

# Independent

Member APNS &amp; CPNE

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

www.dailyindependent.com.pk Quetta

Ph: 2841470/2841473 REG: No. BC-116 B/ID-445 Vd XXV No 154, Rajab 11, 1445 AH Tuesday January 23, 2024 Pages 08, Price Rs.15

## Pakistan fully committed to success of CPEC: PM

Chinese Vice FM calls on COAS, conveys China's satisfaction on CPEC projects' security; Commends Pakistan's peace efforts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Monday said that Pakistan was fully committed to the success of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and stressed the need for both sides to continue to work closely to ensure timely completion of the ongoing projects.

He was talking to Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong who paid a courtesy call on him.

The prime minister welcomed the Chinese vice foreign minister as well as members of his delegation and said Pakistan deeply valued its all-weather, strategic, cooperative partnership with China.

Recalling his visit to Beijing for the 3rd Belt and Road Forum in October 2023, he said that he was deeply touched by the

warm sentiments of President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang towards Pakistan. He also conveyed his best wishes for the Chinese leadership.

In addition to Pakistan-China relations, the regional situation also came under discussion during the meeting.

The Chinese vice foreign minister thanked the prime minister for the courtesy call and briefed him regarding various meetings held during the visit.

He conveyed special greetings of the Chinese leadership to the prime minister. He said China and Pakistan were "iron-brothers". He assured that China would always remain a reliable partner in Pakistan's socio-economic progress.

Meanwhile Vice Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China, Sun Weidong Monday

called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir here at General Headquarters and conveyed China's satisfaction on security arrangements for CPEC projects.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, during the meeting matters of mutual interest and measures to further enhance bilateral defence cooperation were discussed.

The Chinese Vice Foreign Minister said that Pakistan and China are all-weather strategic partners. He acknowledged Pakistan's efforts towards regional peace and stability.

The COAS thanked the visiting dignitary for his warm remarks and said that relations between Pakistan and China are founded on a common understanding of regional peace, stability and prosperity for the people of both countries.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Asim Munir exchanging views with Sun Weidong, Vice Foreign Minister of the Peoples Republic of China during meeting held at General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.

## Bilawal says he only needs one term 'not four' to turn around Pakistan

SAHIWAL (INP): With the election fever reaching its zenith, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said Monday he did not need four but only a one-time government to change the fate of the crisis-hit country.

The PPP chairman — an aspirant for the prime minister's slot — took the veiled dig at Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif, who is taking a fourth shot at power after being granted relief from the judiciary, during a power show in Sahiwal.

Addressing the public meeting, Bilawal said: "I do not want four but one

chance. If you give me a chance, I will change the fate of the country and solve all the problems [being faced by the country]."

Referring to the skyrocketing inflation, unemployment, and poverty, the PPP leader claimed that his party was the sole solution to these problems.

"Pakistan is going through a default time," Bilawal said, adding that there was a "division" in the society.

The former foreign minister warned that hostile forces could use the "division" to fulfil their nefarious designs. "I am contesting election to bury the politics of hatred and division."



SAHIWAL: Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing to public gathering during Election Campaign at Hockey Ground.

## Security advisory issued to contesting candidates by DCs in various districts

Independent Report QUETTA: The security advisory has been issued by the Deputy Commissioners of different districts of Balochistan to all contesting candidates of national and provincial assemblies.

According to the official sources, the security advisory/threat alert has been issued by the Deputy Commissioners of Kachhi, Kohlu, Mastung and Khuzdar to the election contesting candidates in their respective constituencies.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioners have advised the candidates to refrain from unnecessary movement and avoid participation in the public gathering especially being held in open / vulnerable locations to avert any untoward incident.

As there is possibility of terrorist, subversive activities from anti-social elements / banned organizations to disrupt election process or create law and order situation.

In the security advisory issued by the Deputy Commissioner Kachhi, it was stated that a female suicide bomber has been tasked to attack political leaders / public gatherings during the election campaign-2024.

Similarly, the DC Mastung in the security advisory mentioned that apropos the security threat perceptions in the region and the reports from the law enforcement agencies, the terrorists may target political leaders / public gatherings during the election campaigns going on in the district Mastung.

## Security forces killed seven terrorists in Zhub operation

Independent Report

RAWALPINDI: The security forces on Monday killed at least seven terrorists involved in hostile activities against the armed forces and innocent civilians during a fire exchange that took place during an intelligence-based operation in Samba Sector area of Zhub District, near the Pakistan-Afghan border.

According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the Army troops effectively surrounded and engaged the fleeing terrorists.

The seven killed terrorists remained actively involved in terrorist activities against security forces as well as the killing of innocent civilians. Arms, ammunition, and explosives were also recovered from the killed terrorists.

## Hamza for more efforts to ensure free, transparent polls

QUETTA (APP): Commissioner Quetta Division Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat said that all possible efforts would be taken to ensure the conduct of general elections is free, fair, and transparent.

A meeting was held here under the chairmanship of Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafiqat regarding the conduct of the general election in the division. In the meeting, decisions were taken regarding the conduct of general elections and the implementation of the election code of conduct.

The monitoring officers deployed in Quetta Division were directed to implement the election code of conduct in every way and to take action against those who violated it. Hamza ordered that notices should be issued to candidates and political parties in cases of violation of the code of conduct.

## Final list of candidates for reserved seats to be issued today

Independent Report QUETTA: The final list of candidates contesting elections on the reserved seats of provincial and national assemblies is scheduled to be issued today (Tuesday).

According to the Election Commission of Pakistan, a total of 64 candidates were in the competition for 11 seats reserved for women in Balochistan Assembly while 32 candidates were contesting elections on the seats reserved for three minorities in the provincial assembly. Similarly, a total of 28 candidates had filed papers for four seats reserved for women in the National Assembly.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister, Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar exchanging views with Sun Weidong, Vice Foreign Minister of the Peoples Republic of China during meeting held in Islamabad.

## Solangi warns of strict action against those targeting SC via social media

Culprits involved in malicious campaign against judiciary to be taken to task, nobody will be victimised

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Monday said that elements involved in the malicious campaign against the superior judiciary would be taken to task but no group or person would be victimised.

He was addressing a press conference flanked by Director General Pakistan Telecommunication Authority Ahmed Shamim Pirzada and Director General Operations Federal Investigation Agency Waqar uddin.

The minister said that judicial decisions were in the public domain and as per the Constitution and the masses could comment on them.

Condemning the malicious campaign against the superior judiciary and judges on social media, he said that character assassination of someone was a serious violation of the law and the Constitution. He underlined the need to discourage the culture of deceit and intolerance from society.

He said a joint investigation team had been formed to probe the anti-

judiciary campaign and the relevant institutions including FIA and PTA were investigating the ongoing propaganda. He said that Article 19 of the Constitution defines freedom of expression with certain restrictions. The minister said that the caretaker government was set up under a constitutional process and it was written in the preamble of the Constitution that the country will be run by representatives of the people.

He said that elections will be held across the country on February 8 and there should be no doubt about the

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi addressing a press conference along with the officials of Pakistan Telecommunication Authority and Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) at PTV Headquarters.

## Pak flays Consecration of 'Ram Temple' on Site of demolished Babri Mosque

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: Pakistan condemns the construction and consecration of the 'Ram Temple' on the site of the demolished Babri Mosque in the Indian city of Ayodhya.

The centuries-old mosque was demolished on 6 December 1992 by a mob of extremists. Deplorably, India's superior judiciary not only acquitted the criminals responsible for

this despicable act but also allowed the construction of a temple on the site of the demolished mosque.

Developments of the last 31 years, leading to today's consecration ceremony, are indicative of growing majoritarianism in India. These constitute an important facet of the ongoing efforts for social, economic and political

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## CS reiterates interim Govt's resolve to conduct free and fair elections

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan has reiterated the interim government's resolve to take all possible steps for conducting free and fair elections in the province.

He said that all the preparations have been completed for the upcoming elections in light of directives of the Election

Commission of Pakistan. The Chief Secretary was chairing a high level meeting held to review the arrangements made for the general elections in Kalat Division on Monday. The Chief Secretary along with Additional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem, Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh and

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KHUZDAR: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan being briefed by Commissioner Kalat Division Ali Akbar Baloch and DC Khuzdar Muhammad Arif Zarkoon regarding preparation of general elections. IG Police Abdul Khaliq Sheikh, ACS Home Zahid Saleem and Secretary Local Government Noor Ahmed Pirkani are also present

## Nawaz vows to bring country back on dev. track if voted to power

MANSEHRA (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Quaid Nawaz Sharif on Monday vowed that he would bring back the country on the track of development after his party was voted to power on February 8 along with removing the 10 years long sense of deprivation of people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Addressing a big public gathering in connection of 2024 election, Nawaz said the time had come to restart the development works from where the same were left uncompleted in 2017.

He criticized the poor performance of the party that came into power with the slogan of 'change in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa', which had done nothing for the people of the province during its 10-year rule.

The three times prime minister said putting the country again on the path to progress and prosperity would be a difficult challenge, but the PML-N had the ability to put it on road to progress and development.

Nawaz Sharif said that a network of motorways including Hazara Motorway were built by his government that promoted tourism and opened the entire Hazara Division for investment.

Besides construction of the motorways, he said, load-shedding was eliminated with gas and electricity provided to domestic and industrial consumers at affordable rates.

He said that a large number of people were provided jobs during the tenure of last PML-N government.

"In Pakistan, there was no price hike during his tenure as prime minister and all essential services and commodities including bread, vegetables and edible items were available to people at reasonable rates," he said. "Had I not been ousted in 2017 there would have been an international standard airport at Mansehra today, besides train service from Mansehra to Islamabad and

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MANSEHRA: Quaid PML (N) Muhammad Nawaz Sharif waving toward crowd during a public meeting in connection with general elections

## Peaceful elections to be ensured under comprehensive strategy, says caretaker Minister Home

Independent Report

QUETTA: The interim government is paying special attention on establishing peace under comprehensive strategy so as to conduct the upcoming general elections in peaceful manner in the province.

For the purpose, high level official visits are being paid by the caretaker Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Domki and Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan at the division level.

This was stated by the caretaker Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Zubair Jamali while speaking to the local media persons after offering fatiha for the departed soul of wife of Syed

Khurshed Shah Dopasi and mother of Zia Khurshed Dopasi in Dhadhar on Monday.

The caretaker Minister said that the polling stations have been divided in three categories in view of the security situation on the orders of Chief Election Commissioner.

Out of total 5067 polling stations, 2055 have been declared most sensitive while 2280 and 832 polling stations have been declared as sensitive and normal respectively, he added.

The police force would be deployed in the urban areas while Levies would be deployed in the rural areas of the province.



DHADHAR: Caretaker Home Minister Captain (Retd) Mir Zubair Jamali talking with mediapersons

## NP President slams bid on life of party's senior leaders in Kech

Independent Report QUETTA: The President National Party, Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch has strongly condemned the terrorist act of attacking senior leaders of the party in Kech district and said that the elements involved in it want to sabotage the democratic process, however, we would not be pressurized through such subversive acts. The President of NP was addressing a press conference in Turbat on Monday.

He said that we condemn the cowardly terrorist attack on our party leaders and want to give message to the terrorists to stop such acts. He said that National Party is a democratic party and believes in non-violence.

He said that we can't be impressed by such acts, nor we would be scared of them.

Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch said that the party's senior leaders including Akram Baloch, Abdul Rasheed and others were attacked by unknown terrorists in Dasht Khudan area of Kech on Sunday.

He said that we condemn the cowardly terrorist attack on our party leaders and want to give message to the terrorists to stop such acts. He said that National Party is a democratic party and believes in non-violence.

He said that we can't be impressed by such acts, nor we would be scared of them.



## Media strong platform for educating public about uploading any unlawful content on social media: DG PTA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director General of the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), Ahmed Shamim Pirzada on Monday said that media is a strong platform for creating awareness and educating the public about uploading or sharing any unlawful content on internet and social media.

Addressing a press conference along with Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi and DG FIA, he said, "Media is a strong platform that can help to create public awareness about what kind of content can be shared, and what repercussions shared content may have for the nation."

Pirzada said that, sometimes, individuals, including youngsters, inadvertently share content that can be harmful to the country and the public on social media.

The DG said that the PTA has taken several steps to educate the general public, including writing

articles and running media campaigns for awareness.

Additionally, the authority holds regular meetings with social media companies every three to six months to address concerns and collaborate on solutions.

In response to a question, Pirzada said that occasional technical glitches may occur in the system due to system upgrades, and such issues may be experienced in the next two to three months.

He explained that the PTA operates under Section 37 of the Prevention of Electronic Crime Act (PECA), empowering the authority to remove or block unlawful online content in the interest of defence, glory of Islam, contempt of court, decency and morality, defamation, child pornography, the modesty of natural persons, the dignity of natural persons, public order, hate speech, incitement to an offence, etc.

He said that any per-

son can lodge a complaint against objectionable internet content, and these complaints are received via the Complaint Management System (CMS).

He said, that the PTA also conducts proactive searches on the direction of courts and promptly addresses received complaints, emphasizing its primary duty to remove and block unlawful content.

The DG said that about 44 stakeholders, including the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), provincial home departments, provincial Counter Terrorism Departments, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, and others, informed the PTA through the portal regarding any unlawful contents and activities.

He said that the authority takes swift action upon receiving complaints, underscoring its commitment to removing and blocking any unlawful content.



ISLAMABAD: Vice Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China Sun Weidong called on Foreign Minister Jilani Abbas at Ministry of foreign Affairs in the Federal Capital.

## Special permits issued to foreign media for elections 2024 coverage

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government on Monday said special permits were issued to the foreign media for the coverage of the general elections 2024 scheduled for February 28.

In the first phase, the government has issued permits to 49 foreign journalists from 13 different countries for election coverage, said a news release.

