, adding that the two Mehmood Ashrafi said on countries have long government was making both the Muslim countries efforts to provide optimal facilities to prospective each other in difficult times.

Addressing Tazeem-e-Harmain Alorganised by Hajj Organisers Association of Pakistan (HOAP) Punjab zone, at a hotel here, he said Saudi Arabia was dedicated to enhancing facilities for the Hajj and Umrah

pilgrims. He said that an effective system had been put in place to ensure effective monitoring of facilities to be provided to Arabia and Pakistan, Hajj pilgrims. Under the clarified that both system, Hajj pilgrims' brotherly countries' complaints would be relationship was authentic resolved speedily. Ashrafi, who is also the chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council.

**Tahir Ashrafi** said the relationship Saudi Arabia is strong, and the brotherly relations and have always stood with

LAHORE: Special Assistant to Prime Minister and Chairman Pakistan

Ulema-e-Islam Council, Allama Tahir Ashrafi is presenting shield to Saudi

About the recent the four-day Hajj and Umrah Services Conference and Sharifain Conference, exhibition, organised by the Saudi government in Jeddah, he emphasised that placed event the significant importance on enhancing overall environment for Hajj and

Umrah pilgrims. Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki, while appreciating the brotherly relationship between Saudi and long-standing, consisting of



decades.

HYDERABAD: Former PPP leader Dr Irfan Gul Magsi addressing a press conference after joining MQM Pakistan with their fellows and leaders of MQM at district office and Election cell.

# Govt to start rehabilitation center for women drug addicts soon

**Independent Report** PESHAWAR: Provincial Caretaker Minister for Social Welfare, Justice Retired Irshad Qaisar has said that very soon government would start a rehabilitation center in Peshawar for women drug

She was chairing a meeting being convened to discuss progress on projects of social welfare department under annual development program.

The meeting was attended by Additional Secretary Social Welfare Farooq Khan, Senior Planning Officer and the relevant officials of the department. Secretary Social Welfare Aneela Durrani participated in the meeting through video link. The minister said that

the facility would be first government rehabilitation center where only women suffering from drug abuse would be rehabilitated and treated.

The meeting was told that twenty projects are underway under the annual development program for the year 2023-24, seven projects have been stopped due to financial difficulties while thirteen projects have not been approved

It was told that a center of excellence for child autism was created where children suffering from autism are treated and provided counsel while plans are underway to establish Dar ul Aman in different districts of the

#### **UAE** artificial rain experts calls on CM

AHORE Members of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) team, who orchestrated artificial rainfall in Lahore recently, called on Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi at his office on Wednesday. The CM greeted the team members, expressing gratitude individually

during the meeting. Among those present were Ahmed Al Kamal Head of Cloud Seeding for the UAE NCM Team, Pilot Col. Obaid Halaf, Pilot Michael Anstis, Head Seeding Cloud Department Abdullah Al Haman, Arnold Ningala and Verglottoledolato.

CM Naqvi recognised their efforts by presenting certificates of appreciation and commemorative shields to each member and commemorative conveyed his thanks for successfully bringing artificial rain to Lahore, marking a historic event in Pakistan. He emphasised that the nation would always remember this successful experience. which was a culmination of 12 years of efforts to achieve artificial rain in Punjab, including Lahore.

The first artificial rain in Lahore was not only celebrated in Pakistan but gained recognition worldwide, he added. The names of the UAE team members have now become a part of Pakistan's history.

#### **May-9: ATC** issues arrest warrants of 24 accused

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Wednesday issued nonbailable arrest warrants of 24 accused, including Pakistan leaders of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), in a case of torching a container in front of National Park Gulberg.

The court issued the arrest warrants of Shah Mehmood Oureshi, his son, Zain Oureshi, Farrukh Habib, Dr Azeemud Din, Shakil Ahmad Niazi, Khawar Shahzad, Rana Bilal Ijaz, Chaudhry Asif Ali and others. ATC Judge Muhammad Naveed Iqbal issued the warrants on an application filed by the police for the purpose.

The investigation officer had stated that the accused neither joined the investigation process nor could they be arrested vet. He submitted that the accused had hidden themselves to avoid arrest He pleaded with the court to issue their non-bailable arrest warrants.

#### known Educationist Mirza Abid Abbas, at City College. QWP flays social media campaign against SC

PESHAWAR (APP): party election of the PTI Qaumi Watan Party was based on merit and in (QWP) Chairman Aftab accordance with the law. Ahmad Khan Sherpao on Wednesday condemned the malicious social media campaign against the campaig judges of the Supreme judiciary.

Addressing in Charsadda district, he could said the Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf (PTI) lost its electoral symbol bat due to its own follies. He said that PTI founding chairman Imran Khan was responsible for the situation his party was

facing.

The QWP chief said that the recent decision of Supreme Court upholding the ruling of the Election Commission of issue of law and order, Pakistan about the intra-

However, he expressed resentment over the launching of the smear campaign against the

HYDERABAD: Provincial Minister Information Syed Ahmed Shah

addressing the inauguration ceremony of a Library in the remembrance of

He said that the country was already facing gathering at Mandani area a host of issues and it not afford confrontation and unrest. Aftab Sherpao said that some elements were out to create disturbance for their

vested interests.
The QWP leader said that holding a free, fair and transparent election was the only way to take the country towards economic and political stability.

He maintained that the country was facing the



PESHAWAR: Peoples Party (PPP) Leader, Asma Alamgir along with Syed Zahir Ali Shah and others addressing a press conference, in Peshawar.

#### **ACS South Punjab visits BVH** to inspect ongoing work

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab Captain (retd) Saqib Zafar visited the under-construction Outdoor Department of Bahawal Victoria Hospital. He inspected the

ongoing upgradation works in various wards of the hospital. Secretary of Communication and Works South Punjab Jawad Akram was also present with him. He inspected the revamping and renovation

work of the outdoor department of Bahawal Victoria Hospital. He directed that officers of the Buildings Department should complete the construction works within a specific period. Secretary Communication and Works Department Jawad Akram briefed ACS South Punjab about the degradation work. He said that various wards including TB Ward, Medical Ward, Surgery Ward, Emergency Block, and Old CCU are being renovated. He informed ACS about the details of ongoing construction works in CU and other wards. He said that special attention is being paid to the quality of construction materials. The safety arrangements for the working labor have also

#### PESHAWAR (APP): will have concept designs Caretaker Chief Minister of priority urban mobility of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa projects for aforementioned cities. The Justice (R) Syed Arshad participants were also Hussain Shah on Wednesday chaired a informed about different meeting to discuss traffic options for Bus Rapid issues of divisional Transit (BRT) service in headquarter Abbottabad. Abbottabad on the model Spokesperson to

**KP CM chairs meeting** 

to discuss traffic issues

of Abbottabad

Chief Minister Brigadier (R) Syed Mujtaba Tirmizi and high ups of the transport department and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Urban Mobility Authority (KPUMA) attended the

meeting.

