

# Independent

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## 49 foreign journalists issued visas so far for coverage of upcoming elections: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Tuesday that certain elements were just harping on the rumours that "no foreign journalists and observers would be arriving Pakistan for coverage of upcoming general elections" which was contrary to facts.

He was addressing a press conference flanked by Secretary Information and Broadcasting Shahera Shahid, Executive Director General External Publicity Wing Amreen Jan, Principal Information Officer Dr Tariq Mehmood and Director General Radio Pakistan Saeed Sheikh.

Many international media persons had applied for visas to cover the elec-

tions, Murtaza Solangi said adding that 49 visas (for Islamabad Lahore and Karachi) had been issued as of today while 32 requests were under process with many other requests were still being received from different stations of the world.

He said that these 32 visa applications for coverage of elections were under process which had been received in Pakistan High Commission New Delhi and were being processed due to manual visa system in India for issuing visas.

He said that so far 174 requests for ECP Accreditation Cards had been received and processed for foreign media representatives and their associated Pakistani staff who were based in Pakistan.

Responding to a question, Solangi said that

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi addressing a press conference at PTV Headquarters.

## SC reserves verdict in appeal against termination of Shaukat Saddiqui

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Tuesday reserved its verdict in an appeal against the termination of Justice Shaukat Aziz Saddiqui as a judge of Islamabad High Court (IHC).

A five-member larger bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP), Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Amin ud Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Irfan Saadat Khan heard the case.

During the proceeding,

Advocate Khawaja Haris, the counsel for Lt. Gen (retired) Faiz Hameed and Irfan Ramay, denied the allegations levelled in the petition against his clients.

The CJ noted that former registrar of SC had also submitted his comments in the case.

CJ Qazi Faiz Isa said that Attorney General has already stated that facts were not investigated after the speech of Shaukat Aziz Saddiqui. He asked that lawyers now tell how to run further proceeding.



QUETTA: Caretaker Information Minister Jan Achakzai meeting with Caretaker Home Minister Captain (ret) Muhammad Zubair Jamali

## CT Minister Home visits BPSC, meets Chairman: Merit-based recruitments to guarantee development of country: Zubair Jamali

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Captain (Retd) Mir Muhammad Zubair Jamali has stated that the recruitments of youth on the basis of merit is guarantee of development of the country.

The caretaker Minister was speaking to the Chairman Balochistan Public Service Commission (BPSC), Abdul Salik Khan during his visit to the Commission here on Tuesday.

During the course of meeting, matters about mu-

tual interest were discussed. He said that it is very important for the youngsters to use modern technology.

Mr. Jamali appreciated performance of the BPSC and congratulated its entire team under leadership of Chairman, Abdul Salik Khan.

He said that BPSC is rendering its services in an excellent manner, on this it deserves appreciation.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman BPSC said that all students are equal to him, and whoever works hard, would come before.

## Evidences, sources prove India supports terrorism in Balochistan: Global Times

BEIJING (APP): There are "solid bits of evidence" proving that India supports terrorist forces in some Pakistani areas like Balochistan province, providing them with money, weapons, and training, some sources close to the matter told the Global Times.

While continually sup-

pressing some of its rivals and neighbours in the international community with the excuse of anti-terrorism, India has secretly funded terrorist forces in Pakistan, in various parts of the South Asian country, such as Balochistan, inciting local secessionists to under-

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting of the Caretaker Federal Cabinet.

## Elections 2024: Cabinet approves deployment of Pak army, civil armed forces

Forces will perform duties at sensitive constituencies and polling stations, and will also act as a rapid response force

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Cabinet on Tuesday approved the deployment of Pakistan army and the civil armed forces to ensure the peaceful conduct of general elections across the country.

These forces will perform duties at sensitive constituencies and polling stations, and will also act as a rapid response force.

The decision came following the submission of a summary by the federal Interior Ministry in the meeting.

The cabinet which met here under the chairmanship of Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, also discussed in detail the recommendation with re-

## SC summons Qasim Suri in election rigging case

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Tuesday summoned former deputy speaker national assembly and Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) leader Qasim Suri in person next month in an appeal against orders of re-election in NA-265.

The court sought a report from the Registrar's Office within three weeks on non-fixation of Qasim Suri's case for long time after the issuance of a stay order against the verdict of the election tribunal.

The bench also served notices to Lashkrai Raisani and summoned him on the next date.

A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa heard the appeal of Qasim Suri challenging the decision of the election tribunal in which it has ordered for re-election in his constituency in 2018.



CHINIOT: Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing a public gathering at Hockey Stadium.

## PPP to end politics of hatred: Bilawal

CHINIOT/FAISALABAD (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that his party has jumped into the political arena to weed out the politics of hatred and division of the masses.

Addressing a public gathering in Chiniot on Tuesday, he said, "We are not interested in aggravating the political and economic situation while promoting political differences into political enmity. The PPP has never been in-

posed in the next meeting of the federal cabinet.

The cabinet appreciated the efforts of Finance Minister Dr. Shamshad Akhtar in increasing the tax revenue and improving the tax-GDP ratio. The cabinet also admired the finance minister for presenting detailed proposals regarding the administrative structure of the FBR.

The prime minister and all members of the cabinet unanimously supported the proposals regarding the FBR reforms and reiterated that the caretaker government should play its due role in concluding the FBR reform agenda.

On the recommendation

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## BYC calls off Islamabad sit-in

ISLAMABAD (INP) - The Baloch protesters, who had been staging a sit-in outside Islamabad's National Press Club (NPC) since December, called off their demonstration on Tuesday.

This decision followed a letter from the NPC to Islamabad police requesting the removal of the Baloch rights camp, a request that was retracted after facing widespread criticism, including from journalists.

The protesters, organised by the Baloch Yakehti Committee (BYC), had initiated the sit-in on December 22, persisting despite adverse weather conditions. Additionally, they accused the police of harassing their supporters, profiling them, and filing First Information Reports against them.

Dr. Mahrang Baloch expressed disappointment, emphasizing the media community's responsibility to support those whose voices are marginalised. She reported harassment, threats, and the spread of false information, stating that there was a supposed threat around the press club area.

## EC freezes dev. funds of local bodies, cantonment boards

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission (EC) has frozen development funds of local bodies and cantonment boards all over the country.

Development Funds of local bodies and cantonment boards of Sindh, KP and Balochistan will remain frozen till elections are held.

According to notification issued by EC the development funds of local bodies and cantonment boards have been frozen and the local bodies will do cleanliness and sanitation work and daily routine matters. They will not be authorized to launch new scheme or offer tenders. They are allowed to continue their development projects which were announced prior to announcement for general election.

## Firing near check post, 2 laborers killed, 2 injured in DI Khan

DI KHAN (Online): 2 laborers were gunned down and 2 were injured near police check post in Dera Ismail Khan (DI Khan).