The foreign journalists were from multiple countries including China, Japan, America, United Kingdom, Canada, Hong Kong, Serbia, Sweden, France, Germany, Australia, Thai-

land and Singapore.

According to the statement, about 136 foreign journalists have applied for permission to cover the elections to be held on February 8, 2024. Those Foreign journalists, who have not yet been issued permits for coverage, will get the permission passes soon.

Besides, delegations from the European Union, Commonwealth countries will also come to observe the election. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has printed 200,000 accreditation cards.

## Entry of youtubers banned in SC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Guidelines have been issued for court's reporters in connection with entry into Supreme Court (SC).

According to directives issued by SC spokesperson, beat reporters from the institutions will be allowed to enter into SC. Cooperation with security staff will be must in connection with search process at the time of their entry.

Ban has been imposed on all kind of recording including Youtube program inside SC building. Proper arrangement will be made to show court's proceedings to reporters in court's room who come there in big cases.

## EC cancels notification of ROs for postponing polls in two constituencies

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission (EC) has cancelled notification of Returning Officers (ROs) for postponing election in two constituencies of National Assembly including NA-83 and 85 in Sargodha.

The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) has directed the election will take place in these two constituencies. Electoral process should continue therein.

The petition for postponing the election in these two constituencies came up for hearing before EC due to death of candidate.

The petitioner and PML-N candidate Zulfiqar

Ali Bhatti appeared in the EC and told that death certificate of the candidate is of January 15 while he had passed away on January 02 and his funeral prayers were held on January 03. This way forgery has been made in this matter.

DRO Sargodha said it has been proved in inquiry Sadiq Ali died on January 02. Returning officer NA-85 told that fake death certificate was provided to him.

CEC while directing DC Sargodha to take action against secretary union council cancelled notification of returning officer for postponing election.

## Solangi lauds FM Jilani for 'managing fastest de-escalation' with Iran

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Monday lauded the visionary role played by Caretaker Foreign Minister Jilani Abbas for "managing the fastest de-escalation" between Pakistan and Iran.

"Ambassador Jilani Abbas deserves all the credit for his visionary engagement and managing possibly one of the fastest

de-escalation of the diplomatic history," the minister said in a post on X, formerly Twitter.

The minister also posted a joint statement press statement of Pakistan and Iran in this regard.

The joint press statement, issued by the Foreign Office Spokesperson, said: "It has been mutually agreed that ambassadors of both countries may return to their respective posts by 26 January 2024."

## Four more testified in cipher case

ISLAMABAD (APP): Former Foreign Secretary Sohail Mehmood, former Interior Secretary Yousuf Naseem, Assistant Commissioner Islamabad Awaid Irshad, and others testified their statements on Monday in the cipher case.

Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain of the special court of Official secret Acts heard the cipher case against PTI founder and former foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi at Adaila jail.

As many as twenty-nine witnesses have recorded their official statements so far.

Sohail Mehmood stated in court that he retired from service in September 2022 and had not received the cipher copy until that date.

Shah Mehmood Qureshi raised an objection to the interference of prosecutor Rizwan Abbasi during the recording of witnesses.

The court clarified that the prosecution was not interfering but rather assisting in recording statements.

The hearing was adjourned until January 23 after recording the statements of witnesses.

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamsah Akbar exchanging views with Dr. Maen Khreasat, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Jordan during meeting held at Finance Division in Islamabad.

## Elected govt will have to take solid steps to put country on path to progress: Sherpao

PESHAWAR (APP): Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) Chairman Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao on Monday said the next elected government would have to take solid steps to put the country back on the path to progress and prosperity.

Addressing a public meeting in Shabqadar, Charsadda district, he said that Pakistan was facing three major challenges, including political instability, law and order and high inflation.

He said that the next government would also have to work to ensure political stability, which was required for a stable economy. "The elected government will have to find out-of-box solutions to provide relief to the people," he added.

Shedding light on the problems faced by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Aftab Sherpao said its people were facing the shortage of gas and electricity.

He said urged the

people to exercise their right to vote with great care and think about the country and their future.

"The people should keep in mind the track record of the candidates before voting for them," he said, adding that his party would win the next general election based on its performance.

He said that the QWP did not believe in raising hollow slogans as it had always served the people with devotion.

## Pak-Iran bilateral ties crucial for regional stability, counter-terrorism efforts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Representative of the Prime Minister for Religious Harmony and the Pakistani Diaspora in the Middle East and Muslim Countries Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi on Monday said bilateral ties between Pakistan and Iran were crucial for regional stability and counter-terrorism efforts.

Addressing a press conference, Ashrafi shed light on a diverse array of issues spanning from geopolitical relations to religious significance.

He said that the proactive measures taken by the Government of Pakistan and the military leadership for peace and stability in the region had gained significant recognition at the global stage.

Ashrafi clarified that that Pakistan's intelligence-based operations specifically targeted terrorists carrying out terror acts inside Pakistan and not Iranian nationals.

He lauded the unity of the entire Pakistani nation, emphasizing collective strength and resilience in the face of challenges. He

underscored Pakistan's commitment to strengthening its defence capabilities, reinforcing the nation's preparedness.

Underlining Pakistan's extensive global ties, he reiterated that the nation was consistently engaged with the entire Islamic world, always endeavouring for peace and security along with strong condemnation of terrorism.

He affirmed that the entire nation was committed to Pakistan's security and unequivocally supported their armed forces.

Accentuating the strong Islamic brotherhood, Ashrafi said the Pak-Iran relations were deep-rooted, characterized by a profound connection between the two nations.

He emphasized that enhancing bilateral relations between Pakistan and Iran was crucial for fostering regional stability and mitigating terrorist activities. Strengthened cooperation in intelligence sharing, border management, and joint counter-terrorism efforts could create a more formidable front against common security threats.

## Five, including children, found dead in Karachi apartment

KARACHI (APP): The bodies of at least five individuals, among them three children, were found on Monday in an apartment situated in the Shahrah-e-Faisal area under the jurisdiction of the Airport police station.

The deceased were identified by the police as Ahsan Raza Rizvi, his wife Nida, and their three children named Jibreel, Mikael, and baby Umme-Hani. Authorities reported that the children, all minors, were allegedly administered poison.



QUETTA: ANP candidates for PB-38 Malik Naem Bazai addressing a election campaign meeting

## Solangi warns of strict action...

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The minister said that strict measures would be taken against those involved in illegal activities.

Lashing out at those churning out lies and malicious propaganda to mislead the nation for their vested interests, he urged the general public to beware of misleading and fake news.

He advised people to verify every bit of information before sharing it on social media platforms.

Referring to the involvement of internal and external elements in the anti-judiciary campaign, he said that anyone who violated the law would be dealt with according to the law without any discrimination.

He said that the objective of this press conference was to warn such elements against running the malicious campaign.

He said that both FIA and PTA were investigating the matter and hundreds of social media accounts were monitored and action would be taken against the culprits under the law of the land.

Spreading lies was the business of some people as this was part of their "political economy" as they received hefty amounts but these false

news do not benefit the people of Pakistan.

"As the elections are approaching we have to be wary of lies and misinformation," Murtaza Solangi said, adding that the people should verify before sharing such false and false news.

To a question, he said the campaign against the judiciary was launched from within the country and abroad and those involved were connected.

Replying to a question he said that action would be taken only against those who were involved in the campaign to malign the judges of the superior judiciary and no group or person would be targeted.

He said the present caretaker regime was non-political and it had no political friends or opponents, so it had no intention to target any political party or group.

He said that Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar had the Ministry of Interior portfolio and all the ministry institutions were fully operational.

Answering a question regarding disruption in the Internet, he said that during the past few days, the Internet service had some problems due to technical glitches and it had nothing to do with politics.

## Pak flays Consecration...

Continued from page 1

marginalization of the Indian Muslims.

A temple built on the site of a demolished mosque will remain a blot on the face of India's democracy for the times to come. Notably, there is a growing list of mosques, including the Gyanvapi Mosque in Varanasi and Shahi Eidgah Mosque in Mathura, facing similar threat of desecration and destruction.

The rising tide of 'Hindutva' ideology in India poses a serious threat to religious harmony and regional peace. The Chief Ministers of two major Indian states, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, are on record as citing the Babri Mosque's demolition or inauguration of the 'Ram Temple' as the first step towards reclaiming parts of Pakistan.

The international community should take cognizance of the growing Islamophobia, hate speech and hate crimes in India. The United Nations and other relevant international organizations should play their part in saving the Islamic heritage sites in India from extremist groups and ensuring the protection of the religious and cultural rights of the minorities in India.

## Care taker PM calls cabinet meeting today

ISLAMABAD (Online): Care taker Prime Minister (PM) Anwaarul Haq Kakar has called federal cabinet meeting today (Tuesday). According to sources care taker PM will preside over the meeting of federal cabinet taking place today in PM house. Cabinet will consider the summary for reorganization of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). SIFC has also recommended for reorganization for elimination of corruption and simplifying tax system.

The care taker federal cabinet will review economic situation of the country. Political and economic situation of the country will come under consideration in the country.

## CS reiterates interim Govt's...

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Secretary Local Government, Noor Ahmed Pirani had reached Khuzdar for the purpose where they were received by the Commissioner Kalat, Ali Akbar Baloch.

The Chief Secretary maintained that all possible steps would be taken for conducting free and fair elections in the province.

He said that the basic purpose behind visits to the divisions is to ensure provision of necessary facilities, transport and security in the polling stations.

He said that directives have been issued to provide security as well as other facilities including water, electricity and washrooms in the polling stations.

He on the occasion asked the concerned high ups to take tribal elders into confidence so as to ensure peaceful elections.

The Chief Secretary also directed to the district administration to cooperate with the teams visiting districts for installation of CCTV cameras there.

Earlier, the Chief Secretary was briefed about the arrangements made for elections in Kalat division.

The Commissioner Kalat, Ali Akbar Baloch, Deputy Commissioners of all districts and other concerned high ups were also in attendance at the meeting.

## Nawaz vows to...

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Muzafarabad in Azad Kashmir," he added.

Nawaz pledged that he would construct an airport and medical college in Mansehra if the PML-N would form a government after winning the elections.

The public meeting was also addressed by PMLN Chief Organizer, Maryam Nawaz and KP President Amir Muqam besides others.

PML-N Chief Organizer and Senior Vice President Maryam Nawaz, in her address, said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was an important province of Pakistan and it's people could not afford experiences of "political jugglers" any more. She urged the KP people not to give the future of their children into wrong hands, and elect honest and committed leaders with the ability to address their problems swiftly.

Maryam recalled that a political party that had come to power with the slogan of "change" failed to deliver. It had trumpeted the Billion Trees Afforestation Project during its 10 years rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, but on ground where were those trees, she asked.

Maryam said that Hazara was the PML-N's stronghold, and it people would vote for all its candidates from the division.

She said her party after coming to power would accelerate the pace of economic development and provide relief to the poor and under-privileged.

PML-N KP President Engr Amir Muqam also addressed the meeting.

عمارت کرانے پر درکار ہے

PRQ No.1365/22-01-2024

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TSE-232410357733 Tender Fee Rs.2000/- and bid Security 2%

S.No	Name of Work/Installation	E/Cost
1	Construction/Installation of Shade House / Agriculture Tunnel at Agriculture Research Farms and Construction/Installation Green House at Agriculture Research Farm	18,980,000/-

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: Presence in Active Tax Payer List. The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required. The bidder must have completed 3 Assignment of similar nature of work Turnover of at least 13,288,000 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm. The Bidding Firm must Signed & Stamped company seal on every page of the bidding documents. The Bidding Firm must be offered for all the items. The Bidding firm must provide Technical Specifications & Drawing / Design. The bidding firms must provide Two Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Deposit at Call of 2% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The bidding documents can be obtained from the office of the under-signed, 2,000 PKR Issuance of tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT during office hours on working days. Last Date of bid submission: The Tenders must be submitted latest by 06 February, 2024 till 02:00 PM. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the under- signed at 03:00 PM Address: Directorate General of Agriculture Research, ARI, Village Aid Sarab Road Quetta. Phone no: 0819330016 Fax no: 0819330022

DIRECTOR GENERAL AGRICULTURE RESEARCH ARI-QUETTA

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QUETTA: Senior Protection Officer UNHCR inaugurating reception interview section of Advice & Legal Aid Center (ALAC) office. Executive Director SEHER Abdul Wadood and Program Manager Noorullah are also present





President Dr. Arif Alvi in a group photo with the recipients of the Pakistan Engineering Council Engineers' Excellence Awards 2022, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Engineers playing key role in country's development: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday stressing the significance of engineering expertise in every sector of life, underscored the need for continued support and recognition of the engineering community to propel the nation towards sustainable growth and prosperity. Addressing an event titled "PEC Engineers' Excellence Award 2022" held at Aiwan-e-Sadr, the president said the Pakistani engineers had, in the past, played key role in the development of the gulf coun-

tries. He said Pakistan needed more engineers in various sectors to ensure sustainable development. He said Pakistan produced only 25,000 engineers annually which was not enough for the country's need. Out of these, a sizeable portion seeks immigration and goes abroad after graduation. In comparison, the president said that India produced over 1.5 million engineers per year. President Alvi said human resources had been a big challenge for the country as in other sectors like

health, the country needed more human resources. "There are only 150,000 working nurses against the total demand of 0.9 million nurses in the country." Similarly, he regretted that an alarming number of around 26 million children were currently out of school in the country and would become a big burden in future for the society. He said despite challenges, the Information Technology sector of the country was showing good performance which was evident from the fact that

over 2.2 million freelancers were earning their bread and butter along with foreign exchange for the country. He said to increase the number of engineers and to educate the out-of-school children the government needed huge resources. The resources, he said could be managed by bringing reforms in the taxation system. However, he said decades had passed since various financial institutions including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and others had been recommending Pakistan to tax wealthy people.