The meeting was briefed about the proposed Urban Mobility Plan for Abbottabad and, it was told that under the Urban Transport Package-II, consultancy services are under process to develop Sustainable Mobility Plans (SUMPS) for three major cities of the province including Peshawar, Abbottabad and Mingora.

of BRT project of Peshawar. The CM on this occasion, has directed the KPUMA's authorities to prepare a master plan for traffic management in Abbottabad adding that the initial concept of the plan should be finalized keeping in view the ground realities, objective conditions and prevailing vehicular traffic

problems in the city. "A realistic and viable traffic plan should be prepared in consultation with all the stakeholders", he said and directed to have a joint meeting of all the relevant departments and authorities to be presided over by commissioner Sustainable Urban Hazara Division, for this



Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed is being presented shield from Iqra University during conference on Sirat-un-Nabi (SAW) and Contemporary Challenges and their solution at Iqra University Dr Mufti Irshad Ahmad Ajaz and others also seen on the stage.

# minister pays tribute to Mirza Abid HYDERABAD (APP):

Sindh Caretaker Ministér for Information, Social Protection and Minority Ahmed Shah has said that Abid Abbas was an asset of our country who led his satisfaction and we should remember our heroes.

He was addressing at Late Mirza Abid Abbas, city. He informed that they three-day Wednesday.

festival at Public School Latifabad where a session on heroes of this city would be included.

every year in the city.

and our schools.



KARACHI: Chinese Consul General Yang of the People's Republic of China.

# Rana Hussain says:

emotions was now our responsibility. She expressed these

Sindh University Thatta this regard.

# PM Kakar for equitable chances to all to benefit from modern technology

PM, CEO Cocacola discuss matters pertaining to SIFC, foreign investment

Haq Kakar on Wednesday called for providing equitable opportunities to Trillion-Dollar Promise" on the sideline of the 54th annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF), the prime minister said utilizing the state of the art technology was vital to achieve the targets of fast development.

secure the technology, the prime minister said equitable opportunities when it approaches Special Investment was key to ensure towards challenges of trade Facilitation Council and the development. Keeping in private entities and the foreign investors.

DAVOS (APP): Caretaker view the development of business people have Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-technology, PM Kakar different opinion," he said maintained that the digital economy would attain all nations and regions to days to come. He said grab the fruits of modern every region of the world technology. Speaking at a should be benefited from the development being made in the technology sector. As regards the issues of trade and business, he said the private sector should be encouraged to boost investment. Further he added that the private sector should take a lead to Stressing the need to help the government ure equitable resolving the challenges of ensure equitable resolving the challenges of opportunities to all to trade and business. "The government do think in a also discussed the different way and manner establishment of the

should become the opinion more importance in the maker and influencing and contributing more towards Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar ul Haq

Kakar held a meeting with

Chief Executive Officer of

Cocacola Company, James

Quincey on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos today. In the meeting, the Prime Minister highlighted the steps taken by the government to facilitate

The Prime Minister global and business, while the favorable environment for

business and investment in



CEO of Cocacola Company, James Quincey calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum

# **President directs IESCO** to refund Rs 139,000 to a complainant

President Dr Arif Alvi has directed the Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) to refund Rs 139,860 to a complainant who had been wrongly issued an additional demand notice for the installation of an electricity connection along with a transformer due to cost

The president issued these directions while epresentation filed by IESCO assailing the order of the Wafaqi Mohtasib directing IESCO to refund the amount to complainant Haji Akhtar Raheem and adopt proper procedure/

ISLAMABAD (APP):

The government on

Wednesday announced securing the second LNG

cargo from the State Oil

Company of the Azerbaijan

Republic (SOCAR) under

Government Framework

Agreement between Pakistan LNG Limited

Pakistan and Azerbaijan"

(PLL) and SOCAR.

partnership

Government-to-

between

the Ministry of Petroleum considerations.

Pakistan secures

second LNG cargo

from SOCAR

resulting maladministration.

The IESCO had violated its own procedure by not installing the connection within 30 days and later sent an additional demand notice to the complainant, who had already paid the original requisite amount, on account of the escalation of the cost of the material. The complainant had applied with IESCO for an electricity connection along with a 25 KVA transformer. Subsequently, a demand notice of Rs 305, 656, including the cost of allied material was issued to him. He deposited the rules/regulation, which amount, however, IESCO

said in a news release.

PLL and SOCAR

signed a landmark

Framework Agreement

under the Government-to-

Government arrangement.

marking a significant

milestone in the bilateral

between the two countries.

Agreement stipulates that

the demand for LNG in

Pakistan and commercial

The Framework

energy

cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): were violated by IESCO, instead of installing his connection timely, issued an additional demand notice of Rs 139,860 on account of the escalation of the cost of the material. He approached IESCO for withdrawal of the demand notice but to no avail Feeling aggrieved, he approached the Wafaqi Mohtasib for the redressal of his grievance, who passed the order in his favour. IESCO, then, filed a representation against the order of the Mohtasib with the President. After personally hearing the case and going through the record of the case, the president directed IESCO to refund the amount to the complainant.

#### Gold rates down by Rs.3,600

ISLAMABAD (APP) The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.3,600 and was sold at Rs.213,700 on Wednesday compared to its sale at Rs. 217,300 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.3,087 to Rs.183,213 from Rs. 186,300 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.167,945 from Rs. 170,775 the All "The cargo is scheduled for delivery in February 2024, further strengthening the energy strengthening the demand for LNG in the dema Rs.2,600 whereas that of ten gram silver declined by Rs.42.86 to Rs.2,229.08.

# **ICT** exports increased by 22.67% in Dec 2023 ISLAMABAD (APP): initiatives for freelancers

Dr Saif says:

Caretaker Federal Minister Information Technology Telecommunication Dr Umar Saif on Wednesday said that the Information Communication Technology (ICT) export remittances had increased by 22.67 percent in the month of December 2023. A total of \$303 million ITC exports proceeds were received in December, following a 13% increase in November 2023, the

minister said in statement. Dr Umar Saif said that facilitative measures, such as allowing to retain 50% of the dollars, digital payment systems, and

had played a crucial role in boosting ICT exports growth. Expressing gratitude to Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar and the Special Investment Facilitation Council for their efforts in providing facilities for the IT industry, he said that the objective behind the policies was to bolster the national economy and advance the IT and telecom sectors in the country. Dr Saif said it was a beginning, which would usher in significant industry's growth. "The reforms introduced by the caretaker government has played a key role in that regard."



DOHA: SAPM, Jawad Sohrab Malik meets Dr. Ali bin Samikh Al Marri, Labour Minister of the State

# **SAPM Sohrab meets Qatari Labour Minister,** discuss safe immigration

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistani and Human Resource Development, Jawad Sohrab Malik, commenced his inaugural official visit to Qatar with a pivotal meeting with Dr Ali bin Samikh Al Marri, the

Minister of Labour in During the meeting, SAPM, Jawad Sohrab provided an Malik overview Government of Pakistan's ongoing efforts and initiatives aimed at enhancing labour skills to align with and meet the demand and standards of the Qatari labour market and received a press release

here on Wednesday. The discussion as enhance the safe and legal migration of the for the

SAPM, Jawad Sohrab Malik and Qatar's Labor Minister, Dr. Ali bin Samikh Al Marri pledged to foster a collaborative environment that supports the secure and lawful movement of Pakistani workers to contribute to Qatar's dynamic labour market.