As soon as the incident was reported, a large number of rescue officers and police reached the scene. The injured and dead bodies have been shifted to DHQ hospital Dera.

According to media reports, it has been revealed in the initial reports that 4 persons who were killed and injured were laborers who were working in the fields when unidentified persons opened fire. Police said in this regard that incident took place near police check post in Garah Hayat. Further investigation is underway and search for terrorists has been started. It is pertinent to say that earlier 3 FC officials were injured in an attack on security vehicle of Oil and Gas Company.

## US pledges over \$320,000 to Mehrgarh Museum

US ambassador says Mehrgarh Museum is not just collection of artifacts but it's living connection to our shared past as human beings

Independent Report

QUETTA: The United States Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome and Chief Minister of Balochistan Ali Mardan Khan Domki launched the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) first-ever project in Balochistan.

This landmark initiative allocates over \$320,000 for the preservation of Neolithic and other archaeological artifacts of the Mehrgarh civilization, as well as the enhancement of curation at the Mehrgarh Museum of Balochistan in Quetta.

In his remarks, Ambassador Blome said "This endeavor underscores the importance the United States places on the cultural legacy of Balochistan and

our commitment to fostering a deeper appreciation of its history."

The United States has awarded more than \$8 million for 33 cultural heritage projects across Pakistan, including in Sindh province the restoration of Varun Dev Temple, Frere Hall, the Nusservanjee Building, and the tombs of Sultan Ibrahim and Amir Sultan Muhammad at the UNESCO World Heritage Site Makli Hill necropolis.

The launch, attended by U.S. Consul General Karachi Conrad Tribble, officials from the Government of Balochistan Culture Department, and Sindh Exploration and Adventure Society (SEAS) co-founders Dr. Kaleemullah Lashari and Dr. Asma Ibrahim, included an over-

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KARACHI: Chief Minister of Balochistan Ali Mardan Khan Domki and Ambassador of United States to Pakistan Donald Blome launching the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) first-ever project in Balochistan

## Shehbaz declares Nawaz as guarantee for economic revival, development

AHMEDPUR SHARQIA (INP): President Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has declared party supreme Nawaz Sharif's guarantee for economic revival and development of country if voted to power on February 8.

While addressing an election campaign related public gathering in Ahmedpur Sharqia on Tuesday, he said that three-time prime minister Nawaz Sharif has served South Punjab while being in power and he would continue the journey of bringing prosperity to Pakistan including South Punjab after coming into power.

Terming the 2018 elec-

tions in Pakistan as fraud, Shehbaz Sharif said the nation had to suffer due to what happened after the said bogus polls.

Revealing his development plan for Ahmedpur Sharqia, the former PM said that he will establish Danish Schools in every Tehsil of Punjab if Nawaz Sharif was voted to power.

Shehbaz also announced to give status of district to Ahmedpur Sharqia after coming into power in the 2024 elections.

He said that Nawaz Sharif after coming into power will announce 'big projects' for Ahmedpur Sharqia masses will not be left alone.



LAHORE: Muslim League (PML-N) Leader, Maryam Nawaz Sharif waving hand to her supporters during rally as a part of Election Campaign for the upcoming General Election 2024, in Lahore.

## DROs & DMOs directed to ensure implementation on Election Code of Conduct

Independent Report

QUETTA: A meeting jointly chaired by the Commissioner Quetta Division, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat and Joint Provincial Election Commissioner (PEC) Tahir Mansoor Khan have decided to ensure implementation of the election Code of Conduct and take stern action against the violators in Quetta division.

The meeting was attended by all district returning officers (DROs), District Monitoring Officers (DMOs) besides other concerned officials.

The meeting reviewed implementation of the election Code of Conduct.

The DROs and DMOs were directed to ensure

implementation of the Code of Conduct regarding elections and take stern action against those violating the same.

It was observed that there are complaints of Code of Conduct regarding elections from the candidates and political parties.

Therefore, all DROs and DMOs should take stern action against the violators of Code of Conduct.

In this regard, show cause notices should be issued and fines be charged to the violators, it was directed further.

Moreover, they were also directed to submit report of the action taken against violation of Code of Conduct on daily basis.



## Shahid Ashraf Tarar reviews arrangements for elections

**Independent Report**  
KARACHI: Federal Minister for Communications, Railways and Maritime Affairs Shahid Ashraf Tarar on Tuesday, called for thorough compliance with directives of the Election Commission of Pakistan to ensure free, fair and transparent polls in a secure and organized manner.

He was presiding over a meeting of a high-level committee to oversee security for the upcoming general elections scheduled on February 8, 2024.

The committee was constituted by the caretaker Prime Minister Anwar ul Haq Kakar to ensure the security and peaceful conduct of the 2024 general elections, said a statement issued here.

Chief Secretary Sindh, Dr. Muhammad Fakhr e Alam, caretaker Provincial Home Minister Brigadier (ret) Haris Nawaz, Additional Chief Secretary Home Muhammad Iqbal

Memon, Director General Pakistan Rangers Sindh Major General Azhar Waqas, Inspector General Police Riffat Mukhtar Raja, and representatives of Pakistan Army attended the meeting.

The meeting reviewed in detail overall arrangements particularly security measures envisaged for the upcoming general elections. Sindh CS briefed the meeting on administrative measures while DG Rangers and IG Sindh provided insights into the security situation and preparedness.

Federal Minister Shahid Ashraf Tarar emphasized that the primary objective of the committee is to ensure the conduct of the 2024 general elections in a secure and peaceful environment.

He informed about the establishment of an Election Cell within the Federal Interior Ministry for monitoring of security arrangements and law and order

situation during the general election 2024 with representation from all law enforcement agencies.

He underscored the significance of adhering to the directives of the Election Commission of Pakistan for ensuring free, fair and transparent polls in a secure and organized manner.

During the meeting, Chief Secretary Sindh presented detailed information on the preparations for the general elections, highlighting the damages caused to schools in the province due to recent floods. He informed that funds amounting to Rs 1.5 billion were allocated for the repair of these schools. Additionally, Rs 3 billion were allocated for missing facilities in polling stations for the elections. Chief Secretary Sindh also informed that 4,000 highly sensitive polling stations would be equipped with CCTV cameras funded by the provincial government.

## Solangi condole with Chief Editor Ausaf Group on brother's demise

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Tuesday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the sad demise of the elder brother of Raja Mehtab Khan, Chief Editor Ausaf Group of Newspapers.

In a condolence message, the minister expressed heartfelt condolences and sympathy to Raja Mehtab Khan and his family.

He said he was deeply grieved to hear the news of the death of Mehtab Khan's elder brother and he shared the grief of the bereaved family.