## Assumptions, rumours about elections have died: Solangi

**PIDE issues radical 'reform manifesto' to revitalize national economy**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Monday said that all assumptions and rumours regarding the general elections had died. Delivering his speech at a function organized by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) here, he said that elections will be held on Thursday, February 8, 2024 and the people of Pakistan will exercise their right to vote. The minister said it was the responsibility of the caretaker government to provide support to the Election Commission of

Pakistan (ECP) and it will fulfill its responsibility. Being a parliamentary democracy, he said, the elected representatives had the rightful mandate to run the system in line with the country's Constitution. Urging the national media for responsible reporting on elections, Murtaza Solangi said, "The responsibility of the media had increased a lot with regard to general elections". Important issues including the economy, foreign policy, education, and health were used to be part of the manifestoes of political parties, Murtaza Solangi maintained. He said that basic is-

suess should be discussed and awareness among the people on national issues should be increased. "Today we are facing problems like population growth," Murtaza Solangi said that it should be controlled. He said it was the obligation of the political parties to fulfill promises made to the electorate. He opined that increasing awareness about national issues was the need of the hour. The minister said that under the 18th Amendment, provinces had been empowered. He also stressed for promotion of democratic attitudes within political parties.

## PM for constitution of Federal Commission to review I'abad Master Plan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday stressed upon constitution of a Federal Commission to review Islamabad Master Plan and said that review of this plan was among the top priorities of the federal government. The prime minister also termed the bicycle lanes project as 'an environmental friendly' and asked for its completion in the earlier. The caretaker prime minister chaired an important meeting on different matters of Capital Development Authority (CDA). The meeting was attended by Secretary Ministry of Interior Aftab Akbar Durrani, Chairman CDA Capt (ret) Anwar-ul-Haq

and other senior officials, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. He was given a briefing over the bicycle lanes project in Islamabad and federal capital master plan. Under the bicycle lanes project, a total of 374km lanes and 150 parking stations would be constructed, it was told. The prime minister also emphasized upon the need of vertical construction in the new residential projects in Islamabad, and directed the relevant authorities to formulate an effective strategy to woo investors for the business purposes with construction of high-rise buildings. He also directed the authorities to resolve the water issue of the capital city immediately by ensuring its smooth supply.



Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting of the Capital Development Authority in Islamabad.

## CDA to build two electric bus depots

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has taken a delayed decision for the construction of two electric bus depots in Islamabad.

The first batch of 30 out of 160 China-made buses arrived in Islamabad in the first week of the current month but the construction of two bus depots, which would take another six months, has been taken now.

The second batch of buses would arrive by the end of next month. One of bus stations costing Rs632.06 million would be constructed at Tramari Chowk, while the second station costing Rs604.4 million would be constructed between sectors I-9 and H-9, said a CDA official.

He said the bus depots would be equipped with the necessary facilities like the charging stations, drivers' rest area, maintenance shed and washing area. The Authority has invited bids from the registered construction firms by January 24.

## Fawad Ch. announces to boycott poll

ISLAMABAD (Online): In a letter addressed to Election Commission (EC), former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry has announced to boycott the election along with his group.

In the letter written to EC Fawad Chaudhry said he was arrested so that he may withdraw from election. Our workers were intimidated and threatened. Our nomination papers were rejected without any justification.

Fawad Chaudhry wrote in his letter nomination papers of his brother were rejected but NAB made him co-accused with him. He further said in the letter that EC has failed in discharging its obligations. Demanding resignation from EC is wastage of time. I am ready to face all tribulations but it is not proper to make my voters, friends and family members suffer more difficulties.

## Waqar says: FIA cyber crime working to nab culprits behind spreading hate material on social media

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director Cyber Crime of Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), Waqar uddin Syed on Monday said that FIA cyber crime is working round-the-clock to apprehend the culprits behind spreading hate material on social media.

The cyber crime is on high alert on spread of hate material on social media, he said while addressing a press conference flanked by the caretaker federal minister for information and broadcasting Murtaza Solangi here.

Director FIA cyber-crime Waqar uddin Syed said: "No one would be allowed to create anarchy or malign state and its institutions through malicious campaign on social media."

So far, FIA cyber-crime wing has identified more than five hundred accounts and monitoring many others, he disclosed. The mandate of the joint investigation team is to submit a report in two weeks time, he said adding that FIA cyber-crime wing is working day & night to apprehend the culprits and bring them into the ambit of law. He stated that cyber crime wing is monitoring all social media applications and platforms which are being used by individuals to spread venomous and misleading content against the state institutions. The cyber-crime wing will not delay any action against those found involved in spreading hate material or running malicious campaign on social media.



Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi addressing a ceremony organized by PIDE to unveil 'PIDE Reform Manifesto: Transforming Economy & Society in Islamabad'.



## Speakers term Education Statistics Report data bank for policy-making organizations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speakers on Monday termed the Educational Statistics Report 2021-22 of Pakistan Institute of Education a data bank for policy-making organizations to take effective measures in improving educational facilities for out-of-school children. Speaking as a special guest at the report's launching ceremony, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani emphasized the need to address poverty, health issues, social, and societal problems to bring out-of-school children back into the education system.

Wani highlighted the crucial role of the education sector in controlling the population and advocated for conditional financial assistance from the Pakistan Bail-ul-Mal and the Ehsaas Income Support Programme to enroll children in schools. Commenting on the report, Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani mentioned that the teaching ratio in Islamabad, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Kashmir was commendable, but efforts were required in other provinces as well. He stressed the need to work on educational matters at the provincial level, as provinces were more aware of educational affairs in their regions. He highlighted the concept of home schools introduced in Gilgit-Baltistan, emphasizing its benefits in bringing out-of-school children into the education system.

## Solangi condoles with DG Radio Pak over demise of his mother

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Monday visited Radio Pakistan to offer condolences with its Director General Saeed Ahmed Sheikh over the demise of his mother. On the occasion, the minister offered prayers for the departed soul and sympathized with Saeed Ahmed Sheikh over the tragedy. He prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family including Saeed Ahmed to bear the irreparable loss with fortitude.

## Security, law & order situation in Islamabad under control: ICCPO

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan on Monday said that security and law and order situation in the Federal Capital was firmly under control. The ICCPO, in a video message, said that there was nothing to worry about the Capital's security situation. Everything was under control and the people should not disrupt their daily routine lives. Dr Akbar, in the message issued in the wake of closure of numerous educational institutions in Islamabad on the pretext of security concerns, said maintenance of security was a two-way process requiring the active cooperation of the masses. Encouraging the residents of Capital to remain vigilant, he urged them to stay connected with the social media handles of Islamabad Police for timely updates. He cautioned against giving credence to rumours.

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan, Haji Gulbar Khan meets Governor Gilgit-Baltistan Syed Mehdi Shah.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan, Haji Gulbar Khan meets Governor Gilgit-Baltistan Syed Mehdi Shah.

## Contempt of court IHC decides to hear case against DC SSP on day to day basis

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has decided to conduct hearing of contempt of court case against Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad and SSP operations on day to day basis. The contempt of court case against DC and SSP operations on arresting Shahr Yar Afridi despite court's order came up for hearing Monday.

DC Islamabad, SSP Jamil Zafar and advocate Shah Khawar appeared in the court. Advocate Shah Khawar requested the court to adjourn the hearing of the case till second week of February. Justice Babar Sattar remarked we want to hold hearing of this case on day to day basis. We will hear this case during this week. This entire case is of documents case. You should make preparations as much as you want. We will complete this case this week.

Non bailable arrest warrants of record keeper Adiala jail and record keeper DC Rawalpindi were also issued. The court also issued notice to DC Rawalpindi and Superintendent Adiala. Justice Babar remarked I know law and legal procedure.

## Daniyal resorts to IHC for protective bail

ISLAMABAD (Online): Daniyal Aziz has resorted to Islamabad High Court (IHC) for protective bail for fear of his arrest. Daniyal Aziz has taken plea in the petition Punjab police are subjecting him to political victimization. Baseless case has been registered against him in Narowal. He fears on the basis of this case he can be arrested. It has been further said in the petition he is taking part in the general election as independent candidate and his rivals are making propaganda against him and false FIRs are being registered. It is requested to court his protective bail be approved.

## Body of youth found hanging with bridge in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (Online): Body of a youth has been found hanging with bridge on Faisal Avenue in Islamabad. Traffic continued during this time under the bridge. The body has been shifted to hospital for post-mortem.

According to police the youth Umar Shaham is either committed suicide or he has been murdered. Investigations are underway in this regard.



ISLAMABAD: Police officials busy searching vehicles during routine security check in the Federal Capital.

## Faizabad Dharna case: SC seeks report from inquiry commission within a month

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has given one month more time to Inquiry Commission (IC) in Faizabad Dharna implementation contempt of court case. It was said in the order of SC that Election Commission (EC) has presented detailed implementation report.

The order said EC filed report on court's order. The EC report has not been reviewed so far. EC report will be reviewed. If necessary order on EC report will be issued on next

hearing. Proper order will be issued after reviewing EC report. Faizabad Dharna Inquiry commission proceedings could not be completed within two months. SC sought its report from Faizabad Dharna Commission within one month. A 3-member bench of SC presided over by the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa took up the case for hearing Monday. Attorney General (AG) appeared in the court and told he has filed two miscellaneous petitions.

## Senate Committee on Rules of Procedure & Privileges meeting held

ISLAMABAD: Meeting of the Senate Committee on Rules of Procedure and Privileges was held today under the Chairmanship of Senator Muhammad Tahir Bizinjo here at the Parliament House.

Senator Bahramand Khan Tangi moved a Privilege Motion against the Secretary of the Ministry of Interior, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad, who refused to issue an arms license to him, contradicting the government's policy to

issue arms licenses to parliamentarians. Senator Tangi expressed that the Secretary of the Interior, instead of facilitating him, denied the license, even for personal use, and insisted on the recently imposed ban. He asserted that the Secretary's denial amounted to a breach of privilege not only for him but for all parliamentarians. In the meeting, the ministry contended that Senator Bahramand Khan Tangi had been granted approval for a

01xPB arms license and was required to approach Nadra for biometric verification. However, he neither approached Nadra nor submitted his demand note against the weapon within the prescribed six-month period. It was communicated that he submitted a request for an extension of the validity period. Still, it was clarified that after the expiry of ninety days but before the lapse of six months, the license could be processed with a penalty payment of one thousand rupees.

11 gateway exchanges (32 ports), 3 routers, and 4 network switches and apprehended an individual for further investigation. The FIA team also confiscated active SIMs along with all devices as evidence, the news release added. The PTA had lodged a complaint with FIA, prompting the action based on information about the illegal termination of international calls by using illegally activated SIMs. These raids are part of PTA's ongoing efforts to curb the circumvention of the Multi-Finger Biometric Verification System (MBVS).

During operation, the VOIP setup was found involved in the termination of international calls by using illegally activated SIMs, said a news release issued here on Monday. The team had recovered some 796 active SIMs, 2 gateway exchanges (32 ports), 11 gate-



Senator Muhammad Tahir Bizinjo, Chairman Senate Committee on Rules of Procedure and Privileges presiding over a meeting of the Committee at Parliament House Islamabad.



# Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Tuesday January 23, 2024

## Subdued polls

The extent of the damage that has been wrought on the credibility of the upcoming polls is evident in how muted electoral activities have been.

Barely three weeks before the day millions of Pakistanis are expected to head to polling stations to cast votes for parties of their choice, one still cannot tell that a general election is about to take place.

Two of the three major contenders, the PML-N and PPP, have been out canvassing in recent days, yet it seems as if their campaigns are travelling roadshows that pack up and leave with their leaders once the speeches are done and the loudspeakers fall silent.

Among the key leaders, Nawaz Sharif has appeared only briefly before the public for a short address, while Imran Khan remains confined away from the public's eye. Only Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has been travelling from city to city to shore up votes for the PPP.

It is a shame that a nation of 240m seems tuned out of the democratic process. Elections in Pakistan have traditionally been a riot of party colours and blaring anthems, raucous rallies and jumbo jalsas. Despite all the unpleasantness so far, one had still hoped that we would see a celebration of the country's rich social and political diversity as election day neared.

Instead, with the state constantly spoiling the mood with its ongoing, violent crackdown on one of the country's most popular parties, the citizenry is withdrawing from the process and appears comparably less enthusiastic than in previous years.

It also bears mentioning that the youth, who are at the forefront of ground-level campaigns run by parties, appear to be missing from the picture. Many likely do not want to risk the state's wrath, and their rivals have no real competition to fight against.

The weeks leading to elections are usually a busy time for printing presses, which produce the posters, pamphlets, flags, banners and all manner of related election paraphernalia that make Pakistani elections such a colourful affair.

Event management companies and smaller enterprises that rent out tents, chairs and sound systems also see a boost in business as political activities pick up and parties start rallying their supporters.

However, anecdotal accounts and media reports corroborate that these industries are experiencing much less than expected demand.

Meanwhile, many are turning to outlets that still offer them an opportunity to express themselves creatively and without restrictions. Social media platforms like X and TikTok have become new fronts in the war of political narratives. Given the trend, there are now fears that they, too, may be restricted closer to the polls.

All in all, it is a rather depressing state of affairs, attributable to the ECP's failure to discharge its duties according to their intended spirit.

# China's journey: rising above challenges, embracing sustainable growth

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong passionately reiterates China's unwavering commitment to stand firmly by Pakistan

Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani.

In the complex web of global economic intricacies, we witness the ascent of a nation that has not only carved out a remarkable success story on its own soil but has also emerged as a towering force on the global stage. China's journey is a continuation, where resilience, determination, and a commitment to navigate challenges have transformed it into a beacon of economic prowess.

At the forefront of this transformative journey is the National Financial Regulatory Administration (NFRA), the driving force behind China's unwavering dedication to financial openness and security. This commitment is not merely a statement of intent; rather, it lays the groundwork for a robust and secure economic foundation upon which the nation's prosperity is built. As we delve into the intricate landscape of global economic dynamics, we find China navigating challenges with steadfast determination, spearheaded by the visionary initiatives of the NFRA.