The leaders affirmed workforce.

Qatari conglomerates to underscored the explore and sign commitment of both agreements aimed at leaders to encourage as well providing and enhancing employment opportunities

# Pakistani workforce to workforce. China, Pakistan cooperate on recycled

BEIJING (online): A from the global market will

The project was initiated by the aluminum working committee of Trade and Economic Multifunctional Platform for SCO countries (SCO TEMP). The committee's member units have will utilize its local established an entity in manufacturing expertise to Chongqing Lianglu-

Zone (CBZ) and have also set up an overseas industrial park in Pakistan. approximately RMB 5.5

generate tax revenue, and enhance international trade for Pakistan in the future. In addition, the processed materials will be sold in the international

be processed in the park.

According to Hu

market or exportedto Chongqing CBZ. The Chongqing entity will utilize its local process the imported materials into high-valueadded products and distribute them in the

global market, Hu added. The initiative benefits from China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, as well as Pakistan's industrial base, preferential policies, port and logistics services,

# Over population poses great challenge to economy: Meher

LAHORE Ombudsman Meher were said that over population had posed a great challenge to Pakistan's economy, exerting pressure on resources, infrastructure, socio-economic stability.

over population on inadequate Pakistan Economy" held conditions, here under the aegis of Gold Ring Economic Forum (GREF) a strategic think-tank, he said with a population surpassing 220 million, Pakistan grappled with adverse consequences of overpopulation that

permeate various sectors. Meher said natural resources were strained exacerbating environmental

their commitment to ensuring the welfare and prosperity of the Pakistani workforce in Qatar. Both leaders also discussed the opening of more Qatar Visa Centers (QVCs) in Pakistan for ease of the Pakistani

As part of the official visit, SAPM Malik is scheduled to engage with

# aluminum project

project to recycle aluminum recently began a trial run in Pakistan and Kaiqiang, Director General Chongqing, southwest of SCO TEMP, this will China, China Economic create job opportunities, Net (CEN) reported on Wednesday.

Comprehensive Bonded

With an investment of billion, the industrial park in Pakistan will be equipped with an advanced manufacturing system. and relatively low costs, Raw materials purchased according to Hu.

(APP): degradation, excessive use

Coordinator to Minister of of water, deforestation, State and Federal Tax and increased pollution Kashif Younis Wednesday consequences, posing threats to sustainable development exacerbating climate change-related concerns.

The coordinator said that rapid urbanisation, driven by population growth, leads to the Addressing a growth, leads to the conference on "Impact of emergence of slums and further exacerbating socioeconomic disparities.

'To mitigate its impact, we must prioritize comprehensive family planning programmes, invest in education and healthcare infrastructure. and implement policies that promote sustainable resource management," he added.

# participants during round table discussion on packaging sector in his visit to Regional Office Lahore. Senate body seeks details of budget, following austerity measures

Independent Report ISLAMABAD:

Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue on Wednesday directed the the Finance Division stated complying with austerity the current fiscal year staying within the budget.

Committee was held at expenditure of the Parliament House on Government. While Wednesday with Senator Saleem Mandviwalla in the Chair. The Senate deliberated on the Bill titled "State Owned Enterprises (Governance and Operations) (Amendment) Bill, 2023." Senator Bahramand Khan Tangi, the bill's mover, stated that the primary objective was to restrain the Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officers of state

company assets for The political and monetary purposes, proposing disqualification for such

LAHORE: Regional Chairman FPCCI Zaki Ejaz in a group photo with

Finance Division to The Committee made provide details of the two amendments in the The Committee made budget saved following the amendment bill: firstly, issuance of austerity reduced the 20 years of issued by the Finance Chief Executive Officer to words 'Personal gains and that the Government was Political point scoring to 'Personal and Monetary measures, resulting in Gains'. The Senate body government spending for discussed the motion moved by Senator Zarga Suharwardy on controlling A meeting of the the non-development discussing the Public Petition for the deletion of the proviso in the Customs Act 1969 added by the Finance Act, 2022, the Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) maintained that the proviso in Customs Act 1969 cannot be deleted as it is part of the Finance Act, 2022, and he assured the Committee that the FBR will consider the concerned proviso at owned the time of passage of the



LAHORE: President Lahore Chamber of Commerce Kashif Anwar presenting shield to Chinese Consul General Zhao Shiren during his

# **FPCCI seeks industry** status for packaging sector

**Independent Report** Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Regional Chairman and Vice President Zaki Aijaz on Wednesday demanded the government grant industry status to the packaging sector. He expressed these views while addressing the FPCCI's Round Table

Discussion on the 'Packaging sector: 'Challenges and opportunities', here at FPCCI Regional Office.
Managing Director and CEO of Packages Limited, Syed Hyder Ali, Director & CEO of Century Paper & Board Mills Limited Aftab Ahmed, Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt, Chairman Pakistan Association of Printing And Graphic Arts government of Industry Saad Haleem packaging sector.

Khan, Senior Vice LAHORE: Federation of Chairman of All Pakistan Pakistan Chambers of Corrugated Cartons Manufacturers Association (APCCMA) Khawaja Tariq Mehmood, Chairman of Flexible Packaging-Association of Converters of Pakistan Mujahid Ali Shaikh, CEO of Roshan Packages Limited Tayyab Aijaz Qureshi, Aslam Mehdi, İmran Aziz and others participated in the discussion, and put forth their suggestions for promotion of packaging sector, exports and substitutes of imports.

Zaki Aijaz said that packaging sector was the backbone of all industries and the government should grant industry status to it in order to reap maximum benefits. He said that stakeholders should be included in the committee formed by the federal government on the

#### **FBR** denies reports of protest by **IRS officers**

SLAMABAD (APP) The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) on Wednesday has rebutted the baseless news circulating in certain sections of the media regarding a planned protest by IRS officers. According to the FBR's official measures notification, relevant experience for the Twitter handle, the FBR clarified that no such Division. The Secretary of 10 years and changed the protest was taking place and assured that its offices

> as per routine. "FBR rebuts baseless news being circulated in sections of media claiming that IRS officers would hold a protest tomorrow by wearing black ribbons While and boycott the office work. It is clarified no such protest is taking place and FBR offices will continue to function as per routine", the FBR tweeted.

#### **PSX stays** bearish, loses 170 points

ISLAMABAD (APP) The 100-index of Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bearish trend on Wednesday, losing 170.13 points, a negative change of 0.27 percent, closing at 63,567.34 points against 63,737.46 points the previous trading day.

A total of 421,331,988 shares valuing Rs.18.579 billion were traded during the day as compared to 407,543,943 shares valuing Rs.12.646 billion the last day.