BAHAWALPUR: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs, Aneeqe Ahmed addressing the 10th International Secrat Conference at Khawaja Fareed Auditorium of Islamia University Bahawalpur.

## Bugti approves Pakistan team for FIH Hockey5s World Cup

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** President Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) Mir Tariq Hussain Bugti on Tuesday approved Pakistan team to participate in the FIH Hockey5s World Cup Oman 2024, commencing on January 28 in Muscat. "The PHF president has approved the team after consultation with the hockey team management," said a PHF spokesman.

With new competing nations and a format never associated with a World Cup so far, the event ushers in a new era for international hockey. The inaugural edition of the Hockey5s World Cup will see participation from across the globe with 16 men's and 16

women's teams, from across 5 continents, competing for the title of the first-ever Hockey5s World Champions. Squad: Rana Abdul Waheed (captain), Abdullah Ishtiaq Khan, Muneeb ur Rehman, Muhammad Abdullah, Murtaza Yaqoob, Ghazanfar Ali, Arshad Liaquat, Zakaria Hayat, Abdul Hannan Shahid and Moin Shakeel.

Olympian Shakeel Abbasi has been appointed as the head coach of the team, while Olympian Dilawar Hussain will accompany them as manager. Waqas Mehmood will leave with the team as a physiotherapist, while Junaid Akhtar will be the video operator.

## No Pakistani as ICC announce Men's Test, ODI Team of the Year 2023

**ISLAMABAD (Online):** The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced the Men's Test and ODI Team of the Year 2023 and no Pakistani could make their place in the teams across formats.

The ICC Team of the Year acknowledges 11 outstanding individuals who impressed throughout 2023, whether with the bat, the ball, or their all-round exploits across the calendar year.

Pat Cummins was named captain of the Test Team of the Year after leading Australia to their maiden World Test Championship (WTC) 2021-23 glory and took a total of 42 wickets throughout the year.

Cummins' counterpart, Mitchell Starc also made his way following impressive outings throughout the year with red-ball. Five Australian players were included in the team, making the Aussies the most represented nation in the Team of the Year.

ICC Men's Test Team of the Year:

Usman Khawaja, Dimuth Karunaratne, Kane Williamson, Joe Root, Travis Head, Ravindra Jadeja, Alex Carey (wk), Pat Cummins ©, R Ashwin, Mitchell Starc, Stuart Broad.

ICC also announced ODI Team of the Year which was dominated by Indian players, which came as no surprise as the Blues, despite losing the World Cup final to Australia, played the best cricket in the 50-over format.

India's skipper Rohit Sharma was named the captain of the team due to his fantastic display throughout the year, amassing a total of 1255 runs in the year.

Virat Kohli, Shubman Gill, Mohammad Siraj, Kuldeep Yadav and Mohammed Shami were the other Indians included in the ODI Team of the Year.

ICC Men's ODI Team of the Year:

Zampa, Mohammed Siraj, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Shami.

ICC also announced the Men's T20I and Women's ODI and T20I Team of the Year 2023.

ICC Men's T20I Team of the Year:

Yashasvi Jaiswal, Phil Salt, Nicholas Pooran, Suryakumar Yadav (captain), Mark Chapman, Sikandar Raza, Alpesh Ramjani, Mark Adair, Ravi Bishnoi, Richard Ngarava, Arshdeep Singh.

ICC Women's ODI Team of the Year:

Phoebe Litchfield, Chamari Athapaththu ©, Ellyse Perry, Amelia Kerr, Beth Mooney (wk), Nat Sciver-Brunt, Ash Gardner, Annabel Sutherland, Nadine de Klerk, Lea Tahuhu, Nahida Akter

ICC Women's T20I Team of the Year:

Chamari Athapaththu ©, Beth Mooney (WK), Laura Wolvaardt, Hayley Matthews, Nat Sciver-Brunt, Amelia Kerr, Ellyse Perry, Ash Gardner, Deepti Sharma, Sophie Ecclestone, Megan Schutt.



KARACHI: Caretaker Federal Minister for Communications Shahid Ashraf Tarar chairs a meeting of Election Committee to review security arrangements for upcoming General Elections 2024 at Sindh Secretariat.

## Steps required to be taken for promotion of sports in Balochistan

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: Joint steps at public private sector required to be taken for promotion of sports in Balochistan, particularly in Quetta and its adjoining areas.

These views were expressed by Durra Baloch, Director General, Balochistan Sports Board, Quetta while addressing a function held after the inauguration of "Alpha Fitness Gym", Nawa Killi Quetta here on Tuesday.

He said that sports department was earnestly striving to promote sports in Balochistan and in that regard private sector would also have to contribute. He said that the establishment of Alpha Fitness Gym in Nawa Killi area of Quetta would help persuade people, particularly young generation, towards sports.

On the occasion, Rasheed Nurzai, Aralan Nurzai, district sports officer, Faizullah Kakar, General Secretary, Balochistan Archery Association, Inayatullah Achakzai, social media activist and large number of players of Alpha Fitness Gym were also present.

## US pledges...

**Continued from page 1**  
view of Mehrgarh history and the Mehrgarh Museum of Balochistan.

The Mehrgarh Museum of Balochistan, established in September 2022, showcases the region's pre- and early history. Artifacts from Mehrgarh are globally recognized and displayed in museums including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Musée Guimet in Paris, highlighting Pakistan's global archaeological significance.

The funding from this U.S. grant will enhance the museum's existing displays, strengthen community outreach skills, and provide professional development trainings for the Balochistan Directorate of Archaeology's staff. This ACP project, which is implemented in partnership with the Government of Balochistan Culture Department and SEAS, will support efforts to preserve the cultural landscape of the region.

## Sindh Premier League to begin from Jan 25

**KARACHI (APP):** Caretaker Sindh Minister for Sports and Culture Syed Junaid Ali Shah and Minister for Information, Minority Affairs and Social Protection Ahmed Shah announced that the Sindh Premier League (SPL) 2024 would be commenced on January 25. Addressing a press conference at the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, the ministers said that the SPL would continue till February 05 at

National Bank Stadium Karachi.

SPL President Arif Malik, and renowned cricketers Abdul Razzaq and Chaudhry Shehzaad were also present on the occasion.

All six franchise teams of Sindh province would take part in the inaugural season of SPL.

The ministers announced that the first day of SPL would be free for all.



QUETTA: Director General Balochistan Sports Board Durra Baloch visiting Alpha Fitness Gym after inauguration. Rasheed Nurzai and Arslan Nurzai are also present on the occasion.

## 49 foreign journalists...

**Continued from page 1**  
tion by media, he said so far 25 applications were under process from the UK alone, 08 from Russian Federation, 13 from Japan, 02 from South Africa while 05 from Commonwealth under the category of International Observers.