China's dedication to financial openness and se-

curity takes center stage as the NFRA strategically coordinates efforts to attract foreign investors while propelling the global expansion of Chinese firms. The emphasis on a balanced approach underscores the nation's commitment to creating a robust and secure financial environment. This strategic vision positions China at the forefront of global economic cooperation.

The commitment extends further with a bid to attract high-quality financial resources from around the world. China opens its doors to foreign institutions, encouraging their involvement in sectors such as wealth management, elderly care, healthcare, and non-performing asset disposal. This strategic move not only fosters international collaboration but positions China as a magnet for expertise and distinctive features from diverse corners of the globe.

Highlighting confidence in China's market potential, global banking giant Standard Chartered announces plans to invest \$300 million by the end of 2024. The investment is strategically aligned with the nation's vision for diversified and sustainable financial services. Standard

Chartered's focus areas include wealth management, retail banking, corporate and institutional banking, sustainability, and risk management. This substantial investment signals a robust partnership between the international financial sector and China's thriving economic landscape.

The indomitable connection between China and Pakistan assumes a pivotal role, spotlighting a relationship founded on mutual solidarity and unwavering commitment. At the forefront of this robust alliance, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong emphatically reaffirms China's steadfast support for Pakistan, underscoring its significance on vital matters. This includes a dedicated commitment to upholding principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and fostering economic development within the region.

This enduring friendship extends beyond diplomatic rhetoric; it serves as a cornerstone of China's foreign policy, embodying shared values and goals. Rooted in a history of collaboration and trust, the bond between these two nations transcends geographical boundaries, acting as a catalyst for mutual growth and prosperity. As

China and Pakistan continue to stand shoulder to shoulder on the global stage, this enduring friendship stands as a testament to the strength of diplomatic ties and the potential for shared success in the realms of economic development and international cooperation.

China's investment in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) yields tangible results. In December 2023 alone, Pakistan received \$56.9 million in foreign direct investment (FDI) from China. With a cumulative investment of \$292.8 million in the first six months of FY 2023-24, China remains the leading investor. Completed projects, including highways, power plants, and industrial parks, underscore the transformative impact of the CPEC initiative on regional development.

China's GDP growth of 5.2 percent in 2023 surpasses not only annual targets but also the estimated average global growth of 3 percent. Premier Li Qiang underscores China's role as the world's largest growth engine, emphasizing global cooperation. Analysts commend China's steady economic growth, citing vibrant services sector spending, high-end manufacturing, and progress in foreign

trade activities.

As China strides into 2024, the outlook is optimistic despite global challenges. Projections from international organizations signal China's significant potential for expansion. Experts suggest a GDP growth target of 5 percent, highlighting China's ability to guide green consumption and investment as part of its commitment to sustainable development.

China's steady progress has not only transformed its domestic landscape but has also become a beacon of hope and cooperation worldwide. For Pakistan, this global symbol holds immense significance. As Pakistan seeks to navigate its own set of challenges and envisions a future of sustained prosperity, aligning with China offers a strategic pathway toward realizing these goals.

The deepening collaboration between China and Pakistan signifies more than just economic ties; it represents a shared commitment to inclusivity, cooperation, and a sustained pursuit of prosperity. For Pakistan, this partnership with China is not merely a transactional alliance; it is a strategic choice that aligns with its vision for economic

growth, technological advancement, and social development.

In joining hands with China, Pakistan looks forward to leveraging the economic strength and global influence of its ally. The collaboration aims to bring about transformative changes, bolstering sectors such as infrastructure, technology, and trade. Furthermore, Pakistan seeks to tap into the lessons of success from China's own development journey, embracing the possibilities that arise when two nations come together for mutual benefit.

Essence, the unfolding tapestry of global progress sees China not only as a testament to the possibilities of economic strength but also as a partner in the pursuit of global well-being. As Pakistan charts its course for the future, the collaboration with China becomes a cornerstone, weaving a narrative of shared progress, prosperity, and a brighter future for both nations.

(Author is Secretary General at the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter of the Pakistan China Friendship Association and Media Consultant based in Peshawar, can be reached at [syed.gilani@gmail.com](mailto:syed.gilani@gmail.com).)

## Existence of Zaman Tahafuz Moment and its aims and objectives

By Muhammad Naseem Ranzooraryar

Dear Readers! There are many benefits of unity and agreement. Peaceful unity at national, regional and social levels can benefit the poor and helpless people of the society. Gay love brotherhood and become accustomed to participating in each other's sorrows and joys, which will strengthen the relationship. Hate Keeping greed and prejudice away from nationality, they tend towards humanity and religious friendship. Regarding unity and consensus, it has been described as a special blessing of Allah in the Holy Qur'an. Unity increases your glory and honor. It is the source of your power and supremacy and a means of liberation from mental slavery. Due to unity and agreement, compassion, brotherhood, love, service, and courage are also increased. Success kisses the feet of people who live together and with unity and agreement. Unity and agreement are a strong support and a powerful weapon for you in difficult situations. Enemy elements also shy away from attacking the united forces. Especially for Muslims, unity is an essential factor. Because for the Muslim Ummah, Allah Almighty has set the rule

that the unseen help and support will come only when the relations of unity, consensus and centrality will be established. Considering the situation and events, Zaman Kahool in Ashkezai sub-branch of Achazai tribe also organized a grand first meeting Jirga at Zaman House Chaman in Zamanabad area last Friday, in which [Zaman Tahafuz Moment] by giving a formal organizational form to scholars and tribal elders. Young people, lawyers, doctors, teachers, students of religious and contemporary studies, businessmen, Pashto literature related to print and electronic media and people from other walks of life participated in thousands with great sincerity and courage. It proved that Zaman Tahafuz Moment is an organization dedicated to peaceful reformation and social services. Because all the people belonging to all walks of life are connected with Zaman Tahafuz Moment only they are scattered due to lack of guidance. From this peaceful and reformed flat form, Zaman Tahafuz Moment, first of all from among themselves, through the scholars of the Committee, elders and youths, by rooting out old grudges in the light of Islamic teachings and instructions, continues to strengthen the unity. They will continue their efforts, while keeping a clear eye on

social welfare and regional services, they will take the lead in playing a practical role. The first taarofi jirga consisted of two sessions. The first session was the taarofi session in which all the great and small ones of Zaman Baba presented their taarofis. After that, the second seat was given to reformist statements. In the light of Shariah guidelines, all the family members of Zaman Tahafuz Moment took a pledge to take positive steps for the region by participating with great courage and bravery and agreed that they need and serve each other at all times. I will be present. And it was decided that Zaman Tahafuz Moment will continue to take steps after the advice of its scholars and elders and this Zaman Tahafuz Moment has not come into existence for anyone's opposition or for anyone's pleasure, rather it has come into being for its own sake. Due to the strength of inter-relationships, there are dozens of young people from all walks of life in Zaman Tahafuz Moment. Use it and not become a victim of other people's interests and greed. In this regard, Zaman Tahafuz Moment, in the first introductory jirga at Zaman House Chaman, after the introduction session, the scholars were given a seat to give corrective state-

ments that the youth of Zaman Tahafuz Moment Present detailed statements in the light of Islamic teachings and instructions for the guidance of the youth so that the spirit of religion, friendship, social service to humanity and unity and agreement will intensify among the youth. [Zaman Tahafuz Moment] who are the generation of Zaman Baba to continue this series of unity and agreement among themselves and to take grudges against the flat form of this peaceful and humanitarian Zaman Tahafuz Moment. To take social measures to solve problems and difficulties, especially with the poor among relatives. Play a practical role in cooperation. wisdom The social service will maintain this chain of unity and agreement and at the same time, it is also important to create Zaman Baba Foundation for the poor and helpless people in Zaman Kahool, that soon it will also be restored. This organization is only and only of Zaman Baba. It has come into existence on the basis of complete ethnic recognition and social work and humanitarian service that will never be used for personal national interest because Zaman Tahafuz Moment is a committee that includes

scholars, tribal elders and youths of religious and contemporary studies, whose movement and movement day and night will be under the supervision of scholars and elders. Because Zaman Baba's generation and descendants stand only for human service and building strong relationships. Everyone can join the peaceful Zaman Tahafuz moment of their Zaman Baba with an open heart and perform services according to their field. They are and can take steps for the betterment and unity of the Zaman National Moment. It is hoped that in the future, along with the Zaman Tahafuz Moment, there will also be the existence of the Zaman Baba Foundation. We have inherited the humanitarian initiatives of Hazrat Zaman Baba. Even today, there is no Kalashnikov culture in the entire generation and descendants of Zaman Baba, as in the old times. They live a pure and free life. The scholars of Zaman Tahafuz Moment addressed the first Taarofi Jirga and said that Zaman Baba has the reward of being noble and peaceful in the nation for the entire night, that Zaman Baba himself did not take up arms against anyone. And Alhamdulillah, there is no such family or individual

in his complete generation who has arms or guards culture. By the grace and grace of Allah Almighty, the generation and descendants of Hazrat Zaman Baba are free from all kinds of wars and disputes, free from the taint of weapons and live peacefully. From our elders to our elders, everyone has come away from killing and looting. Well, we will also leave the legacy of urging the future generations to live a peaceful life and live a noble life. Hazrat Zaman Baba's nobility is a clear example that till today. Social and anti-human evils such as murder, looting, cruelty, coercion on the rights of others, robbery, robbery, banditry, etc. are not found in his generation and descendants. which is a peaceful and great example in the country and the region. In the light of this continuity, Zaman Baba's generation and descendants followed the footsteps of their great peaceful and dervish grandfather, Hazrat Zaman Baba, by bringing into being the Zaman Tahafuz Moment. He is determined to continue this message and chain of peace until his future generations. Jalil-ul-Qadr Jada Majid Hazrat Zaman Baba's genealogy is very detailed. He has five sons. And the genealogy of Hazrat Nasruddin Baba i.e. Hazrat Zaman Baba is in the stages of preparation and it will be published as soon as possible in detail.

## Challenging agenda

Malecha Lodhi

Foreign policy challenges for the next government have become even more complex after Pakistan and Iran traded airstrikes last week. Relations between the two neighbours have been uneasy even at the best of times. The presence of armed groups on both sides of the border has long been a sticking point.

But the Iranian air strike against a militant group inside Pakistani territory sparked unprecedented tensions and evoked a strong response from Islamabad. A Foreign Office statement condemned the "unprovoked violation of its airspace" and warned of "serious consequences." Iran's action drove relations to a historic low, compelling Islamabad to retaliate by conducting military strikes against militant targets in Iran.

This flare-up in tensions could not have come at a worse time, when Islamabad's relations with its other two neighbours remain deeply troubled. Pakistan's regional security concerns have shown little sign of easing in recent years. Relations with India remain frozen, with frequent eruption of tensions along the Line of Control in Kashmir.

Pakistan's ties with Afghanistan under the Taliban have become increasingly fraught and tense. Having long sought to prevent a two-front scenario of hot borders with its neighbours, Islamabad now has to deal with this very security challenge. Despite the de-escalation in Iran-Pakistan tensions, the relationship has been damaged.

The next government will have its hands full on the foreign policy front, apart from dealing with multiple domestic challenges, especially the ongoing economic crisis. The range of foreign policy issues it will have to address makes it necessary to undertake a wide-ranging review of the entire gamut of foreign policy. Holding envoys conferences is not the same thing.

With global power shifts underway in an unsettled, multipolar world, characterised by mounting geopolitical tensions and a fraying international order, there is urgent need for the managers of Pakistan's foreign policy to assess this big picture and take stock. Without a broad review and understanding of linkages between various policy areas, Islamabad will be unable to effectively navigate the complex international and regional geopolitical terrain.

At the global level, the key challenge would be to avoid getting into the crosshairs of US-China confrontation, the overarching global dynamic today. Much rhetoric is heard from Pakistani officials about balancing relations between two global powers. That's declaratory policy.

The reality is that China is Pakistan's overriding priority, with a solid economic dimension now augmenting long-standing strategic ties. Having stood the test of time, the relationship meets both Pakistan's security and economic interests. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is the pivot of China's Belt and Road Initiative, whose timely progress requires close coordination and addressing Beijing's security concerns in this regard.

With the US, relations have been in flux since the American military withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021. This diminished Pakistan's importance in Washington's eyes, because, for two decades, Afghanistan was the principal basis for the relationship, which was largely shorn of bilateral content and marked by both close cooperation and deep mistrust.

The challenge for the next government is to find a new basis for ties, forge

a stable relationship with Washington, and be prepared to deal with a possible Trump presidency. The US remains Pakistan's largest export destination, a source of FDI and a global power with significant influence, especially over international financial institutions, whose assistance Pakistan's crisis-prone economy constantly needs.

Complicating a reset in ties is Washington's top strategic priority of containing China. As Pakistan cannot be part of any anti-China coalition, this limits the space for Pakistan-US relations. As does Washington's growing strategic and economic relationship with India, its partner of choice in the region in its strategy to project India as a counterweight to China.

The implications for Pakistan of the US-India partnership are apparent from Washington turning a blind eye to Delhi's illegal actions in occupied Kashmir and its augmentation of India's military capabilities. The latter has aggravated the regional strategic imbalance and magnified Pakistan's security dilemma. The challenge, then, is to find space between the Pakistan-China strategic relationship and US-India entente to rebuild ties for mutual benefit. There are

certainly areas of cooperation to explore to reconfigure ties.

Managing the troubled relationship with India will arguably be the most vexing foreign policy challenge. Relations were ruptured when India illegally annexed Jammu and Kashmir in August 2019, and absorbed it into the Indian Union in brazen violation of UN Security Council resolutions. Formal dialogue was suspended by Delhi even earlier, and trade, too, was halted.