Some 332 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 111 of them recorded gains and 203 sustained losses, whereas the share prices 18 remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were PTCL with 45,978,785 shares at Rs.14.02 per share, K-Electric Limited with 41,567,872 shares at Rs.5.59 per share and Treet Corporation 36,390,498 shares at Rs.20.05 per share.

Philip (Pakistan) Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.51.24 per share price, closing at Rs.734.50, whereas the runner-up was Bata Pakistan Limited with a Rs.33.00 rise in its per share price to Rs.1,733.00.

program to provide E-bikes, E-rickshaws

**Punjab Green wheels** 

at Khanna Pull area in the Federal Capital.

Independent Report AHORE: Caretaker provincial minister for transport of Punjab Ibrahim Hasan Murad on Wednesday marked a pivotal moment in Punjab's history by integrating 26,000 electric vehicles

into its urban fabric. Talking to a private news channel, he said the initiative caters to students, low-income citizens, women, and people with disabilities.

Through program, the government has decided to give the university students 10,000 electric bikes on a subsidy, he added.

announcements were interest-free e-bikes for women, three-wheeler bikes for the disabled and also interest-free

rickshaws for deserving

ISLAMABAD: A vendor is selling Kinnow at his fruit stall alongside a road

people.

Recognizing the pressing need to combat pollution, the Punjab government's program addresses the root cause by targeting the 70-80% pollution contribution from the transportation sector, he added.

He said, "Punjab's commitment to sustainable transportation is not just a step forward; it's a leap into a greener, cleaner future. The minister said that

another historic milestone was achieved with the issuance of electric vehicle (EV) licenses for the first time in Pakistan.

This move not only encourages the adoption of eco-friendly modes of transportation but also positions the country.

#### Shipping activity at **Port Qasim**

KARACHI Shipping activity reported at the Port where three ships namely, MSC United VII, High Challenge and Poly World carrying containers, palm oil and coal, berthed at container Terminal, Liquid Terminal and Bulk Cargo Terminal respectively on Tuesday January, 2024 Meanwhile another containers ship 'Maersk another Cape Town' also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on today January

A total of eight ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a containers ship 'MSC United VIII' is left the port on Today morning January, 17th 2024 and four more ships, Sakizaya Youth, Kouros Glory, Bateleur and Medi Tirreno are expected to sail on same day afternoon.



Revenue presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

# Cease fire in Gaza or risk 'greater war', warns UN chief

**Monitoring Desk** UNITED NATIONS: UN Secretary General António Guterres has emphasised the urgent need for a humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza after more than 100 days of escalating violence.

"Tamp down the flames of wider war because the longer the conflict in Gaza continues, the greater the risk of escalation and miscalculation," he warned in a statement issued on Monday evening.

He stated that "an immediate humanitarian ceasefire" was necessary to ensure an uninterrupted supply of emergency aid

onslaught on Gaza by Israeli forces over these 100 days "has unleashed wholesale destruction and levels of civilian killings at a rate that is unprecedented during my years as Secretary General".

He pointed out that "the vast majority of those killed are women and children, adding that "nothing can justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people"

end the hostilities, he said: in Gaza is beyond words. Nowhere and no one is safe."

Guterres noted that the across the Blue Line as well. warning of potential broader escalation affecting regional stability. "Stop playing with fire across the Blue Line, de-escalate, and bring hostilities to an end in accordance with (relevant) Security Council resolutions," he said

The Blue Line refers to the border demarcation between Israel and Lebanon established by the United Nations in 2000 following Stressing the need to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Leba-"The humanitarian situation non. Earlier this month, Israel carried out a drone strike across the Blue Line to kill

Lithuania

found guilty in

CIA torture case

**Monitoring Desk** 

STRASBOURG: The Eu-

ropean Court of Human

Rights (ECHR) on Tues-

day condemned Lithuania

over the torture of a Saudi

man in a secret CIA prison,

the second case to target the

Lithuania had violated sev-

eral provisions of the Eu-

ropean Convention on Hu-

man Rights, which it up-

holds, especially articles 2

(right to life) and 3 (prohi-

bition of inhuman or de-

grading treatment), the

pay Mustafa Al Hawsawi

100,000 euros (\$109,000)

in damages for "blindfold-

ing or hooding, solitary con-

finement, the continuous

use of leg shackles, and ex-

posure to noise and light".

standard CIA practice un-

der the secret detainee

programme at the time", al-

though not "the harshest"

applied in Lithuania, the

1968, was captured in Pa-

kistan in 2003 and sus-

pected by US authorities of

involvement in the Sept 11.

Turkish court

fines Somali

leader's son

over fatal car

crash

ISTANBUL (Internews):

The son of Somalia's presi-

dent was sentenced by a

Turkish court on Tuesday

to 2-1/2 years in prison for

causing death by negligence,

which was converted into a

fine of 27,300 Turkish lira

(\$900), state media re-

seriously injuring him.

gation. An arrest warrant

was issued for him after

the courier died in hos-

absentia in Istanbul on

Tuesday, having been back

Mahmoud was tried in

pital on Dec. 6.

Al Hawsawi, born in

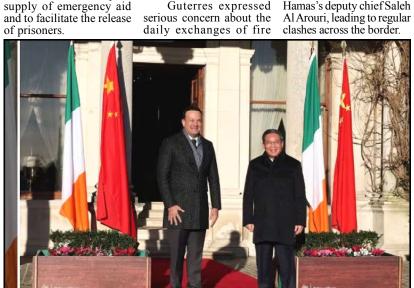
court added.

Such techniques were

Lithuania must also

Judges found that

Baltic nation.



Chinese Premier Li Qiang and Ireland's Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar meet at Farmleigh House, in Phoenix Park, Dublin, Ireland.

# Rights group urges Lebanon to free Kadhafi's son

NEW YORK (INP): Hu- Sadr in 1978. man Rights Watch called on Lebanon Tuesday to release a son of Libya's former dictator Moamer Kadhafi, saying he had been held on 'spurious charges" for

eight years. Lebanon in 2015 arrested and accused Hannibal Kadhafi, known for living the high life, of withhold-Shiite cleric imam Mussa Salah said in a statement.

But HRW said he was only two years old at the time the cleric disappeared, and accused Lebanon of subjecting him to an "apparent arbitrary detention on spurious

"Spending eight years in pre-trial detention makes a mockery of Lebanon's aling information about the ready strained judicial sysdisappearance of Lebanese tem," the group's Hanan

# Freighters seek air cargo back-up amid Red Sea shipping crisis

manufacturers are seeking to fly their products in the next few weeks as attacks on Red Sea shipping force them to find alternate routes, logistics firms say, a potential boon for a sector dealing with muted post-pandemic demand and

The Red Sea, which leads to the Suez canal, lies on the key east-west trade route from Asia's manufacturing hubs to Europe and onto the east coast of the Americas. About 12% of world shipping traffic accesses the Suez Canal via

But more than two months of attacks by already about increased air Yemen's Houthi militia on

alarmed major powers in an escalation of Israel's war with Palestinian Hamas militants in Gaza.