Accreditation Cards had also been processed for local Pakistani media houses, Murtaza Solangi said and added so far 6,065 journalists had been processed including 1200 from Lahore, 1470 from Karachi, 1050 from Peshawar, 600 from Quetta, 355 from Hyderabad, 250 from Faisalabad and 290 from Multan.

The cases where the media intends to go and cover other cities, besides Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi, would be examined on case-to-case basis, in consultation with relevant ministries, he said.

The minister said that even though the last date for application for visas of January 20 had already passed, the relevant institutions of the Election Commission of Pakistan and Ministry of Information were still receiving visa

requests, which would be processed on case-to-case basis.

Executive Director General EP Wing, Ambreen Jan said visa applications for election coverage were received from 14 countries. She added in total 81 foreign journalists applied for visas, out of which 49 had been issued visas while others were under the process.

She said that a Code of Conduct for international media and Observers has been issued by the ECP which had been shared with them. She said that the number of applications for International Election Observers was 55.

To a question she said Press Information Department would set up a media cell for election coverage to provide facilities to the media and a 24-hour election cell will also be operational in the EP Wing to provide facilities to foreign journalists.

Replying to a question, Murtaza Solangi said that it was the responsibility of the state to protect its citizens and it would take necessary measures to provide security to foreign journalists and observers.



QUETTA: Secretary Health Balochistan Abdullah Khan presiding over a meeting of health department

## Cabinet approves deployment...

**Continued from page 1**  
of the finance ministry, the federal cabinet approved the extension of the tenure of Tahir Hussain Qureshi as the President of SME Bank for three months or till the formal closure of the institution.

The cabinet, on the recommendation of the Ministry of National Health, appointed Principal Shifa College of Dentistry, Shifa-e-Milat University Islamabad Prof. Dr. Anwar Ali Shah as the representa-

ive of medical colleges in the registration board of Islamabad Health Regulatory Authority.

Likewise, the cabinet also approved the appointment of Dr. Dur e Shehwar Faisal as the representative of the Private Healthcare Establishment Sector in the Board.

On the recommendation of the Ministry of National Health, the cabinet also approved the formation of a search committee for the appointment of the

vice-chancellor of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University Islamabad. The minister for national health will head the committee. The cabinet also approved the decisions taken in the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) held on January 9, 2024.

Similarly, the cabinet approved the decisions taken in the meetings of the Cabinet Committee on Legislative Cases held on January 9 and 17, 2024.

## Evidences, sources prove ...

**Continued from page 1**  
mine regional stability through terrorist attacks, they revealed.

Through looking into historical materials and related news reports from both Pakistani and Indian media sources, as well as speaking with sources and observers who are familiar with the situation in Balochistan, the Global Times found that India has a long history of backing terrorism in Pakistan.

"Concrete evidence"

In December 2023, a commander of the Baloch National Army (BNA) separatist militant group, who had surrendered himself to the Pakistani government, disclosed that India has been secretly supporting terrorist activities in Balochistan and financing separatist forces in the region.

According to media sources, Sarfraz Ahmed Bungulzai made the announcement at a press conference in Quetta. Bungulzai said that he thought his armed struggle was for Baloch rights, but later he realized that "India is involved in all these conspiracies."

"And after taking money from India, they shed the blood of their own Baloch," said Bungulzai, according to media reports.

A Pakistani source told the Global Times that once again, it shone a light on India's behind-the-scenes villainy.

However, Chinese observers said the

commander's surrender does not mean the collapse of the BNA, the group may have an impact on similar terrorist and separatist forces there.

Apart from the latest case pointing to India, a few years back, there was another case that indicated that India was probably supporting terrorism in Pakistan.

In March 2016, Pakistan released a confessional video statement of an Indian spy agent named Kulbhushan Yadav, who was arrested red-handed earlier that month while attempting to infiltrate Pakistan from the border area.

Yadav said in the video that he was a serving officer of the Indian Navy, and did intelligence gathering for Indian agencies under the cover name Hussein Mubarik Patel.

"I was picked up by RAW (the Research and Analysis Wing, India's alleged external intelligence agency) in 2013 end," Yadav said. "My purpose was to hold meetings with Baloch insurgents and carry out activities with their collaboration. These activities have been of [a] criminal nature, leading to the killing of or maiming of Pakistani citizens."

Multiple instances have been highlighted by Pakistan's security authorities on some international forums, illustrating how the RAW funds elements in Pakistan to spread unrest, observer Ali Abbas Ramay, a journalist with the City News Network Pakistan,

told the Global Times.

"Proof of India's involvement in creating the BLA has been presented, including Yadav's confessions," Ramay said.

The clues of India's connection with terrorist forces in Pakistan could also be found in a few Indian media reports.

The Hindu, for instance, published an article in July 2019, stating "It is established that BLA (Baloch Liberation Army) commanders, in the past, had sought medical treatment in India's hospitals, often under disguise or with fake identities."

The Hindu article referred to BLA's militant commander who "was based in Delhi for at least six months in 2017," to receive "extensive treatment for kidney-related ailments."

Some of the related evidence has been made public. Many other concrete forms of evidence show that India backs terrorism in Pakistan, although they have not yet been released for a variety of reasons, said a source close to the situation in Balochistan.

"We have had the evidence long before," the source told the Global Times. He said that he was "100 percent" sure that India has been funding the terrorist forces in Balochistan.

Double standard in fighting terrorism

Some Pakistani scholars believe that India has a long history of continuous interference in Pakistan's affairs.

## FINAL NOTICE

It has been observed that multiple projects under various contractor's responsibility remain incomplete despite repeated notices. This serves as a final notice for immediate action to fulfill contractual obligations. Non-compliance will result in legal consequences and potential contract termination. Address this matter urgently.