New irritants emerged, including disagreement over the Indus Waters Treaty dispute settlement mechanism. Against this backdrop, the question is whether a fresh start is still possible if Nawaz Sharif returns to power and Narendra Modi is re-elected, given their past relationship which produced a thaw in ties.

The path to normalisation of relations, however, remains strewn with formidable challenges given Delhi's actions in occupied Kashmir and refusal to even talk to Islamabad about the dispute. It would be difficult for Pakistan to take steps to normalise ties if Delhi rules out discussion of the issue and claims all it will talk about is for Pakistan to vacate Azad Kashmir.

As normalisation may not be a near-term possibility, Islamabad and Delhi should focus on managing tensions and consider how to put in place an agreed framework to manage tensions in order to prevent them spinning out of control.

Dealing with Afghanistan will also preoccupy the next government at a time when relations have hit a new low because of the Taliban's unwillingness to act against the terrorist group, Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan, which continues to carry out cross-border attacks from its Afghan sanctuaries.

Endless rounds of talks between the two neighbours have yielded little, forcing Islamabad to adopt a tougher stance towards Kabul. There are, however, limits to a coercive approach, as Pakistan would not want a breakdown in relations. This leaves it with a difficult policy dilemma in dealing with Kabul.

There are other foreign policy challenges too, which the government will have to deal with. But it is Pakistan's domestic trajectory — how competently it governs itself and builds a strong economy — that will determine the effectiveness of its foreign policy. All foreign policy, after all, begins at home.



## Govt committed to support pharma sector: Nadeem Jan

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan has emphasized the government's proactive efforts to enhance support for the pharmaceutical industry, marking the commencement of a new phase with the establishment of a Pharma Park in Pakistan.

Addressing the ground breaking ceremony of two pharma units of Zenith Group of Companies at Sundar Industrial Estate, here on Monday, he expressed optimism that the production from these units would significantly elevate the country's exports, underlining the government's steadfast commitment to prioritizing and enhancing export-driven initiatives.

Dr. Nadeem Jan highlighted the initiation of a new era with the Pharma Park in Pakistan, emphasizing that these units are set to commence

Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) production within the next six months. He articulated that these initiatives aim to bolster local production, ensuring a steady supply of essential ingredients for pharmaceuticals within the country.

The minister emphasized that local production is poised to not only fulfill the country's needs but also drive exports, anticipating a reduction in medicine prices. He highlighted the government's comprehensive strategy to enhance the permanent supply of medicines, emphasizing the imperative to boost the productive efficiency of pharmaceutical units through the adoption of modern technologies.

Dr. Nadeem Jan affirmed that, in line with the government's promotion policy, manufacturers of APIs are receiving support through

avenues such as accessible loans, tax concessions, and technical assistance. He expressed confidence that this policy commitment would significantly elevate the country's pharmaceutical industry.

He expressed his anticipation of inaugurating similar pharmaceutical development projects in Karachi in the coming days, as part of the Pharma Park initiative. These projects, he emphasized, will propel the country's health sector toward self-reliance.

Dr. Nadeem Jan reiterated the government's determination to provide top-tier medical facilities, highlighting the current substantial drug imports and the ongoing practical efforts to achieve self-sufficiency in medicine production. He affirmed that the trajectory of development and prosperity for the nation would persist with an accelerated pace.



**PESHAWAR:** Chairperson, National Commission on Status of Women presenting shield to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam during a function organized by the National Commission on Status of Women.

## Women's socioeconomic development guarantee for country progress: Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali here Monday said that the share of women in Pakistan was about 52 percent in the country's population and their socioeconomic development was guaranteed for speedy progress and prosperity of the nation.

Addressing a function organized by the National Commission on Status of Women held at a local hotel here as a chief guest, the Governor said the increase of girls students compared to boys students in educational institutions of KP was a solid proof of women's education

development. The Governor said the status of women in Islam was very high, adding our religion has given the right of property to them and nobody could change it.

Haji Ghulam Ali said that women were given highest respect by our society being a mother, sister, wife and daughter and it was the responsibility of the government to ensure provision of all rights to them.

He said close liaison with politicians for enactment of legislation for protection of rights of women was imperative for

safeguarding their rights legally and constitutionally. The governor assured full support to the national commission on status of women for progress, autonomy and development of women besides other organizations in this regard. The function was also addressed by Nilofar Bakhtiar, Chairperson, National Commission on Status of Women. Nilofar Bakhtiar said women of Pakistan were playing key roles in the development of their country and underscored the need for protection of their rights as guaranteed in the constitution.



**LAHORE:** Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi inspecting the quality of work of newly constructed counters during his visit to Emergency block of Children Hospital.

## MQM-P organises poll rally at Bagh-i-Jinnah

KARACHI (APP): The Muttahida Qaumi Movement- Pakistan (MQM-P) has organized a public meeting here at Bagh-i-Jinnah on Sunday night and vowed that the people of the mega city have decided in favour of MQM by warmly participating in our Jalsa.

Addressing the election rally, MQM Pakistan's Convenor Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui criticized the PPP for allegedly neglecting the urban areas of Sindh.

While addressing Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui said that the PPP Chairman should stop dreaming of becoming the prime minister as they will also take away the chief minister's chair from the People's Party.

In the election of February 8, the opponents will be defeated in Karachi, Hyderabad and other districts of the province as the people have woken up, Dr Siddiqui said and

claimed that with the support of allied parties not only in cities but from the village's PPP will be washed out.

The MQM Pakistan's leadership called all National as well as Provincial Assemblies candidates at the stage introduced them to the general public and appealed to them to vote for their candidates in the upcoming general polls.

He said that the security of Karachi was the guarantee of the security of Pakistan, while the prosperity of the country depended on the prosperity of Karachi.

Addressing the public meeting, Muttahida leader Dr Farooq Sattar told the people of other districts of Sindh that very soon Sindh will get rid of looters.

He said elections are to be held on February 08 but people have given a decision on January 21 by participating in MQM's rally. Senior Deputy Convenor MQM- Pakistan.

## Father murders son over political argument

PESHAWAR (APP): A heated political argument between a father and son took a tragic turn, resulting in the father fatally shooting his son. In the Badaber region of Peshawar.

According to the police, the incident took place in Peshawar in the limits of Budh Bir police station, where the father and son had an argument about politics.

As the accused was warning his son to avoid politics, accused Noor-ur-Rehman shot and killed the boy because of hurtful remarks.

Both father and son engaged in political debate which turned ugly when Noor-ur-Rehman became enraged and in a fit of anger restored to taking up the pistol and opened fire on his son.

After committing the crime, Noor ur Rehman escaped from the scene. Police later arrived and shifted the body for post mortem.

Efforts are underway to arrest the escaped father over killing of his own son.

## Kristin Hawkins praises Naqvi's work ethics

LAHORE (APP): The United States (US) Consul General to Lahore Kristin K. Hawkins has praised work ethics, hard work and dynamism of Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi.

In a meeting with the Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi at the latter's office here on Monday, Ms. Hawkins lauded the people friendly initiatives of Mohsin Naqvi, adding that Mohsin Naqvi's omnipresence is felt everywhere and all are awed by his work and dedication to service.

Hailing the caretaker provincial cabinet, she said the caretaker government under the dynamic

leadership of Mohsin Naqvi has set new standards of public service, adding that he is seen working round the clock. Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, speaking on the occasion, said that the Punjab government wishes to benefit from the expertise of the Americans in the agriculture sector especially in the methods to get more wheat yield.

He further said that Punjab government wishes to undertake town house projects like California, adding that it is also interested in affiliation of local educational institutions with California University.

## 5420 ltr illegal Diesel seized in DI Khan

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The district police have recovered 5420 litres of Diesel during the ongoing crackdown against illegal fuel agencies across the district, said a police spokesman on Monday.

He said that a crackdown was launched against illegal fuel agencies across the district following the directions of District Police Officer (DPO) Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani.

During different operations conducted in this regard, the police recovered 5420 liters of illegal Diesel while cases were also registered against two persons involved in the business of illegal fuel.



**LAHORE:** Leader of Pakistan People's Party Sharjeel Inam Memon addressing a press conference in Provincial Capital.

## DCs told to act against polling staff absent from duties

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Punjab Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman on Monday issued instructions to all deputy commissioners to take action against the polling staff who are absent during training.

He issued these instructions during a meeting to review the arrangements for the conduct of general elections, at the Civil Secretariat. Provincial Election Commissioner Aijaz Anwer Chohan, IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, the secretaries of home, local government departments, officers of Provincial Election Commission and officials concerned attended the meeting while all the divisional commissioners, RPOs, deputy commissioners and DPOs participated through video

link. The Chief Secretary directed that the attendance of the staff during the training be ensured and strict action be taken against absent officials. He mentioned that holding free, fair and transparent elections is an important national responsibility. He said that the requisite funds have been provided, therefore no shortcoming in polls arrangements would be acceptable. He said that transport and security plans were a very important part of election arrangements, adding that the two components should be given special attention. He said that deputy commissioners should review the preparations for the elections on a daily basis.

Provincial Election Commissioner Aijaz Anwer Chohan said that all district returning officers.

## ANF recovers 169 kg drugs in eight operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting eight operations across the country managed to recover over 168 kg drugs and arrested nine accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday.

He said that 1 kg of Ice was recovered from a passenger going to Bahrain at Allama Iqbal International Airport. In another operation, 100 kg of hashish was recovered from the Lasbela area.

In two operations conducted in the Teera Khyber area, 21 kg hashish was recovered while 10 kg hashish, 7 kg opium, 3 kg Ice, 2 kg heroin and one 30-bore pistol were recovered near Kala Shah Kaku Toll Plaza, GT Road and two accused were arrested.

5 kg hashish, 6 kg opium, and 2 kg Ice were recovered near GT Road Lahore and an accused was arrested.

In the 7<sup>th</sup> operation, 10 kg hashish was recovered from two suspects arrested near 'Tablighi' Center Islamabad.

In the eighth operation, 2 kg of hashish was recovered from two suspects netted near University Chowk Kohat.

The spokesman said, ANF while conducting the 9<sup>th</sup> operation.

## Traders announce to support JUI-F candidate in elections on PK-113

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): A traders union has announced support for Jamiat Ulema Islam Fazlu-rehman (JUI-F) candidate for provincial assembly seat PK-113 in the upcoming general elections scheduled to be held on February 08, 2024.

The Markazi Anjuman Tajran made this announcement during a public meeting held here at a local hotel and vowed to support the JUI-F candidate for PK-113 Kafeel Ahmad Nizami besides running door to door campaign for him.

The JUI-F candidate for PK-113 Kafeel Ahmad Nizami was the chief guest of the event which was also attended by Markazi Anjuman Tajran President Sohail Ahmad Azmi and other renowned traders including Chaudhry Jameel Ahmed, Haji Muhammad Ramzan, Javed Akhtar, Muhammad Saeed, Janabat Khan Mehsud, Naem Qureshi, Sher Muhammad Mehsud, Haji Muhammad Khalid, Haji Tahir Sharif, Amjad Karim, Muhammad Sohail and others.

On the arrival of Kafeel Ahmad Nizami.

## LDA demolishes illegal constructions

LAHORE (APP): On directions of Commissioner Lahore and DG LDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa, LDA teams demolished and sealed more than a dozen illegal constructions and commercial buildings in Johar Town, BOR Society, Wapda Town, Lahore Avenue and OPF Housing schemes on Monday.

During the operation LDA teams took action against Plot No. 25 A, 25 B in BOR Society and 19E in Rahman Society. An operation was conducted against Plot No. 337 Block E, 154 Block E One in Johar Town, Plot No. 71 in Wapda town and Plot.

## CM inspects Band Road project, directs early completion

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi has intensified efforts to ensure the timely completion of the "Controlled Access Corridor Band Road Project".

The Chief Minister conducted a comprehensive inspection of the project, spanning 8 kilometres. Assessing various locations, he noted that 55 percent of Package 2 (Babu Sabu to Sagian) and 74 percent of Package One (Sagian to Niazi Chowk) have been successfully executed.

During the inspection, Chief Minister Naqvi closely monitored the ongoing work on Package Two and Package One, emphasizing the need to expedite the construction

process. He specifically directed the acceleration of Package Two's progress, urging the deployment of additional labor for prompt completion. Chief Minister Naqvi directed the completion of asphalt work on both packages by the first week of February, emphasizing the utilization of all available resources to open the corridor for traffic.

Chairing a meeting at the Sagian site office, Mohsin Naqvi received a detailed briefing on the project's status. He urged contractors to intensify their efforts, ensuring a swift conclusion to the project. Commissioner/DG LDA and contractors provided updates on the project's progress during the meeting.

Provincial Minister Housing Azfar Ali Nasir, Secretary Housing.

## IG Punjab, ACS Home pinned the ranks of SPs to newly promoted officers

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Punjab Police arranged the rank pinning ceremony of new promoted officers who got promotions from DSP to SP rank at the Central Police Office. Additional Chief Secretary Home

addressing the ceremony said that departmental promotion is an important milestone for any government employee. Promotion scrutiny in Police Service Pakistan and Administrator Service



Mian Shakeel Ahmed was the chief guest of the event. IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar and ACS Home Mian Shakeel Ahmed pinned the ranks of SPs to newly promoted officers. DSPs including Nasir Nawaz, Ghulam Abbas Rana, Muhammad Javed Akhtar Jatoti, Waseem Akhtar and Azhar were among those promoted to SP. ACS Home Mian Shakeel Ahmed, while

cadres are very strict. Due to effective coordination with police leadership, various rules drafting, development schemes, driving licensing issuance, special initiative up-gradation of police stations were completed quickly during last year. Mian Shakeel Ahmed said that our coordination has been very good, beside it, we have received full support from the Chief Minister of Punjab.

## February 8 will be the day of victory of Nawaz Sharif: Khawaja

SIALKOT (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said that February 8 will be the day of victory of Nawaz Sharif. He expressed these views at a worker convention at Kamanwala in NA-70 constituency as the special guest.