While air freight prices have so far remained relatively stable as the shipping crisis coincides with a seasonal lull in demand, data from freight booker Freightos showed rates on a China-to-Europe route had surged 91% week-onweek on Sunday.

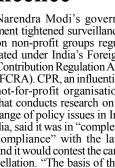
Price reporting agency TAC Index also said there were signs of an uptick in China-to-Europe air freight rates this week. "We are talking to many customers

# **India cancels independent** policy think tank's funding licence

**Monitoring Desk** NEW DELHI: India has cancelled the New Delhibased Centre for Policy Research's (CPR) licence to obtain international funding, the interior ministry said on Wednesday, just under a year after it suspended the permit on the grounds the think tank had broken the rules on grants.

Thousands of civil society groups in India have had their licences to receive overseas donations cancelled since 2014 after Prime Minister

Narendra Modi's government tightened surveillance



on non-profit groups regulated under India's Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA). CPR, an influential not-for-profit organisation that conducts research on a range of policy issues in India, said it was in "complete compliance" with the law and it would contest the cancellation. "The basis of this decision is incomprehensible and disproportionate, and some of the reasons given



People attend a protest against the Alternative for Germany party (AfD), rightwing extremism and for the protection of the democracy in Cologne, Germany

# WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres attends the 54th annual meeting of

the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

# **Chinese PM sees trade** barriers as a threat to global economy

**Monitoring Desk** DAVOS: Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang told the world's political and business elites in Davos on Tuesday that "discriminatory" trade barriers were a threat to the global economy, in a not-so-subtle dig at the United States.

Li's remarks came as the World Economic Forum's (WEF) 54th annual conference is preoccupied with a slew of global risks, including war in Ukraine and bombardment in Gaza, climate change and the rapid rise of artificial intelligence. Li shared the spotlight with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who attended the forum in person for the first time in an effort to maintain military support from Kyiv's allies after nearly two years of war with Russia.

Li spoke just days after a tense presidential election in Taiwan, the democratic island that Beijing claims as part of China.

But the most senior Chinese official to attend the WEF since 2017.

# Iraq recalls envoy from Iran after missile strike

**Monitoring Desk** DUBAI: An Iranian missile strike on targets in northern Iraq set off an unusual dispute between the neighbouring allies on Tues-day, with Baghdad recalling its ambassador in protest and Tehran insisting the attack was intended to deter threats from Israeli spies.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said they had hit an Israeli espionage centre in Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan region, while the elite force said they also struck in Syria against the militant Islamic State group.

The strike appeared

likely to deepen worries about worsening instability

across the Middle East. with Iran's allies also entering the fray from Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Yemen.

There has also been concern that Iraq could again become a theatre for regional conflict after a series of US strikes on alleged Iran-linked groups. Those strikes came in response to "dozens of attacks" on US forces in the region since Oct 7. The Guards said the late Monday attack, Iran's first direct military strike in the region linked to the Gaza crisis, was in response to Israeli atrocities against several of its commanders and those of Iranian-allied forces around the Middle East.

#### **UK PM Sunak** faces major test in showdown over Rwanda asylum plan

LONDON (Internews): British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak faces a major parliamentary showdown on Wednesday over his plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda, with many of his own lawmakers threatening to rebel after they lost an initial bid to toughen his proposed law.

The government comfortably defeated attempts to strengthen the bill late on Tuesday that had been backed by almost a fifth of lawmakers from Sunak's Conservative Party in what was the biggest rebellion yet against the British prime minister.

#### Muslim youth stabbed to death in Delhi

NEW DELHI (INP): A 19year-old Muslim youth was stabbed to death by three individuals in New

The incident took place in the Jamia Masjid area of the Indian capital.

The deceased was identified as Armaan alias Kasim, a resident of Loni area of Ghaziabad city of the Indian state of Uttar

As per reports, the deceased and his father used to work as street vendors in Meena Bazar area of New Delhi.

It is to be mentioned here that Muslims are not safe in any part of India.



Russia's attack on Ukraine, in central Kharkiv, Ukraine.

# **Coming flood of US Treasury** issuance unsettles some investors after blazing rally

NEW YORK (Internews): Cracks are forming in the market's bullish consensus for bonds, as resurfacing fiscal concerns duel with expectations that cooling inflation will push the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates in coming months.

Mohamed Hassan Bullish investors be-Sheikh Mahmoud was driving a car carrying a diplomatic licence plate on Nov. 30 when he hit a motorcycle courier in central Istanbul, He had left the country on Dec. 2, following a police interro-

lieve the explosive rally bonds experienced in late

2023 is likely to continue into this year, if the Fed loosens monetary policy as expected. Futures fied to the Fed's main policy rate on Friday showed investors they say.

pricing in more than 150 basis points of cuts twice the amount policymakers projected last month. Not so fast, say the bears.

While expectations for Fed easing may be driving bond prices now, some believe U.S. Treasury issuance, expected to nearly double to \$2 trillion in 2024, could be a counterweight. Yields which move inversely to bond prices would have to rise from current levels to entice demand for the flood of new debt,

# **Arctic blast ends New** York snow drought, brings record cold to West

Millions of Americans awoke on Tuesday to snow, freezing rain and frigid temperatures as an Arctic blast gripped much of the United States, ending a nearly two-year 'snow drought" in New York City and putting much of the West into a deep

Record-breaking cold was expected across the Rocky Mountains, Great Plains and Midwest, with wind chills below minus 30 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 34 degrees Celsius) reachng the mid-Mississippi Valley in the morning.

The lowest temperature in the country on Tues-

NEW YORK (Internews): day morning was -36 F (-Millions of Americans 38 C) in the small Colorado town of Briggsdale, population 134.

'That's crazy," Katie Sizemore, a barista at the Blue Mug Coffee Bar in Greeley, Colorado, said when told she was near the coldest spot in America. Greeley, about 30

miles (50 km) south of Briggsdale, was about 13 degrees warmer than its neighbor to the north, but Sizemore said the locals were nonetheless bracing for the cold by dressing in extra layers and cranking up heaters. We don't go outside for very long," she

#### Pannun asks Sikhs to stop Punjab CM from hoisting flag on **Indian R-Day**

NEW DELHI (INP): The US-based prominent leader of Khalistan Movement, Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, has called upon the Sikh community in the Indian Punjab to unite and stop Chief Min-ister, Bhagwant Mann, from hoisting the Indian flag in Ludhiana on India's Republic Day, the 26th January. Gurpatwant Singh Pannun in a video said that the Punjab government was falsely branding Sikh youngsters as gangsters and then killing them in fake encounters. He also asked the youth to get in touch with him and register themselves as voters for a referendum on Khalistan.

#### Britain's **Conservatives** set for 1997-style election defeat, poll predicts

Monitoring Desk LONDON: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservative Party is set for an electoral defeat on a par with its heavy loss to the Labour Party in 1997, according to a YouGov opinion poll published in the Telegraph newspaper.

Ahead of an election expected later in 2024, the poll predicted Labour was on course to win 385 seats in parliament while the Conservatives will retain just 169, losing more seats than they did in 1997.