S.NO	NAME OF WORK	CONTRACTOR COMPANY NAME
1.	CONST. OF EXAMINATION HALL FOR GBHS AT HARNAI BAZAR REMIS CODE: 08181. PSDP NO. 1238 (2019-20)	MS MINK ENTERPRISES, GOVERNMENT CONTRACTOR.
2.	GGHS BAZAR DISTRICT HARNAI.	MS BAZ MOHAMMAD & SONS GOVT CONTRACTOR.
3.	GGHS SHARAG BAZAR DISTRICT HARNAI.	MS KHANAN & BROTHERS GOVT CONTRACTOR.
4.	GGHS SAADULLAH HARNAI	MS MOSUM KHAN, ABUL FAYYAZ CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, GOVERNMENT CONTRACTOR.
5.	GGHS SPIN TANGI DISTRICT HARNAI.	MS NADIR KHAN & BROS
6.	CONST. OF SPORTS COMPLEX AT DISTRICT HARNAI (22016.1104) PSDP NO. 9552	MS AL HABIB TRADE
7.	ESTABLISHMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TRAINING CENTER AT HARNAI. (22015.0716) PSDP NO. 9387	MS HABIB ULLAH SHAH GOVT CONTRACTOR
8.	GGHS GHARIB ABAD HARNAI 8184	MS AZLAN SHAH CONSTRUCTION COMPANY.
9.	POLICE LINE HARNAI, DPO OFFICE RESIDENCE. PSDP NO. 9847 (2015.0620)	MS MUHAMMAD NAZIR BROTHERS GOVT CONTRACTOR
10.	CONST. OF DISTRICT ACCOUNTS OFFICE RESIDENCE IN DISTRICT HARNAI	MS HAJI ABUL HAQ GOVT CONTRACTOR

Executive Engineer(B)  
CWPP&H Department District,  
Harnai

PRQ No.1368/23-1-2024  
www.dpr.gov.pk @dpr\_gov @dpr\_gov @dpr.gov

**NOTICE OF TENDER DW&CE/6002-ADVT/127/E-6 18 Jan 2024**

**MILITARY ENGINEER SERVICES**  
**NOTICE OF TENDER**

01. The office of DW&CE (PAF) Chaklala invites sealed tenders for the following **Emergency Work in light of PPARA Rule 42-c (v) of 2004:-**

02	(a) Rehab of Certain Facilities	(MM)	Costing Approximately Rs. 20,000 Million
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03. The contractors are required to submit their applications for issuance of tender documents alongwith their complete credentials as shown at (Serial 9). The applications shall be scrutinized and the tender documents will only be issued to the firms who have sufficient experience in the relevant field and satisfy other special conditions required for the job and area. Tenders will only be issued to the scrutinized contractors. The tender must be received in the office of Accepting Officer by 1130 Hrs on **08 Feb 2024** and will be opened at 1200 Hrs on the same date.

**NOTE:-** Contractors shall provide certificate that they are not involved in any type of litigation with Government Department in the Court of Law and that no special report of Directorate of Inspection and Evaluation (E-in-C's Branch GHQ) is outstanding against them.

04. All contractors will certify in writing that they are registered with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC), and will submit a copy of their registration. Contractors not registered with PEC are ineligible to apply.

05. Contractor born on approved List of MES in categories 'A' and 'B' and also having experience of this type should only apply.

06. Contractors who desire may be present at the time of opening of tenders.

07. The Accepting Officer reserves the right to accept or reject the tender. Rejected tenders will be dealt with as per Para 33(1) of PPARA Rules.

08. The interested parties can contact **CMES (PAF) SAMUNGLI** / authorized representative for further details from 0715 to 1335 hours on all working days.

09	Name of Work Executed during Last 2 Years and in Hand	Agency	Amount of Work	Time Allowed (Months)	Date of commencement	Date of Completion	Percentage Progress of work in Hand	Departmental Performance Report on each Work by the Engineer in Charge
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PID (I) No.4419/23



## Wafaqi Mohtasib successfully addressed grievances from almost 2.1 mln households

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: Since its establishment, the Wafaqi Mohtasib has successfully addressed grievances from almost 2.1 million households, with 193,028 complaints resolved in 2023 alone. January 24 holds special significance in the history of the Wafaqi Mohtasib, as it came into existence on this day 41 years ago in 1983. To commemorate the 41st year of the Wafaqi Mohtasib's existence, simple yet impressive ceremonies will be held in all regional offices to observe this momentous occasion, said a news release.

He expressed confidence in achieving the core values of Ombudsmanship, including the elimination of maladministration and the promotion of good governance to pave the way for the rule of law and the protection of human rights. He said that January 24 holds special significance in the history of the Wafaqi Mohtasib, as it came into existence on this day 41 years ago in 1983. The institution, he mentioned, has followed a positive trajectory and provided speedy and free administrative justice to millions of households, particularly the disadvantaged and marginalized segments of society.

The increasing number of complaints received by the offices, he said, is a clear indication of the people's trust in the institution's capacity to address issues of maladministration, inefficiency, neglect, and discrimination. Looking ahead to the New Year, he said that enhancing the institution's outreach and accessibility will continue to receive special attention. This involves opening regional offices and sub-offices, conducting open forums in remote areas, and inspection visits to improve service delivery for agencies generating persistent complaints. Raising awareness among the general public about the mandate and scope of the institution's work through regular interaction with electronic, print media and periodic awareness lectures will add value to these efforts. He renewed the commitment to the cause of ombudsmanship, particularly the steadfast adherence to its core values of promoting and protecting human rights.



ISLAMABAD: Convener, World Minorities Alliance (WMA) Julius Salik addressing during protest of Capital Development Authority (CDA) Sanitary workers, in favor of their demands at sector G-7 in the Federal Capital.

## Sherry says: PPP's 10-point election agenda road-map to public prosperity

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) senior leader Sherry Rehman on Tuesday described the 10-point election agenda of her party to address the concerns of the working class and marginalized communities in the country.

The PPP leader, in an interview with a private news channel, emphasized that her party chairman, Bilawal Bhutto, in his recent address at a public rally in Sahiwal, focused on ending the politics of hatred and division and advocated for solutions to economic crises. Rehman highlighted that Bilawal was committed to addressing the issues faced by the public rather than engaging in divisive politics. She emphasized that the PPP was dedicated to resolving the problems of the people through hard work and dedication. "We are not pursuing a politics of hatred or division; instead, we are striving to solve the problems of the people."

## ICCPO inaugurates Pakistan's first women driving school & test centre

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: According to the details, Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan has formally inaugurated Pakistan's first women's driving school and test centre at the Police Lines Headquarters Islamabad, a public relations officer said. He said that the driving school was completed in collaboration with Islamic Relief Organization. The school aims to provide specialized training to women under the guidance of experienced instructors. The inauguration ceremony was attended by ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan as chief guest, while Islamic Relief Organization's Country Director, CPO Safe City/Traffic, Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad, under training women participants, and a large number of police officers were also present on the occasion.

ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan emphasized the crucial role women play in society, stating that the positive role of women is very important in society and that they are the key contributors to the progress of any community. The recent cold wave and foggy conditions have already made living conditions difficult with people already suffering due to power load shedding and low pressure of gas. In these circumstances, the number of people complaining of cold-related ailments has also shot up over the last few days.



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## CPDI condemns unlawful removal of Punjab Information Commission's members

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) strongly condemned the unlawful removal of Chief Information Commissioner Mehboob Qadir Shah and Information Commissioners Dr Arif Mushtaq and Chaudhary Shaikat Ali from their positions within the Punjab Information Commission. The removal, executed under section 5(8) of the Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Act 2013, through a notification by the Punjab Information and Culture Department is a matter of grave concern for the promotion of transparency and citizens' right to access information.