The convention was organized by PML-N leader Hafiz Shahid Ghug. Khawaja Muhammad Asif said that earlier there were oppositions and rivals in politics but there was politeness and people respected each other. "Then some people came who changed this culture. People should bury them

with the power of their vote in such a way that their politics is buried forever," he added.

The PML-N senior leader urged the youth to go door to door to apprise people of the development agenda of the party. "Youths are a valuable asset to the country and they should keep unity in their ranks. The PML-N is a symbol of development and prosperity and whenever it came to power, the city of Allama Iqbal witnessed unprecedented development.

Various educational institutions, a women university and motorways were built in its tenure."



**LAHORE:** American Consul General in Lahore Ms. Kristin K. Hawkins meeting with Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi.

## Training of 23,810 presiding officers completed: PEC KP

PESHAWAR (APP): Out of 33,048 presiding and senior presiding officers, 23,810 were trained for the general election in 2024.

The Provincial Election Commissioner has taken serious notice of 6.6 per cent of the absent staff and contacted the Chief Secretary, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said a spokesman of the Provincial Elections Commission (PEC).

The Chief Secretary directed all the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners in

this regard. The authorities of KP Elementary and Secondary Education were also summoned to the PEC Office with directions to immediately fulfill the shortage of staff and initiate disciplinary proceedings against the absent employees. The training of 1,33,275 assistant presiding and polling officers has already been completed. The training is underway at 125 training centers after it was started on December 25 and will continue till February 1, 2024.



**LARKANA:** Farmers are burning their harvested crops near Larkana-Khairpur Road, the smoke of which may cause nuisance for passing vehicles.



## Shamshad Akhtar, WB Country Director discuss financing operations in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs Dr Shamshad Akhtar and Country Director World Bank (WB) for Pakistan, NajyBinhassine on Monday met to discuss, review and finalize the financing for two World Bank-funded operations in Pakistan. The operations include additional financing of US\$ 250.0 million for an ongoing World Bank-funded programme titled "Crisis-Resilient Social Protection Programme (CRISP)", being implemented by Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), said a news release here.

The program aims to support the development of a more adaptive social protection system that will contribute to any future crisis resilience among poor and vulnerable households. The second WB-funded operation includes Pakistan: "Resilient and Accessible Microfinance (RAM) Program" worth US\$175.0 million to help enhance access to microcredit and support the resilience of the microfinance sector and its borrowers. Considering the importance of interventions planned under the CRISP program, Dr Shamshad Akhtar gave go-ahead signal to engage the World Bank additional financing of US\$250 million for the program in principle.

She, however, desired to convene another meeting next week to formalize the program contours. She also desired to invite the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and Security and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) in the next meeting to finalize the program modalities. The World Bank team apprised the Finance Minister about the broad contours of the RAM program, its funding volume and objectives.

The meeting was informed that the microfinance sector of Pakistan has shown resilience and continued to grow despite multiple exogenous shocks. However, sector growth and resilience have been shaken by deep and continued shocks and are currently being impeded by 3-cross cutting constraints including Capital, Liquidity, and Climate Shocks.



Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar chairing a meeting with World Bank team on Pakistan Resilient and Accessible Microfinance (RAM) in Islamabad.

## Wheat cultivation grew by 7 % during current Rabi season

ISLAMABAD (INP): Owing to the incentives introduced by the government, wheat sowing in the country during the current season (Rabi 2023-24) increased by 7.5 per cent as compared to the crop sowing of the corresponding period of the last year.

During the period under review, wheat sowing had been completed over 23.69 million acres as against the set targets of 22.22 million acres, said Food Security Commissioner In the Ministry of National Food Security and Research Imtiaz Ali Gopang.

The wheat crop has been sown across more than 23.69 million acres of land in various crop-growing regions during the current season to meet local staple food requirements and maintain strategic reserves throughout the year, he told APP here on Monday.

The wheat cultivation targets fixed for the period under review were achieved by 107 per cent as crop sowing in two major grain-producing provinces Sindh and Punjab gained momentum as both the provinces surpassed their assigned targets for the current season, he added.

## Pak-Qatar agreements to boost job prospects, SAPM meets separately with Qatari Ministers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (SAPM OP&HRD), Jawad Sohrab Malik, led a successful official visit to Qatar, culminating in the signing of several Agreements & Letter's of Intent (LOIs) with top Qatari companies intended to significantly enhance employment opportunities for the Pakistani workforce in Qatar. The signing of these agreements with renowned Qatari firms, including Qatari Diyar-Saudi Bin Laden Group Construction (QD-SBG), Hamad Bin

Khaled Contracting Company W.L.L (HBK), Ali Bin Ali Holding W.L.L, Sheikh Jabor Bin Mansour Bin Jabor Bin Jassim Al Thani (JM) Holding, Tabeeb Care Medical Services, and Al Rawnaq International Commercial Projects, marks a crucial step in strengthening bilateral relations between Pakistan and Qatar in the field of human resource development, a news release said.

In addition to these agreements, the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, Jawad Sohrab Malik held a significant meeting with Hamad Saleh Al Qamra, Chairman of Al Qamra Holding, focusing on the recruitment of Pakistani manpower for various company projects. The visit also included a tour of the View Hospital, a part of Elegancia Health Care, where the recruitment of Pakistani health professionals is underway following a recent MoU between Elegancia Health Care and the Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC) of Pakistan.

The primary objective of these initiatives is to create enhanced employment avenues for Pakistani workers in Qatar.



DOHA : SAPM, Jawad Sohrab Malik signs agreements with Qatar's top companies.

## Trade and Investment Officers' delegation visits FPCCI

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: A 40-member delegation of newly appointed Trade and Investment Officers (TIOs) visited Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Regional Office here Monday.

Sharing his views regarding the ways and means to enhance country's exports with the TIOs, the FPCCI Regional Chairman and Vice President Zaki Ejaz said that in order to increase Pakistan's exports, the Trade and Investment Officers should play their role in organizing joint ventures, business-to-business meetings, exchange of trade delegations and single country exhibitions between the Pakistani business community and other countries, besides ensuring timely sharing of information on required certification and value addition with the respective exporters. He suggested that TIOs should also provide quarterly trade data including Pakistan's imports/exports with other countries of the world, arguing that it would enable the Pakistani business community to take advantage of the available trade opportunities by introducing new products and technologies there. Zaki Ejaz added that business community should also be supported in any HS code related tariff and duty so that trade could be promoted as 'it is our common goal to increase Pakistan's exports'. "If we want Pakistan's exports to reach \$100 billion in the next ten years, effective marketing is essential to achieve this goal," he remarked. On this occasion, FPCCI Vice President Quratul Ain said, "If trade missions share reports and data with FPCCI on a monthly basis, we can provide them with relevant data and research-based suggestions regularly."

Some 335 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 140 of them recorded gains and 171 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 24 remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were K-Electric Ltd with 97,700,790 shares at Rs.5.57 per share, Pak Petroleum with 23,338,496 shares at Rs.131.01 per share and PIAC(A) with 21,105,500 shares at Rs.12.07 per share.

Nestle Pakistan Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.70.00 per share price, closing at Rs.8,270.00, whereas the runner-up was Mari Petroleum Company Limited with a Rs.53.28 rise in its per share price to Rs.2,428.65.

## PSX turns to bullish trend, gains 657 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Monday, gaining 657.19 points, a positive change of 1.04 percent, closing at 63,939.41 points against 63,282.23 points the previous trading day.

A total of 298,699,061 shares valuing Rs.12.515 billion were traded during the day as compared to 287,310,860 shares valuing Rs.9.320 billion the last day.

Some 335 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 140 of them recorded gains and 171 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 24 remained unchanged.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity reported at the Port where three ships namely, OOCL Norfolk, Cape Sounio and South Robin carrying Containers and Chemicals, berthed at Container Terminal and Engro Vopak Terminal respectively on Sunday January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

Meanwhile General cargo carrier Charade carrying Steel coil also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim on same day.

A total of nine ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, OOCL Norfolk, Cape Sounio and Hafnia Raven are left the port on today morning and three more ships, Southern Robin.



SARGODHA: Vendors displaying old shoes to attract the customers at his roadside setup.

## SCCI chief demands compensation for affected traders' of Saddar fire

PESHAWAR (APP): Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president, Fuad Ishaq was highly saddened over the horrific fire that broke out at Peshawar's Time Centre and demanded that the provincial government immediately announce compensation for the affected traders' community.

In a joint statement issued here on Monday, Fuad Ishaq, president, Sanallah Khan, senior vice president and Ijaz Khan Afridi, vice president of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and members of the chamber's executive committee said that this horrific fire in Time Centre Peshawar quickly engulfed 200 shops and small counters of mobiles, accessories and batteries, which completely gutted.

They expressed high grief and sorrow over

monetary loss, worth millions of rupees to the trader's community and asked the present interim provincial government to immediately announce special financial assistance.

The SCCI chief Fuad Ishaq and members of his cabinet praised the efforts of rescue teams of Pak-Army, Air Force, Cantonment Board and Rescue 1122 in timely conducting operations and dousing massive flames and preventing mass-scale losses. He said the business community has already faced difficulties owing to the prevailing scenario.

He said difficulties of traders would be further added after this horrific fire incident, which occurred in Time Centre in Peshawar' Saddar. The SCCI chief made a kind appeal from the provincial government and authorities concerned to ensure every possible financial assistance.

## Gold rates dip by Rs.600

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.600 and was sold at Rs. 215,700 on Monday compared to its sale at Rs. 215,300 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs. 514 to Rs.184,071 from Rs. 184,585 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.168,731 from Rs.169,203, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram Silver remained stagnant at Rs. 2,600 and Rs. 2,229.08 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$8 to \$2,042 from \$2,050, the Association reported.

## Exports increase by 35.33% to Rs 4.3 trillion in 1<sup>st</sup> half

ISLAMABAD (APP): The exports from the country in the rupee term witnessed an increase of 35.33 percent during the first half of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

Exports during July-December (2023-24) were recorded at Rs.4,300,752 million as against Rs.3,177,893 million during the corresponding period of last year, showing an increase of 35.33 percent, according to the provisional data released by PBS.

On a year-on-year basis, the exports during December 2023 increased by 54.59 percent and were recorded at Rs.799,588 million compared to the exports of Rs.517,240 million in October 2022.

On a month-on-month basis, the exports increased by 8.86 percent when compared to the exports of Rs. 734,541 million in November 2023.

The main commodities of exports during December, 2023 were rice other than Basmati (Rs.124,040 million), knitwear (Rs. 103,898 million), readymade garments (Rs. 84,569 million), bed wear (Rs. 64,119 million), cotton cloth (Rs. 40,678 million), cotton yarn (Rs.26,984 million), towels (Rs.24,814 million), rice Basmati (Rs.22,888 million), badeup articles.



FAISALABAD: Farmers are busy harvesting radish crop at their field.

## CDNS secures Rs 55 bln in Islamic finance bonds

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has secured Rs 55 billion in Islamic finance bonds by January 22, of the current fiscal year 2023-24.

"The National Savings has issued Islamic bonds for the promotion of the Islamic finance system, which will help the development of the Islamic economy in the country," a senior official of the Directorate of National Savings told APP here on Monday.

CDNS had achieved the set target of Rs 60 billion in the fiscal year (2022-23) for Islamic investment to introduce the new products to the market.

"Islamic finance has a very important role in the global financial sector at this time, and a large part of the economy of many major countries currently includes Islamic finance," he added.

The senior official of CDNS said that work was being done on institutional reforms in CDNS and that new reforms and innovations were being introduced.

"Islamic finance has a very important role in the global financial sector at this time, and a large part of the economy of many major countries currently includes Islamic finance," he added.

Given the current market trend in the country, an ambitious target has been set to further improve the savings culture, he said.

Replying to another query, he said the CDNS had collected an investment of Rs 16 billion in July 2023-24 through Islamic investment bonds.

He added that the directorate had set a target of Rs 75 billion for the new financial year 2023-24 for Islamic finance bonds.

Replying to another question, he said the CDNS aimed to introduce new dimensions in the Islamic finance sector.

He informed that



LAHORE: Mr Zaki Aijaz, Regional Chairman / VP FPCCI and Ms. Qurrat-ul-Ain, Vice President FPCCI photographed with Trade and Investment Officers, DG TDAP Shahzad Ahmed and others are also present.



KARACHI: Senior Advisor, Regional Office of Wafaqi Mohtasib, Syed Anwar Haider during a meeting with KE Executive Director and senior officers at Regional office of Wafaqi Mohtasib.

## PTCL, Huawei conduct 50G-PON trial to pioneer next generation fiber optic broadband in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL), the country's leading broadband service provider, completed the country's first successful trial of 50G-PON technology, marking a historic stride towards the introduction of next-generation fiber-optic broadband services in Pakistan.

This groundbreaking achievement is a result of PTCL's strategic partnership with Huawei, a global leader in

information and communication technology, said a news release. 50G-PON, defined by ITU-T as a next-generation Passive Optical Network-based broadband technology, is set to revolutionize Pakistan's digital landscape.

With significantly higher capabilities than the existing GPON and XG(S)-GPON technologies, 50G-PON delivers an astounding 50 Gbps per PON port. The technology is poised to reshape future requirements related to Industries, Enterprises,

Campuses and Home Environments, as the advancement unlocks the infinite potential for bandwidth-intensive & low-latency next-generation services. Key use cases include evolution towards Holographic Technologies, XR-based Metaverse in home & workplace, Smart Manufacturing based on Remote Surgery and Medical Clinics, High Performance Gaming, etc. It will also be a valuable tool for business and enterprise services.

## DG NADRA visits ICCI, discusses opening of NADRA Facilitation Desk in chamber

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director General (DG) National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) Zulfikar Ahmed on Monday visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI).

He discussed the feasibility of opening the NADRA Facilitation Desk in ICCI, said a press release.