#### Russia is developing its relations with North Korea in all areas, including "sensitive" ones, Kremlin spokes-Putin has deepened

Russia is developing ties with North Korea

in all areas: Kremlin

man Dmitry Peskov said on Wednesday. North Korea's foreign minister lauded comradely ties with Russia on Tuesday and then held rare talks in the Kremlin with President Vladimir Putin, who has been invited by Kim Jong Un to visit the reclusive nuclear-armed country.

Asked about the talks in Moscow, Peskov said the situation on the Korean peninsula was discussed, but that the main focus was on developing bilateral re-

People's Republic of Ko-

MOSCOW (Internews): rea is our very important partner, and we are focused on the further development of our relations in all areas, including in sensitive areas," Peskov told reporters.

ties with North Korea since sending troops into Ukraine in 2022, and the United States and its allies have condemned what they say have been significant North Korean missile deliveries to Russia to help its war effort. Both Russia and North Korea have repeatedly dismissed the criticism. Moscow says it will develop ties with whatever countries it wants and that its cooperation Pyongyang does not con-

The Democratic travene international agree-

### Nazis, no thank you'; Germans take to streets to call for AfD ban

against the far-right Alternative for Germany party are gaining momentum in the wake of a report that two senior party members joined a meeting to discuss plans for the mass deportation of citizens of foreign

While the party has long railed against immigrants, the proposals for "unassimilated citizens" to be deported to "a model state in North Africa", reported by outlet Corrective, has struck a nerve in Germany. Some have compared them to the Nazis' initial plan to deport European Jews to Madagascar.

The line has long since been crossed," protester Stephan Kalsh said at a demonstration in Cologne on Tuesday evening, where many protesters called for

the party to be banned.

BERLIN/COLOGNE the country that have at-(Internews): Protests tracted tens of thousands since the story broke last week. Some have been attended by high-ranking officials like Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock.

The AfD, which is polling second in nationwide surveys, has denied the plans are party policy. Coleader Alice Weidel parted ways with one of her advisers who participated in the talks

Still, Germany's domestic spy chief Thomas Haldenwang has warned of extremist movements within the AfD, which is under security surveillance.

The reports of the plans have drawn widespread condemnation from political and security leaders. Scholz urged democrats to stand against far-right "fanatics" while Haldenwang called It was the latest in a for the "silent majority" wave of protests around to wake up.

### Trump attends rape defamation case in New York

straight from his victory in the Republican Iowa caucuses to a New York courtroom Tuesday for the start of a defamation trial brought by writer E. Jean Carroll after an earlier jury found he had sexually assaulted her in the 1990s.

In court, the former US president did not make any statements, and he and Carroll avoided looking at each other while jurors were being selected, according to reporters allowed inside the courtroom But Trump continued

attacking Carroll on his Truth Social platform, reposting a clip from an in-terview she gave to CNN and writing, "Can you be-lieve I have to defend myself against this woman's fake story?!

Addressing supporters at a rally in New Hampshire later in the day, Trump said he planned to attend daily court proceedings in the "phony" case in New York over the next several days, while continuing campaigning. "Early in the morning I go to a Biden

NEW YORK (INP): witch hunt," Trump said in which will hold the nation's second presidential nomination contest next Tuesday. "And then I come here in the afternoon, and I stop, we make speeches and we get the votes." The shocking defama-

tion case, which would likely once have been enough to wreck any politician's career, has had no visible impact on Trump's bid to retake the White House—and if anything is boosting his standing with his party's right wing. Carroll, 80, is seeking more than \$10 million in damages in the civil trial, alleging that Trump defamed her in 2019 when he was president and she had just come out with her allegation, saying she "is not

my type."
This is separate to a civil case last year where another New York jury found Trump liable for sexually assaulting Carroll in a department store dressing room in 1996 and subsequently defaming her in 2022, when he called her a "complete con job."

#### UK wage growth slows again, offering some relief to BoE

British wages grew at the England's concerns of a slowest pace in almost a year, according to official data published on Tuesday that added to signs of a gradual cooling of the inflationary pressure in the labour market that has worried the Bank of England.

Growth in earnings excluding bonuses remained strong reflecting the shortage of workers in the labour market since the coronavirus pandemic but slowed for a third time in a row to an annual 6.6% in the September-to-November period.

That represented a sharp deceleration from growth of 7.2% in the three months to October and was the weakest increase in regular earnings since the three months to January

Yael Selfin, chief economist at KPMG UK, said the smaller pay increases signalled further labour market weakness

"The marked slowdown in pay growth will tics (ONS) said.

LONDON (Internews): ease the Bank of potential wage-price spiral, which could lead to faster falls in inflation," Selfin said.

'Vacancies are also expected to fall further, which could see pay growth normalising towards levels consistent with the inflation target by the end of the year. This will likely bolster the case for interest rate cuts later this year.'

Sterling edged down against the U.S. dollar. Investors continued to bet on a first cut in the BoE's benchmark rate which is currently at its highest since 2008 in May.

The BoE has been worried that pay is rising too quickly for inflation to fall to its 2% target, despite a slowdown in the headline rate of price growth in recent months

Including bonuses, which can be volatile, pay growth slowed to 6.5% from 7.2% in the three months to October, the Office for National StatisPM says:

# Pakistan needs to be more competitive, attractive to benefit from industrialisation

Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday said that Pakistan needed to be more competitive and attractive to facilitate the journey of industrialisation

in the region. The prime minister, addressing an event titled '20th Pakistan Breakfast at Davos 2024" held by Pathfinders Group on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum, said a trading activity of around \$336 trillion trade was happening in China, and GCC countries were also entering into the manufacturing industry.He said China had acquired the transformation stage to relocate some of its industry and of energy and required di-Pakistan could be one of rection those destinations.

countries were rich with capital but had geographi-

the manpower or taking their capital to countries with a conducive environment and cheap energy and

He told the gathering of intellectuals, writers and representatives of welfare organisations, that Pakistan was a unique place owing to its diversified culture, geography and topography with the eight highest peaks, deserts of Thar and Balochistan and the plains of Punjab. Calling human resources the biggest asset of Pakistan, he said 60 percent of its 240 million population was under 30 years of age which meant whole

Highlighting the Similarly, the GCC achievements of his government, Prime Minister Kakar said the governance

DAVOS (APP): Caretaker cal disadvantages with the structure was improving options of either importing and that the government would leave behind a blueprint for the next government enabling it to respond to the challenges.

"I am quite sanguine that people are feeling a deep sense of positivity, he said and mentioned the structural changes and revamping of the taxation

He said "spend less on government and earn more' bent government which was also facilitating the private sector to earn money and

Referring Pakistan's ideal geographical situation, he said the vhole of Central Asia was looking to have connectivity through Pakistan which had the highest population



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Health Services Regulations and Coordination, Dr. Nadeem Jan witnesses the grant signing ceremony between Pakistan and Japan to support Pakistan's Polio Program.