In a press statement, Mukhtar Ahmad Ali, Executive Director of CPDI, emphasized that the removal of commissioners without providing a reasonable opportunity to explain any alleged misconduct is a direct violation of the provisions outlined in section 8 (sub-sections 9, 10, and 11) of the Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Act 2013. These sections clearly stipulate that the government must provide commissioners the chance to present their positions, and if unsatisfied, may refer the case to the Provincial Assembly of Punjab for an open inquiry by a Special Committee. As the Punjab Assembly is dissolved, in case of such matter the Speaker of the Punjab Assembly shall constitute a special committee and such special committee may exercise the powers of a special committee of the Provincial Assembly until the election of the new Provincial Assembly, as mentioned in Section 8 (12) of the Act, he further added. The Punjab Information Commission plays a crucial role as a statutory and independent body responsible for implementing the Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Act 2013.

## Four killed in accident

ISLAMABAD (APP): Four women were killed and two others, including a young girl, sustained injuries when an over-speeding Mazda van collided with a rickshaw on the National Highway in Shikarpur Tuesday morning.

According to Rescue 1122 sources, the accident took place near Achi Masjid due to dense fog and poor visibility, a Private news channel reported. The police said that the bodies and injured were shifted to a hospital. Three of the four women were identified as Farida, Hajira and Najma.

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## Foggy, cold wave envelop various parts of country

ISLAMABAD (APP): Citizens in various cities including the capital are facing almost freezing temperatures due to dense fog that engulfs in the morning and stays on for hours after daybreak where health experts asked people to remain vigilant while maintaining a healthy diet and using face masks. A thick layer of fog has enveloped many cities in Punjab including Lahore, paralyzing routine life and disrupting road traffic, a private news channel reported. The recent cold wave and foggy conditions have already made living conditions difficult with people already suffering due to power load shedding and low pressure of gas. In these circumstances, the number of people complaining of cold-related ailments has also shot up over the last few days.



ISLAMABAD: The outgoing Ambassador of Tajikistan in Pakistan, Ismatullo Naserdin calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

## Jamal Shah shares plan of 2nd CPEC Cultural Caravan with envoys of Central Asian States

**By Muhammad Ilyas**  
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Jamal Shah, on Tuesday held a meeting with Ambassadors of Central Asian States Russia and China to discuss the initial plan of second 'CPEC Cultural Caravan 2024, aimed at strengthening cultural bonds between Pakistan, China, Russia and Central Asian States.

The high level meeting held here at Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) attended by Ambassador of Russia to Pakistan His Excellency Albert Khorev, Embassy of China Counselor Bao Zhong, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Atajan Movlamov, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan H.E. Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan H.E. Totuaev Ulanbek Asankulovich, Ambassador of Uzbekistan H.E. Aybek Arif Usmanov and Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan H.E. Khazar Farhadov.

Federal Secretary National Heritage and Culture Humaira Ahmed, Advisor National Heritage and Culture Muhammad Kashif Irshad, Director General PNCA Ayub Jamali, Executive Director Lok Virsa Uzair Khan and Chairperson Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) Dr Najeba Arif were also present on the occasion.

Addressing the diplomats, Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah apprised that his ministry planned to organize a second China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Cultural Caravan aimed at promoting economic ties and strengthening cultural bonds between Pakistan, China and the Central Asian States. Jamal Shah said that CPEC Cultural Caravan will commence its journey from Xi'an, China, and traverse through Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, UAE, Gwadar, Karachi, ultimately concluding in Islamabad.

"Cultural Caravan to Document Diverse Lives on CPEC, Silk Route" he added. This cultural excursion will document the experiences and stories of the people along the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the Silk Route, covering Central Asian countries. He said that the Cultural Caravan will be composed of diverse groups of Pakistani, Chinese and Central Asian artists, musicians, photographers, anthropologists, writers and filmmakers.

He said that the CPEC Cultural Caravan aims at promoting dialogue, cultural exchange, understanding, trust and respect between the nations, adding that it will also strengthen international relations in terms of protection of cultural heritage, cultural and academic exchange. He said that CPEC Cultural Caravan will also strengthen and support the promotion of arts and creative industries on the caravan route in fields of culture, history, education, and economic and heritage tourism. He said that the idea is this that cultural excursion under the title 'CPEC Cultural Caravan 2024' will be composed of diverse groups of Pakistani, Chinese and Central Asian artists, musicians, photographers, anthropologists, writers and filmmakers.

Addressing the diplomats, Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Humaira Ahmed, Advisor National Heritage and Culture Muhammad Kashif Irshad, Director General PNCA Ayub Jamali, Executive Director Lok Virsa Uzair Khan and Chairperson Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) Dr Najeba Arif were also present on the occasion.

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## TikTok shares election integrity measures on platform ahead of poll

ISLAMABAD (APP): TikTok on Tuesday shared its approach to upholding and protecting election integrity on its platform ahead of the Pakistan parliamentary elections slated for February 2024. The initiative underscores TikTok's commitment to being a responsible and reliable source of information, especially during critical civic events said a news release. TikTok has robust measures in place to combat misinformation, violence, and hate speech in line with its Community Guidelines, available both in English and Urdu. The platform is dedicated to removing misleading information about civic processes, including voter registration, candidate eligibility, ballot counting, and election results. TikTok's policies strictly prohibit content that intimidates voters, suppresses voting, or incites violence. Over 40,000 personnel globally, in conjunction with advanced technology, are deployed to ensure user safety on the platform, complemented by collaborations with intelligence firms, industry partners, and civil society organizations. To help counter misinformation, TikTok works with local and regional fact-checkers to help the platform consistently and accurately remove election misinformation. Content under review or identified as unsubstantiated is restricted from the For You Feed recommendation, and both viewers and creators are alerted about the potentially misleading nature of such content. A significant element of TikTok's strategy is the launch of the Pakistan Election Center on the platform, available both in English and Urdu. This hub will direct users to authoritative information on the election, including voting procedures and locations. Enhanced by advanced technology and local language support, the platform is poised to ensure a safe environment free from violations of its Community Guidelines.

## NIH confirms nine new Corona cases in last week

ISLAMABAD (APP): Health officials on Tuesday said that nine new coronavirus cases were reported during the last week across the country. As per data shared by the National Institute of Health (NIH), the case positivity ratio was 0.33 percent while no patient was in critical condition. No death was reported from the coronavirus while 2,694 Corona tests were conducted. Meanwhile, the official of the Ministry for National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination said that the government had strengthened the role of Border and Health Services in Pakistan to deal with any sub-variant of Covid-19.

## Butcher of Gujarat again exposed India's claim of democracy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed said on Tuesday that the butcher of Gujarat's inauguration of a temple on the ruins of Babri Masjid once again exposed the claim of India being the world's largest democracy. In a statement, he said that religious polarisation is Indian state policy that destabilises regional peace.