Speaking on the occasion he said that the role of the business community is very important in the economic development of the country.

He said that the NADRA is ready to open its Facilitation Desk in ICCI premises to facilitate businessmen in NADRA-related services.

He said that the NADRA Desk in ICCI would also provide e-Sahulat services to facilitate the business community in payment and collection transactions.

He said that ICCI should also approach the Passport Office to start its services in the NADRA

Facilitation Desk so that the business community can also avail of both services in ICCI.

The e-Sahulat is a network of active franchisees connected with telcos and banks to facilitate in payment and collection transactions, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President ICCI thanked Chairman NADRA for taking prompt action on ICCI's proposal for opening a Facilitation Desk and sending a senior officer to ICCI to study its feasibility.

He said that the availability of the NADRA Facilitation Desk in ICCI would be a great positive development for the benefit of the business community.

He said that ICCI would also coordinate with the Passport Office to provide services of both organizations from the NADRA Facilitation Desk.

Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI also welcomed the initiative of NADRA.



# Israeli plan to destroy Hamas not working, peace talks needed - EU's Borrell

BRUSSELS (Internews): Israel's plan to destroy Islamist Palestinian group Hamas in Gaza is not working and the European Union must pursue efforts to create a "two-state solution" despite Israeli opposition, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said on Monday.

Israeli Prime Minister had on Sunday reaffirmed a hard line against any Palestinian state as it would pose "an existential danger" to Israel. He said Israel would keep insisting on full security control over all territory west of the Jordan River, which would include Gaza and the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Borrell spoke at the monthly gathering of EU foreign ministers, attended this time by counterparts from Saudi Arabia, Egypt

and Jordan and the Arab League secretary-general. The talks will focus mainly on the consequences of Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel and Israel's retaliatory offensive in Gaza. Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz and Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki were making separate appearances at the meeting, which was also taking stock of the war in Ukraine.

Alluding to Israel's stated objective of annihilating Hamas in its devastating three-month-old war in the Gaza Strip, Borrell told reporters: "What are the other solutions they have in mind. Make all the Palestinians leave? Kill all of them? The way they are destroying Hamas is not the way to do it. They are sealing the hate for generations."

Borrell said he wanted to press ahead with international efforts to create a process that would lead to a Palestinian state co-existing alongside Israel. The last talks to that end collapsed a decade ago amid mutual mistrust and intransigence.

Israel's massive aerial and ground offensive in small, densely populated Gaza has killed more than 25,000 Palestinians, according to Hamas-run enclave's health authorities, flattened built-up areas and left most of its 2.3 million people homeless.

Israel has said the war could go on for "many months" and it would not rest until Hamas was eradicated, all Israeli hostages freed and the Gaza Strip posed no more security threat.



DONETSK: Two men stand next to a body of their relative lying on the ground, killed as a result of a missile strike.

## Putin willing to visit Pyongyang soon, North Korea says

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed his willingness to visit Pyongyang soon when he met with North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui in Russia last week, North Korea's state news agency KCNA reported on Sunday.

Putin also thanked North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for his invitation to visit, KCNA said, citing North Korea's foreign minister's assistant office.

It would be the Russian leader's first trip to North Korea in more than two decades.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Monday that Russia hoped a Putin visit to North Korea, at Kim's invitation, would take place "in the foreseeable future", but he said no date had yet been agreed.

KCNA's Korean-language report on Sunday

## Protesters call for change to Netanyahu government

**Monitoring Desk**  
TEL AVIV: Thousands of Israelis gathered in Tel Aviv to protest against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government, accusing the veteran leader of mishandling the nation's security and calling for a new election.

Anti-government protests that shook the nation for much of 2023 ceased after the attacks by Hamas in southern Israel on Oct 7. Political rifts were set aside as Israelis rallied behind the military and the families of those killed or taken hostage.

But with the devastating war in Gaza in its fourth month and opinion polls showing lagging support for Netanyahu, calls for leadership changes are growing stronger, though there is no indication that his position is under any imminent threat.

This was reflected in Saturday night's turnout in a central Tel Aviv square where many of last year's protests took place.

While the crowd was much smaller than those seen last year.

## Fire erupts at Russia's Novatek Baltic Sea terminal after explosions heard

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: A fire broke out at a Baltic Sea terminal belonging to Novatek, Russia's largest liquefied natural gas producer, regional officials said on Sunday, amid reports of explosions and Ukrainian drone sightings in the area. The Ust-Luga complex, located on the Gulf of Finland about 170 km (110 miles) west of St. Petersburg, processes stable gas condensate into light and heavy naphtha, jet fuel, fuel oil and gasoil, according to Novatek's website. The port is used to ship processed products to international markets.

"There were no casualties as a result of the fire at the Novatek terminal in the port of Ust-Luga. The personnel were evacuated," Alexander Drozdenko, the Leningrad region's governor, said on the Telegram mes-

## Hamis rejects Israeli efforts to decide Gaza's future

**Monitoring Desk**  
GAZA STRIP: Palestinian resistance group Hamas said on Sunday its October 7 raid in southern Israel was a "necessary step" against Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories.

But the fighter group admitted in a 16-page report justifying the attack that "some faults happened... due to the rapid collapse of the Israeli security and military system, and the chaos caused along the border areas with Gaza."

The group said it rejected any international and Israeli efforts to decide Gaza's post-crisis future.



Liberia's president-elect Joseph Boakai, who defeated President George Weah in a runoff election gives a speech after he was sworn in as president during the inauguration ceremony in Monrovia, Liberia.

## Gaza deaths top 25,000 as Israel pushes offensive

**Monitoring Desk**  
GAZA STRIP: Gaza's Hamas-run health ministry on Sunday said the death toll in the war-torn Palestinian territory breached 25,000 as Israel pushed its southward offensive and renewed bombardment in the north. Israel is pressing its push against Hamas in southern Gaza as it seeks to destroy the group responsible for the deadliest attack in the country's history. In early January, Israel's military said the

## US Navy declares two SEALs missing in Gulf of Aden as deceased

**FLORIDA (INP):** Two U.S. Navy SEALs who went missing in the Gulf of Aden earlier this month during a raid on a boat carrying Iranian weapons have not been located following an exhaustive search and their status has been changed to deceased, military officials said on Sunday.

The SEALs were reported missing after boarding the vessel in a Jan. 11 operation near the coast of Somalia, the U.S. Central Command said on X.

## Zelenskiy counts on more Western defense aid for Ukraine in next two months

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said on Saturday that he expected a number of new Western defence packages for Ukraine to be signed this and next month.

"We are preparing new agreements with partners - strong bilateral agreements," Zelenskiy said in his nightly video address.

"January and February should bring corresponding results. There are already specific dates when new and strong documents can be expected."

After Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022,

## UK taking election threats 'very seriously'

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: The UK is taking threats of foreign interference elections expected later this year "very seriously", the defence minister said on Sunday, after a warning from a counter-terrorism official. "Obviously, that's something that we take very seriously," Shapps told the Sky News channel.

Counter-terrorism bodies and other institutions would "be looking very carefully at that", he said. UK counter-terrorism chief Matt Jukes said Friday that the espionage threat from foreign states — such as China, Russia and Iran.



Displaced Palestinians use a donkey cart for transportation at a camp in Rafah near the border with Egypt in the southern Gaza Strip.

## US-Mexico immigration coordination producing results, official says

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: A high-level US State Department meeting with Mexican officials lauded progress following a crackdown on illegal immigration, a State Department spokesman said.

A crackdown on migrant smuggling networks, train and bus routes has produced results, Matthew Miller, a State Department spokesman, said in a statement.

"Our coordinated efforts with Mexico are demonstrating positive results at our shared border," the statement said.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Mexican Foreign Secretary Alicia Bärcena on Friday at the US Department of State in Washington. Top-level officials from other government agencies involved in immigration coordination also attended the meeting.

The US also made a commitment to support Guatemala, a source of some migrants.

## 5 Iranian soldiers killed as fellow comrade opens fire in Kerman

**KERMAN (INP):** In a shocking incident, an Iranian soldier unleashed a hail of gunfire on fellow comrades in the southeastern city of Kerman.

The attack, which occurred at a barracks dormitory, resulted in the tragic death of five soldiers, according to reports from Iranian state TV.

The assailant, whose identity remains undisclosed, is currently at large, leaving authorities scrambling to apprehend the suspect.

The motive behind the brutal assault is yet to be determined, adding an air of mystery to the unfolding situation.

## Poland's Tusk pledges quick end to friction as he visits Ukraine

**KYIV (Internews):** Poland's new Prime Minister Donald Tusk arrived in neighbouring Ukraine on Monday to meet President Volodymyr Zelenskiy, aiming to strengthen relations after months of political friction between the two wartime allies.

Tusk's government is exploring how to make more ammunition and military equipment as part of a new aid package for Ukraine, Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski said last week. Warsaw has emerged as a key ally for Kyiv as it defends itself against Russia and seeks more financial and military support from Western partners. Po-

## Poland's Tusk pledges quick end to friction as he visits Ukraine

land has also taken in more than a million Ukrainian refugees. There is no more important issue than supporting Ukraine in its war effort - that is number one," said Tusk, who assumed office last month, in comments carried on Polish television.

Relations between the two had deteriorated in recent months amid blockades by Polish truckers at the border, which threatened to dent Ukraine's GDP.

They agreed last week to suspend their protests, which had been aimed at revoking Ukrainian truckers' permit-free access to the European Union, until March 1.

## Dozens buried, 8 killed in southwest China landslide

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: Dozens of people were buried and eight confirmed killed when a landslide struck a remote and mountainous part of southwestern China on Monday.

The pre-dawn landslide buried 18 homes and sparked the evacuation of more than 200 people when it struck in Zhenxiang County, Yunnan province, state media said.

Eight people are confirmed dead and rescuers have extracted four, according to a report by state broadcaster CCTV at around 5:30pm (0930 GMT), though the condition of the four was not immediately clear.

Two hundred rescue workers have been dispatched as well as dozens of fire engines and other equipment, CCTV said.

And as temperatures plunged on Monday night, dozens were still trapped, state news agency Xinhua said.

Rescuers are "using all kinds of tools to search for survivors", Xinhua said.

One local told the state-run Beijing News outlet that she was asleep when the disaster hit and that parts of her ceiling had fallen onto her head.

"At the time I thought it was an earthquake, but later I knew it was the hillslope collapsing," another resident told the outlet. Both were quoted under pseudonyms.

## Strike on busy market kills 25 in eastern Ukraine

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: A strike on a crowded market in the Russian-occupied city of Donetsk in eastern Ukraine left at least 25 people dead and 20 wounded on Sunday, Moscow-backed officials said.

Both Moscow and Kyiv have accused each other of a sharp escalation in attacks on civilian areas in the past two months. Shattered storefronts and broken glass could be seen in videos shared by Russian state media, along with what appeared to be bodies lying on the ground nearby.

"At the moment, information about 25 dead has been confirmed. At least 20 more people have been injured," said Denis Pushilin, head of the region's Russian-controlled administration.

He blamed Ukraine for the strike, calling it a "horrific" attack on a civilian area. Ukraine did not immediately comment. Officials said the strike hit a southwestern suburb of the city, less than 15 kilometres from the eastern front. Local resident Tatiana said she heard an incoming projectile overhead, and hid under her market stall.

"I saw smoke, people screamed, a woman was crying," she told a local media outlet.

"Where is there anything military here? It's just a market," another resident named Tatiana told the same outlet. "This is one of the strongest blows in recent times," she said.

The toll marks one of the deadliest in Donetsk since Moscow launched full-scale hostilities against Ukraine in February 2022. Donetsk, occupied by Russia and its proxy forces since 2014, has been repeatedly targeted by what Moscow has called indiscriminate Ukrainian shelling.

Moscow called Sunday's attack a "barbaric terrorist attack" that showed the need for its "special military operation" in Ukraine.

## Germans protest against 'mass deportation' plan of far right

**Monitoring Desk**  
MUNICH: Tens of thousands gathered across Germany again on Sunday to protest the far-right AfD, after it emerged that party members discussed mass deportation plans at a meeting of extremists.

The influx of demonstrators was so large in Munich that organisers were forced to cancel a planned march and ask people to disperse for safety reasons. Organisers said some 50,000 people had turned up to the demonstration, twice as many as were registered for the event. An earlier estimate announced to the crowd had put the figure at 200,000, according to a journalist. Police estimated a figure somewhere in the middle, around 100,000, according to the German daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung. Those who made it to the site of the planned protest carried signs saying "Nazis out" and "never again is now".

Some 250,000 people had already gathered in cities across the country on Saturday, according to AfD estimates. Demonstrations were called in some 100 locations across Germany from Friday through the weekend, including in Munich, Berlin and cities in the east of the country where the AfD has its strongholds.

The wave of mobilisation against the far-right party was sparked by a Jan 10 report by investigative outlet Correctiv, which revealed that AfD members had discussed the expulsion of immigrants and "non-assimilated citizens" at a meeting with extremists.

Among the participants at the talks was Martin Sellner, a leader of Austria's Identitarian Movement, which subscribes to the "great replacement" conspiracy theory that claims there is a plot by non-white migrants to replace Europe's "native" white population.

News of the gathering sent shockwaves across Germany at a time when the AfD is soaring in opinion polls, just months ahead of three major regional elections in eastern Germany where their support is strongest.

## Trump closes in on Republican presidential nomination as DeSantis quits

**NEW YORK (INP):** Donald Trump aims to sew up the Republican presidential nomination after the contest narrowed to a two-horse race with Florida governor Ron DeSantis's withdrawal less than 48 hours before the New Hampshire primary on Tuesday.

Short of a defeat in the Granite State, or a close second-place for his remaining rival Nikki Haley, the timeline to Trump's nomination as the candidate to face President Joe Biden in November could be greatly accelerated.

The ex-president won a crushing victory over DeSantis in Iowa last week, with Haley trailing in third, and no candidate has ever failed to claim the Republican crown after taking the two opening states.