# Japan announces \$3.62m grant to support Pakistan's polio programme

**Independent Report** SLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has announced a new US\$ 3.62 million grant to procure essential oral polio vaccines as part of its continued support to polio eradication efforts in Pakistan. Pakistan Polio Programme will use these funds to procure more than 21 million doses of vaccines to support polio campaigns in 2024, said a

news release. Pakistan is one of only two countries globally that has yet to stop polio. In 2023, Pakistan reported a total of 6 cases of polio. With polio cases cornered to only a few locations in the country, the Govern-ment of Pakistan and partners are preparing to launch an aggressive plan of activities in 2024 to stop this life altering disease for children. Each national immunization

Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

DAVOS (APP): First Lady

Begum Samina Alvi on

Wednesday called for en-

suring universal access to

assistive technology for

persons with disabilities,

the aging population and those suffering from non-communicable diseases.

keynote address at an event

themed "Unlock the every

day: advancing the SDGs

through the power of

Assistive Technology" on the sidelines of the World

Economic Forum 2024,

urged global leaders to pri-

oritize the integration of

assistive technology in

their national plans and Sus-

tainable Development

Goals (SDGs) strategies.

**Independent Report** 

QUETTA: In connection

with anti-corruption aware-

ness campaign, NAB

(Balochistan) invited a del-

The first lady, in her

drive targets over 44 million children under the age of five, with more than 370,000 frontline workers, predomi-

nantly women, playing a crucial role to ensure the Polio Programme's out-"Despite the challenges, Pakistan will remain relentless in our drive to put an end to polio in the next year," said Dr. Nadeem Jan, caretaker Federal Health Minister. He said, "As we prepare to launch polio campaigns in 2024, together with our partners we will maintain an emergency focus towards resolving the remaining challenges that stand in our way to reach all children. "The minister said, "The unwavering support of the Government of Japan has been instrumental in helping us get closer

to reaching zero cases. We

are thankful to the Govern-

"Unlock the Every-

day" is the first-ever global

campaign on assistive tech-

nology (AT) that has been

launched to raise awareness

about everyone's right to

AT- such as wheelchairs,

glasses, hearing aids, pros-

theses and digital devices -

regardless of their geo-

graphic and socio-economic

background. The event, or-

ganized by Devex and ATscale

at the SDG Tent in Davos,

was attended by high-level

leaders specializing in disabil-

ity inclusion, technology

and impact investment, and

aimed to explore the trans-

formative power of AT in

revolutionizing the lives of

millions of people who have special needs.

The event inaugurated

with recitation of holy

QUETTA: Former Provincial Advisor Malik Naeem

Bazai meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik

First Lady calls for

universal access to

assistive technology

**Delegation of student,** 

faculty members of UoL

visits NAB Balochistan

ment and people of Japan for their continued support towards polio eradication in Pakistan." ITO Takeshi. Charge d' Affaires ad interim of Japan to Pakistan appreciated the significant gains made last year in controlling the spread of poliovirus. "I would like to express my sincere respect to polio workers and law enforcement agencies for

their dedicated mission for

humanity", said Mr. ITO. Noting the importance of a clear and strong commitment by the Pakistani leadership to end polio, he said, "Japan would like to renew its commitment to continuing its efforts toward the ultimate goal of polio eradi cation by promoting routine immunization" he added. The new funding is part of the continuous support from the Govemment of Japan to the Polio Eradication programme.

#### Balochistan Law Minister slams Iranian missile strike in Panjgur Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Law, Parliamentary Affairs Prosecution, and Amanullah Kanrani has condemned the Iranian missile strike in Panjgur area of

In a condemnation statement issued here on statements of institutions to democracy and journal-Wednesday, the Minister being circulated on social ism," the minister re-Law and Prosecution said | media regarding elections. marked. that the Iranian missile strike is just sorrowful and disturbing.
Amanullah Kanrani

stressed that Iran should refrain from such action by clearing its position before Pakistan.

He said that the impermissible Missile attack is not inly interference in the internal sovereignty, but is also equal to harm the unity and solidarity among the Muslim world and indirectly benefit Israel.

He said that it is dire of the rivals to create differences among the Muslim

#### Bilawal flays attack on PPP candidate's house in Turbat

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari strongly con-demned the grenade attack on the house of the party's candidate, contesting the general election from Turbat, Balochistan.

Asghar Rind is contesting elections for the provincial assembly seat in the district Kech Balochistan.

Unknown men attacked PPP leader Mir Asghar Rind's house in Turbat with hand grenade

The brother of Asghar Rind was injured in the attack, while the outlaws escaped unhurt from the spot. The injured brother of the PPP leader was rushed to the hospital for medical

Following the hand grenade attack on Mr Rind's residence, law enforcement agencies initiated a search operation in the area. No group has claimed responsibility for the assault on Mr Rind's

# Quran, Seerah solution to all contemporary issues of world: Aneeq Ahmed

faith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed has said that Quran and Sirat e Tayyaba provide us guidance and set basic principles concerning to every field of life urging students to develop comprehension of religion as well as contemporary issues. While addressing a conference on "Sirat un Nabi (SAW) and contemporary challenges and their solutions" jointly organized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Iqra University here on Wednesday, he said that it had been imperative that students not only understand the religion of Islam but also comprehend requirements of the contemporary era as well as economic, social and other issues in the light of teach-

Religious Affairs and Inter-

ing global situation. Aneeq Ahmed said that religious obligations (Deen) and demands of worldly pursuits (Duniya) are intertwined and we have to search the solution of

ings of Islam and keep them-

selves abreast of develop-

KARACHI (INP): Care- contemporary issues in the taker Federal Minister for light of Quran and Sirat-e-Tayyaba adding that true comprehension of religion could not be achieved without understanding the worldly affairs.

Islam emphasizes on practical action and application of knowledge and life of Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) is a guiding example for every human being, he noted and added that (PBUH) set standards for individuals, society and state and those must be fol-

While referring to his recent visit to Saudi Arabia, the federal minister informed that Hajj agreement was signed in Hajj Conference in Madina Munawarah which was attended by delegates from 80 countries. "I have floated an idea at the conference that all the rulers of Muslim countries should gather in Makkah Mukarama on the occasion of Hajj to discuss the issues being faced by Muslims across the world and come up with a unanimous agenda to deal with them.



RAWALPINDI: H.E. Dr. Maen Khreasat, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Jordan called on Minister for Defence, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Anwar Ali Hyder at Ministry of Defence.

# Fake news - a biggest threat to democracy & journalism: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Wednesday said that the fake news had become the biggest threat to democracy and journalism. Highlighting the issue of fake news, disinformation and misinformation on the social media platform 'X', the minister referred to the doc-

Condemning a fake press release issued in the name of the Election Commission of Pakistan, he said such unethical moves were on the rise as the date of elections was nearing in.