## Senate hosts Parliamentary Interface for learning experience of Provincial Assemblies

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Parliamentary Interface regarding learning experience of the Provincial Assemblies Secretariat with Senate Secretariat of Pakistan was held on Monday here at the Parliament House, jointly organized by the Senate of Pakistan and Mustehkam Parliament.

The event focused on providing an overview of the Senate's structure, legislative processes, parliamentary research and overall work of the Senate of Pakistan Secretary Senate, Mohammad Qasim Samad Khan, welcomed the delegation and received a brief introduction from the members of the provincial assemblies accompanying the delegation. Haris Rehman, Principal Secretary, delivered a comprehensive presentation on the structure, electoral college, and functions of the Senate of Pakistan. Muhammad Zubair Thaheem, Joint Secretary briefed the delegation about the reforms and key initiatives undertaken by the Senate to equip itself for modern challenges, a news release said.

Joint Secretary of Legislation in the Senate, Rafi Ullah briefed participants from the Parliamentary Interface on International best practices in the working of the Upper House of the Parliament. He also covered topics such as Senate House proceeding, Senate powers, its legislative role, accountability, and policy guidance. During the session, members stressed upon ways to enhance the Senate's relevance in terms of powers to money bills. Muhammad Azam, Deputy Secretary Legislation also briefed on new Senate practices, including public petitions, PAC, Senate assistance in International Parliamentary Congress and Women Parliamentarian Congress.

Additionally, Iffat Mustapha, Director Research in the Senate, inquired about participants' research scope in their provinces and provided insights into parliamentary research. She outlined the background of research, mentioning the creation of different specializations in the Senate over time. Mustafa emphasized that research not only assists the parliamentarians during their foreign visits but also benefits various departments as well. The participants also visited the Senate Museum, Senate Library, Senate Hall, Data Center and received an informative briefings about them.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf addressing press conference in the Federal Capital.

## Nawaz to take revolutionary steps to steer country out of economic crisis: Abbasi

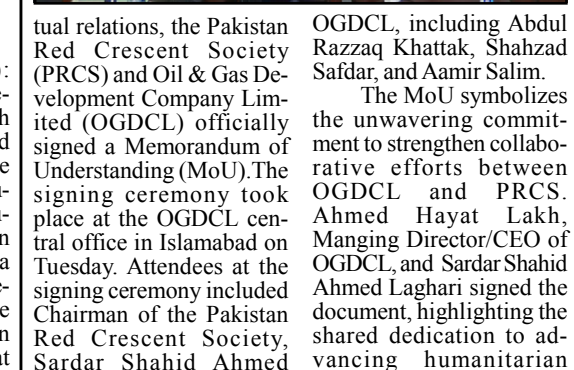
ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Hanif Abbasi on Tuesday said that his party supremo Nawaz Sharif would take practical steps which have never been taken before to get the economy out of the crisis. "If the PML-N gets another chance to rule the country, we will take revolutionary steps to steer the country out of the economic crisis," he said while talking to a private news channel.

He expressed optimism that his party would win the next elections with thumping majority, adding that true change would only be possible when genuine representatives of the people take their place in the legislative chambers. He was of the view that all political parties should promote a culture of civilized language among the youth.

## PRCS, OGDCL forge strategic partnership to advance humanitarian initiatives

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: In a dedicated effort to elevate collaboration in humanitarian endeavors and fortify mutual relations, the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The signing ceremony took place at the OGDCL central office in Islamabad on Tuesday. Attendees at the signing ceremony included Chairman of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society, Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari, Brigadier (Retd) Abdul Hadi, Managing Body Member, Muhammad Abdullah Khan, Secretary General, and representatives from OGDCL, including Abdul Razaq Khattak, Shahzad Saifdar, and Aamir Salim.

The MoU symbolizes the unwavering commitment to strengthen collaborative efforts between OGDCL and PRCS. Ahmed Hayat Lakh, Managing Director/CEO of OGDCL, and Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari signed the document, highlighting the shared dedication to advancing humanitarian causes.



## ISSI holds Round Table discussion: False flag operations and electoral politics of India

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: As the general elections in India draw nearer, the India Study Centre at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized a Round Table discussion on "Unravelling the Nexus: False Flag Operations and Electoral Politics of India." The participants of the Round Table included eminent former diplomats, defence practitioners, think-tank representatives, and members of the media and academic community. The event aimed at assessing potential implications of such incidents on regional stability as well as underscoring the imperative of responsible actions in the South Asian geopolitical landscape. The deliberations delved into the possibilities of another false flag operation in the run-up to Indian elections, the historical precedents, the modus operandi in previous instances, and the effect of such occurrences on public perceptions relating to issues of peace and security, bilateral relations, and national security. Experts analysed the events surrounding the Pulwama incident, Pakistan's swift response after Balakot strike, and the country's simultaneous engagement in the strategic, diplomatic and information arenas. The participants highlighted both Pakistan's firm resolve as well as measured, timely and effective response, consistent with its commitment to ensuring regional stability.

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ISLAMABAD: Artists performing traditional dance during TDCP 19th International Cholistan Desert Rally and Culture Festival, at a local hotel in the Federal Capital.



Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**  
Wednesday January 24, 2024

## Our 'free' media

Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar told a CNBC interviewer during his recent trip to Davos that the media in Pakistan was "freer than in the West", while arguing that Western media operates under far more regulations compared to the media in Pakistan.

Mr Kakar's words brought to mind a similar statement made by former prime minister Imran Khan during his tenure, when he had made the same appraisal of press freedoms in Pakistan in response to a probing question by a foreign interviewer.

The answer had been as scandalising to practising journalists then as it is now. Taken without context, their words seemed to suggest that the relative lack of formal regulatory oversight gives Pakistani media some sort of qualitative edge. Anyone familiar with the country and its media landscape knows that this is clearly not the case.

The truth is that whenever the Pakistani media and working journalists have attempted to assert their freedoms in recent years, they have invariably been made to pay a very heavy price for it.

Starting from the days when Nawaz Sharif last fell out of favour with the establishment, powerful operators acting behind the scenes have used progressively coercive means to whip the media into lining up with their narratives. This publication is among those that were made to suffer the worst of such practices.

So weary have media practitioners now become of the sword constantly hanging above their necks that various journalists' and media workers' representative bodies resolved this past weekend to begin pushing back against it.

The Coalition for Free Media, as it is being called, is a welcome effort that had been long awaited. It is hoped it will be able to wrest back a modicum of the independence Pakistani media has been gradually deprived of over the last decade.