That makes New Hampshire make-or-break for Haley, Trump's one-time UN ambassador, who trails her former boss in polling for what is seen as her strongest state.

Trump, 77, has ramped up attacks on



People gather in front of the Reichstag building, seat of the lower house of parliament Bundestag, as they attend a demonstration of a broad alliance under the slogan #TogetherAgainstRight to protest against the Alternative for Germany party (AfD), right-wing extremism and for the protection of democracy in front of the Bundestag building in Berlin, Germany.



## Pakistan, China for enhanced cooperation in IT, agriculture, HR development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and China on Monday reiterated their desire for enhanced cooperation in the areas of economy, information technology, agriculture, and human resource development for the mutual benefit of the two friendly countries.

This was discussed in a meeting between the visiting Vice Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China Sun Weidong, who along with his delegation called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong, was also present during the meeting, a President House press release said.

Welcoming the delegation, the president said that China was a very dear friend that had always supported Pakistan during difficult times.

He highlighted that CPEC projects had contributed to the economic development of Pakistan, be-

sides helping meet its energy needs.

The president stated that Pakistan was fully committed to the high-quality development of CPEC, adding that the Chinese support in the next phase of CPEC would be crucial for Pakistan's industrial development.

He remarked that economic cooperation between the two friendly countries would further cement bilateral ties. He appreciated the Chinese support in stabilising Pakistan's economy.

The president said that Pakistan wanted to learn from the Chinese experience in IT, education, health, agriculture, and poverty alleviation for its socio-economic development.

He remarked that Pakistan and China held similar views on various regional and international issues and cooperated at different fora.

He reiterated that Pa-

kistan would continue to support China on all core issues, including the "One China" Policy, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Tibet, Xinjiang, and the South China Sea.

He said that Pakistan was grateful to China for supporting Pakistan's national development and its principled stance on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

The visiting Vice Foreign Minister of China said that Pakistan and China had a long history of friendly relations which would continue to grow stronger.

He said that CPEC had yielded fruitful results and that both countries had huge potential for increasing cooperation in various fields.

He also thanked the president for visiting China during the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, saying that his support to express solidarity with China would always be remembered.



ISLAMABAD: President, Dr. Arif Alvi exchanging views with Sun Weidong, Vice Foreign Minister of the Peoples Republic of China during meeting held at Aiwan-e-Sadr in Islamabad.

## Pak foreign policy played crucial role in defusing tension with Iran: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Monday said the foreign policy pursued by Pakistan post-January 16 had played a crucial role in de-escalating the tension with Iran.

The minister, in an interview with a Turkish broadcaster, TRT, the minister said that the whole region was concerned by tension between Pakistan and Iran that had significantly been reduced.

He said Pakistan's leadership had overcome the issue to a greater extent, and lauded the constructive

role played by brotherly countries, including Türkiye and China, for defusing the tension.

He said Pakistan greatly valued Türkiye's goodwill for it and its people. Both countries enjoyed all-weather relations that were a "precious asset of Pakistan".

The minister said the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), which was the only institution entrusted with holding free, fair and transparent elections, had been fulfilling its responsibilities efficiently.

He said the caretaker government, born out of a constitutional process, was

performing its duties under a legal cover. It would extend all-out support to the ECP for holding the elections, he added.

To a question, the minister said that it was a political culture that some political parties were airing complaints regarding the level-playing field.

There was no restriction on politics in the country and measures were taken to ensure a level-playing field for political parties, he emphasized.

Solangi said that the caretaker government had no favorites and none of the family members of its ministers was taking part in the elections.

## Maryam Nawaz says Politicians must give off considering KP an experiment station

MANSEHRA (INP): Chief Organizer Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Maryam Nawaz has said that the politicians must give off considering Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) an experiment station for them.

While addressing a public gathering in Mansehra on Monday, she said that the former PTI government made tall claims and promised the people of five million homes and billion tree Tsunami but didn't fulfill any of their promise.

Maryam Nawaz said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was land of sensible people and people keeping in view that performance of former rules should elect right people in the upcoming general elections.

She said that the incarceration of PTI leaders was the outcome of their own



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani inaugurating the Wall of Federation, at Parliament House in Islamabad.

## PEC takes serious notice of absentee polling staff at trainings

Independent Report  
QUETTA: The Provincial Election Commissioner (PEC) Balochistan, Muhammad Farid Afridi has taken serious notice of the polling staff found absent during the training sessions in Quetta.

The PEC took notice of the absentee staff during his visits to different training sessions to review the process of training in Quetta.

The training is being imparted to the male and female presiding and senior assistant presiding officers at the sessions.

The Provincial Election Commissioner said that it has been decided to take stern departmental action against the absentee polling staff during the training sessions.

He said that all the district returning officers have been issued directives to ensure presence of the polling stations in their respective districts.

He also directed to take stern action against those polling staff who were found absent from the training sessions.

## PPP believes serving of people: Rozi Khan

Independent Report  
QUETTA: Provincial General Secretary of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Rozi Khan Kakar, candidate for Constituency NA 263 and Syed Hasnain Hashmi, candidate from Constituency PB 43 said that the PPP P was always fighting for the rights of the people because serving of masses was mission of the party.

They expressed these views while talking to the media on the occasion of the inauguration of the election office of Pakistan People's Party on Spiny Road Quetta. Qasim Khan Achakzai, Safiullah Mengal, Qazi Qahir Achakzai and others also spoke on this occasion.

Rozi Khan Kakar and Hasnain Hashmi said that during his tenure, the party launched projects like Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan Package, 18th Amendment, Benazir Income Support Program, which not only provided employment to thousands of people of Balochistan but also gave financial autonomy to the province.

They said the Pakistan People's Party is not fighting against any party or candidate, but against inflation, unemployment,

## Civil Hospital, Taraqee, Bank Al-Falah: MoU signed for increasing capacity of Cardiac Surgery Dept.

Independent Report  
QUETTA: The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed for increasing the capacity of Cardiac Surgery Department of the Civil Sandeman Provincial Hospital, here on Monday.

The MoU was signed among the Civil Hospital, Taraqee Foundation and Bank Al-Falah.

The Medical Superintendent of the Hospital, Dr. Muhammad Ishaq Panezai, Director Finance, Taraqee Foundation, Jahanzaib and Regional Head of the Bank Al-Falah, Sanaullah signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations.

The caretaker Minister Finance, Amjad Rasheed, Secretary Health, Abdullah Khan, Additional Secretary, Arif Khan, Chief Planning Officer Health, Abdul Rasool Zehri and Section Officer, Riasat witnessed the signing ceremony.

Under the MoU, the Bank Al-Falah would provide beds, medical equipment and machinery and surgery kits for the cardiac patients at the Cardiac Surgery department of the Civil Hospital, as informed on the occasion of MoU signing. In addition to this, the repair and renovation of the Cardiac Surgery department would also be done under the MoU.

## Five killed as vehicle falls into ravine in Dir Upper

PESHAWAR (APP): At least five individuals were killed, and fifteen others were injured when a vehicle, enroute to a wedding ceremony, plunged into a ravine in Dir Upper.

According to Rescue 1122 and the police, the incident occurred in the Badali area when the driver of the double-cabin vehicle lost control, leading to a deep fall in the mountains.

Police reported that the injured and deceased have been transported to Wari Hospital.

## FM Jilani, Chinese Vice FM discuss bilateral ties

Independent Report  
ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani and Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong on Monday here reaffirmed the All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership and held an in-depth discussion on the entire gamut of bilateral relations including CPEC and bilateral economic and financial cooperation.

The Foreign Minister appreciated the contributions of the Chinese Vice Foreign Minister in deepening Pakistan-China friendship and commended

China's unflinching support to Pakistan on all issues.

Expressing satisfaction at the steady development of CPEC, Foreign Minister Jilani emphasized the significance of CPEC for Pakistan. He said that Pakistan would continue making efforts for the realization of CPEC's full potential for shared benefits.

He appreciated China's readiness and support for all CPEC projects in Pakistan.

Thanking the Foreign Minister for the generous hospitality,



QUETTA: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Central General Secretary, Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri addressing ceremony on occasion of resignation of Bilal Khan Kakar in favor of Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman, in Quetta.

## Commissioner chairs meeting regarding Quetta City App for facilitating people

QUETTA (APP): Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafiqat chaired a meeting regarding the release of Quetta City App and other matters for the convenience of the public on Monday.

Deputy Commissioner Quetta Lt. Ret. Saad Bin Asad participated in the meeting through video link while Focal Person Assistant Director IT Muhibullah and Representative Excise and Taxation were also present.

Various important issues related to Quetta City App were discussed in detail for the convenience of the people in the meeting.

In the meeting, a briefing was given about the services, data entry, motor vehicle registration, local domicile certificate and arms license facility regarding the city app. Addressing the meeting, Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafiqat said that an app called Quetta City would be created for the needs and convenience of the citizens in which people could easily get local domicile certificates, arms licenses, motor vehicle registration and other facilities. City App for Public Convenience is an initiative that aims to help citizens solve the problems they face in their daily life, apart from this, citizens can avail various information.

## Election oversight body head briefs CEC on polls preparations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Communications, Railways, and Maritime Affairs Shahid Ashraf Tarar, serving as the convener of the Election Oversight Committee, discussed election preparations with Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan and briefed him about upcoming polls arrangements of both federal and provincial governments. In the meeting held at the Election Commission Secretariat, Ashraf Tarar emphasized that the committee's primary goal is to oversee election security, address obstacles in arrangements, and ensure measures for peace, additional security.

## Toshakhana, 190m pounds references IHC rejects plea for issuing stay order

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has rejected the plea for issuing stay order in Toshakhana and 190 million pounds references.

The petitions seeking cancellation of jail trials of Toshakhana and 190 million pounds references came up for hearing before a division bench of IHC comprising Chief Justice (CJ) Aamir Farooq and justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri Monday.

Prosecutor General NAB presented the report on documents related to

notification on jail trial and court's order.

A copy of report was provided to Shoaib Shaheen counsel for PTI founder under court's order. Court rejected plea from Shoaib Shaheen for issuing stay order in NAB references.

Shoaib Shaheen had requested the court during the hearing of the case to give stay order for two days saying it makes no difference.

The CJ IHC Aamer Farooq remarked case is not going to end or complete. We see it on next hearing.



QUETTA: Medical Superintendent of the Hospital, Dr. Muhammad Ishaq Panezai, Director Finance, Taraqee Foundation, Jahanzaib and Regional Head of the Bank Al-Falah, Sanaullah signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for increasing the capacity of Cardiac Surgery Department of the Civil Sandeman Provincial Hospital



A Belarus delegation headed by Mr. Rassalai Viachaslau, Deputy Minister SAMI, held a meeting in Ministry of Defence Production with Pakistan delegation headed by Secretary Defence Production, Lt Gen (Redt) Humayun Aziz HI(M).

## Pak-Belarus inter-govt commission on defence meets at MoDP

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Pakistan and Belarus "Inter-Governmental Commission on Military and Technical Cooperation", established since 2015, met at the Ministry of Defence Production on Monday.

Three sessions of the Commission have been conducted so far, including the last held in Minsk, Belarus in April, 2021, while the fourth one was being held in Pakistan from January 22-24, a news release said.

## Wang says: China supports Pakistan, Iran to bridge differences thru dialogue

BEIJING (APP): China on Monday said it supported Pakistan and Iran in bridging differences through dialogue and consultations, as both countries were friendly neighbors and its good friends.

Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin during his regular briefing said, "I want to stress that Pakistan and Iran are friendly neighbors, and both are good friends of China. China is committed to upholding regional and international peace and stability and supports Iran and Pakistan in continuing to bridge differences through dialogue and consultation."

Responding to a question about China's Vice Minister Sun Weidong's ongoing visit to Pakistan and Vice Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu's phone call with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kami last night, he said that China maintained close communication with Pakistan and Iran.

When asked if was China mediating between Pakistan and Iran?, he said,

## Security concerns Bahria, Air, National Defense universities close for an indefinite period

ISLAMABAD (Online): Three universities of Islamabad have been closed for an indefinite period due to security concerns.

According to sources, the directives to close Bahria, Air and National Defense universities have been issued on Monday. Final examinations of students have also effected due to closure of universities.

Several educational institutions have also been

closed in areas of these universities in Islamabad.

Sources of university administration said that students were notified late night about the indefinite closure of universities.

Islamabad Police said that security is already tight due to elections and sit-ins in Press Club, Islamabad.

Security agencies have also conducted search operations in suburban areas of Islamabad.



QUETTA: Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafiqat presiding over a meeting regarding Quetta City App for facilitation of people.

## Entrepreneurship stimulates employment growth, creates job opportunities for rural communities: Speakers

By Rafiullah Mandokhail  
ZHOB: 'Although unemployment is considered to be the most challenging social problem in poverty-hit Balochistan, but 'Balochistan Livelihoods and Entrepreneurship Program' financed by the World Bank to promote enterprise development and livelihoods supports the local entrepreneurs and individuals to enhance profitability, job creation and income is a blessing for the province', said the speakers at a seminar entitled 'Citizen Engagement and Awareness Seminar' held at the Cultural hall here. The seminar was attended by male and female community members, journalist Rafiullah Mandokhail and people from different walks of life.

District Coordinator BLEP Afzal Khan in his

keynote speech said that organizing the seminar was aimed at creating awareness and providing information to the youth on employment opportunities through entrepreneurship. 'In order to promote livelihoods through enterprise development and job creation, BLEP has been implemented in eight targeted districts in Balochistan including Zhob and neighboring Sherani districts. The project is financed by the World Bank and executed by the Planning and Development (P&D) department Balochistan,' he said.

Speaking at the event, Deputy Director Mines and Minerals department Balochistan Abdul Razzaq Kakar and Director Awar-Balochistan Muhammad Abid Sherani said that the five-year project has a significant role in poverty