"Today, a fake directive was forged and circulated in the name of Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister. Now the Chief Election Commissioner is being targeted. Today fake tored notifications and news is the biggest threat

### Secretary C&W says Timely completion of dev. projects in Nasirabad, Sibi our top priority

QUETTA (APP): Provincial Secretary, Communications and Works (C&W) Kamber Dashti on Wednesday said that the improvement of infrastructure and timely completion of development projects in Naseerabad and Sibi divisions was our top priority.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting regarding the progress of the ongoing development projects in the Sibi Zone Road Sector fiscal year 2023-24. The meeting was attended by Engineer Officers of Sibi and Naseerabad Divisions, Chief Engineer

Sibi Zone Mir Ahmed Mengal, Chief Engineer Design Dr. Sajjad Baloch and Technical Advisor Mukhtiar Kakar. The meeting was briefed in detail regarding the progress on the ongoing development projects in Sibi and Naseerabad divisions.

On this occasion, the Secretary said that these two divisions of the province were agriculturally prosperous and fertile areas and the connecting roads of these areas were playing a very important role in timely delivery of agricultural produce to the mar-



LAHORE: PPPPPresident, Asif Ali Zardari addresses public gathering meeting regarding inauguration ceremony of Election Campaigns in connection of the General Election 2024, held at Peko Road NA-127 constituency in Lahore.

#### **Pak China Institute** enrolls 366 students

GWADAR (INP): Pakistan-China Technical and Vocational (PCT&VI) has admitted 366 students from Gwadar and other parts of

Balochistan in various pro-Around 500 students both male and female made their appearance in entry test to get admitted in

many areas of study including Tourism, English language, Maritime and Port Management, Software Technology, Chinese Language and Culture, Mechatronics and E-Commerce, according to a Gwadar Pro's report on Wednesday.

PCT& VI official told Gwadar Pro that classes will commence on January

He said that 15 students were admitted in Tourism Management, 127 were enrolled in English Language, 59 were admitted in Maritime and Port

Management.

conveyed to admit students

in their relevant subjects.

Meanwhile, he said that 100 students were enrolled in Software Technology, 35 were admitted in Chinese Language and Culture, 5 were given admission in Mechatronics and 25 were enrolled in E-Com-

All vocational and training programs and courses are designed in collaboration with Shandong Institute of Commerce and Technology (SICT), China, and relevant accredited in-



DAVOS: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar meets the Prime Minister of Belgium Alexander De Croo on the sidelines of the World Eco-

# WMFP strongly condemns assault on Kosovo journalist

ISLAMABAD (PR): The Women's Media Forum Pa- attempted to ask Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti Women's Media Forum Pakistan (WMFP) stands in solidarity with a Kosovo journalist who was assaulted by the Prime Minister's security team. WMFP is concerned about the increasing attacks on women in media around the

demns the assault, pressing Facebook calling it a to take steps to help train women journalists against such attacks and demand that authorities ensure journalists, especially women journalists are safe in the

On December 28, 2023, journalist Blerta Dalloshi-Berisha from TV

Blerta hurt her right hand after the PM's security used needless force on her and snatched her microphone which also disrupted the filming.

Later, Blerta elaborated on the incident, con-WMFP strongly condemning the attack on her

Media reported there has been tension between PM Kurti's government and the media outlet TV Klan that Blerta works for. In June 2023, the government tried to close the channel by stripping it of its license. Fortunately, the courts did not allow this to

#### **Taragee Foundation** organizes Hackathon in Balochistan's six districts

**Independent Report** QUETTA: A hackathon was organized in six districts of Balochistan Quetta, Pashin, Kharan lushki, Musa Khel and Zhob, under the auspices of Taraqee Foundation, to promote better coordination for entrepreneurs.

The Hackathon organized for Farmers, FAO, ivestock, BRSP, Banks, ivestock Department, Ag-Balochistan, Commission Agents, Input Suppliers, PPAF and Agriculture Departments. The focus was on increasing connectivity



President Quetta Chamber of Commerce Abdullah Achakzai attending a meeting of 11th Joint Border Trade Committee held in Charbahar, Iran

# DC and REC inspect **Monitoring Control Room**

QUETTA (APP): Deputy and it could also be the cen-Commissioner (DC) ter of measures for imme-Commissioner Naseerabad Batul Asadi along with Regional Election Commissioner (REC) Abdullah, Election Commissioner Tariq and all other focal persons inspected the District Monitoring Control Room.

They also expressed satisfaction over the measures during visit. While giving a briefing,

Focal Person Manzoor Ahmed said that close attention would be focused on all the issues on the ocdiate redressal of complaints made by the public, many other important aspects were also highlighted. The DC gave orders

that the officers who have been assigned the responsibilities in the control room should perform their duties in the true sense, so that this phase of the election could also be completed in a clean and transparent manner. All facilities including wireless system are provided in the control room so that the casion of the election focal persons do not face through the control room any kind of difficulties.

### Islamabad Court drops charges against PTI founder and wife

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad court has dis-Section 496B, which manmissed the case alleging an illicit relationship against the founder of PTI, Imran Khan, and his wife Bushra Bibi. The District and Sessions Court in Islamabad presided over the hearing on the marriage case between Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi, ultimately rejecting the accusations of improper relations.

The court cited legal

dates two witnesses. Noting the absence of the second witness, the court decided to drop the charge under Section 496B. Consequently, the charges against PTI founder Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi now solely pertain to Section 496. The charges revolve around the marriage be-tween the PTI founder and Bushra Bibi during Eid.

#### Panjgur additional DC injured in Kalat road mishap

KALAT (INP): Panjgur additional deputy commissioner and his driver sustained injuries in a road mishap on the Quetta-Karachi Vational Highway in Kalat on Wednesday.

According to sources in the police, a Zamyad vehicle crashed into the car of Panjgur Additional Deputy Commissioner Khurram Khalid on the Quetta-Karachi National Highway. As a result, the ADC and his driver sustained in-

The injured were shifted to a hospital in Quetta after administering

Police have also ar-

egation of students along with faculty members of University of Loralai (UoL) to visit NAB Balochistan. Accordingly Vice Chancellor Mr. Ehsan Ullah

Kakar, Director General UoL Dr. Khair Muhammad Kakar, faculty members and fair gathering of students visited NAB (Balochistan). During the visit, a ceremony was arranged wherein lectures to the participants were given about the working of NAB (Balochistan) and its other allied matters. Thereafter, the guests visited different offices of NAB (B) including investigation wing, complaint verification cell, library, art gallery and other

Quran and national anthem. Director General NAB Mr. Zafar Iqbal Khan and Director NAB Muhammad Rashad delivered their lectures on awareness against corruption and of working (Balochistan). In order to eradicate corruption from society, they stressed upon the students to live their lives as per Islamic values, so the evil of corruption can be eliminated from our society. They highlighted that nepotism, Influence peddling and favouritism are the

treatment. branches of corruption but unfortunately these have been taken by the society as norm/right. DG NAB (Balochistan) replied detailed answers to the questions raised by the students and faculty members dur-



QUETTA: Director General NAB Zafar Iqbal Khan, Vice Chancellor University of Loralai Ehsanullah Kakar and Director NAB Balochistan Dr. Muhammad Rashid addressing students participated in a lecture organized by NAB Balochistan in connection with Awareness Campaign against Corruption