From high-profile abductions that have gone unquestioned to unresolved murders of journalists, the Pakistani media fraternity has suffered much in silence, while being forced to cede more and more control over editorial decision-making to unaccountable individuals.

Press 'advisories', a relic of the Zia era, now seem to be issued every week. Both overt and veiled threats are issued periodically, ensuring that few dare question the state's diktats.

There is a growing realisation that protecting press freedoms is no longer a question of self-preservation or interest: it is clear that the Fourth Estate cannot continue to watch out for the public interest and fulfil its duty to speak truth to power if it allows itself to continue to be divided and exploited by a predatory state.

In this suffocating environment, more and more journalists and media practitioners are realising that their safety is in presenting a united front. More power to those leading the change.

### Jawed Naqvi

It was a day to celebrate and cheer for the ruling party. It was a day to reflect and worry for India's future. It was a day for the BJP to show what many say is its trump card in the run-up to the general elections due in May.

According to this view, the grand but all too rushed inauguration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya was aimed at securing votes, like the way the killing of security personnel in Pulwama did in 2019, or as the politically induced communal carnage in Muzaffarnagar was used in 2014.

It was a day for the opposition to calibrate its response, quietly, a day when Rahul Gandhi battled obstacles in the BJP-ruled Assam in his east-to-west march for unity and justice. It was a day when Mamata Banerjee offered puja at a Durga temple in Kolkata to call for a needed campaign for communal unity. It was the day when several key opposition leaders politely

turned down the invitation to visit Ayodhya.

It stands to reason that the most critical foil to the BJP's religious-nationalist card in the coming elections is INDIA itself, the alliance that powerful regional satraps knit together with the resolve to defeat Prime Minister Modi with a decisive headcount. The opposition is not unaware that National Socialists had 37 per cent votes when Hitler came to power, almost exactly the count that the BJP got in 2019. But one doesn't have to be irrational about these things.

There's a difference between the Nazis of Germany and the current strength of Hindutva forces in India. Hitler didn't hold elections after coming to power. That possibility doesn't exist in India for the near future. It's a defining difference, and it's one the opposition plans to seize with everything it has. It must shepherd the remaining 63pc voters into a fighting unit.

There's nothing to indicate that the premature and apparently des-

perate inauguration of the Ram temple would stand in the way of an opposition bid to win the 2024 polls. If the BJP hopes to exploit a daylong spectacle in Ayodhya to canvass support in the name of the new temple to Ram, that shouldn't worry the opposition at all, provided peace prevails. Do note that the last two Lok Sabha polls were fought with the BJP foregrounding divisive violence, domestic in 2014, and cross-border in 2019.

The opposition needs a plan to counter any scope for communal friction, which many see as a possibility if the temple ploy falters. This is one of two main challenges the INDIA alliance needs to have a plan to thwart.

The other is a questionable presidential tradition. Since the opposition is gearing to fight the election as an alliance and not as a single unit, there is a real chance of a technical glitch.

Should the BJP emerge as the single largest party but without a clear majority, the presi-

dent, would be technically correct to invite Mr Modi to form the government. And we know only too well how wrecking opposition parties has been honed into a craft by Mr Modi. Money would not be a problem looking at the list of the moneybags at the Ayodhya event.

There is a tradition, shown by Rajiv Gandhi, for example, who preferred to sit in the opposition in 1989, despite heading the largest party albeit without a majority. And there is the example of Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1996. Asked first, he jumped at the opportunity to be prime minister for all of 13 days. Those are the truly daunting challenges the opposition faces, not the Ayodhya event.

We don't know, of course, how the date of Jan 22 was arrived at for the temple inauguration by Mr Modi, but it surely meant different things to different people.

According to a TV interview by one of four Shankaracharyas that head the Hindu fold of Sanatan Dharma, a particular as-

trologer from Varanasi was pressed to find an auspicious day in January even though the temple was not complete and is not likely to be for quite a few more months. The idol ceremony requires the temple to be complete, the Shankaracharyas have pointed out. To what avail?

There was a gamut of things happening on Jan 22 in the wider world.

An EU delegation was heading to the Middle East. Ron DeSantis quit the US presidential race as Republican hopeful to throw his weight behind Donald Trump. For the Palestinians, particularly those in Gaza, it was another day of trauma, ironically at the hands of those who were themselves victims of unconscionable brutality, but in Europe. It was a dreary day also in the uprooted lives of the victims of an unending war between Russia and Ukraine.

It was also a day when all 11 convicted rapists in the Gujarat pogroms were back in prison. They surrendered together at 11.45 pm on Sunday, re-

ports say, to comply with the supreme court's refusal to extend their premature release by the BJP establishment.

The apex court shot down the reprieve albeit on technical grounds. It must have been a sombre day for Bilkis Bano who, though she saw her tormentors jailed again by the kindly judges, must have sensed an entire culture of sectarianism and hate uncorked in Gujarat in 2002 now seeking divine blessings in Ayodhya.

Religion is a peculiar thing. Mahatma Gandhi was an ardent devotee of Ram, and his killer's name was Nathuram, literally Lord Ram. It's not unusual for this to happen. Zealots of any faith pounce on their own quite readily. But Gandhiji's Ram, as depicted in his favourite bhajan, was a defender of the weak and the fallen. Ishwar and Allah were harmoniously enshrined in his telling of Ram, something negated by the divisive construct of a new cult Mr Modi may have unveiled in Ayodhya. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Mental health comes first

### Eman Hassan Jugg

According to a WHO study, at least one per cent of the total world's population dies by suicide every 40 seconds across the world. It further states that 5.0 per cent of people in the world try to kill themselves at least once during their lifetime.

Over three-quarters (77 per cent) of global suicides in 2019 occurred in low- and middle-income countries, according to a WHO report published in 2021. There is no significant change in this trend and a high suicide rate continues to be a serious and pressing concern in Pakistan as well.

Every other day, there are posts on social media describing a suicide case where someone has either died by suicide or attempted to take their lives. Pakistan has had a consistent suicide rate - 8.9 suicides per 100,000 people - since 2000. This is a deeply concerning social issue that holds significant legal implications as well.

Till December 2022, suicide was classified as a criminal act in Pakistan under Section 325 of the Pa-

kistan Penal Code which imposed a punishment of one-year imprisonment along with a fine for those convicted of attempted suicide.

The government recognized that the purpose of the law should be to deter people from committing this act and identify key contributing factors that urge people to end their lives. The existing legal framework was not fulfilling this purpose which was evident from the persistent high suicide rates throughout the years.

This section was ultimately repealed by the government in 2022. However, merely repealing the criminalization of suicide does not present a solution to this deeply entrenched suicidal problem. The suicide issue in Pakistan necessitates a comprehensive methodology that can address the root causes and challenges faced by those who may experience a deep sense of hopelessness and despair leading to suicidal thoughts.

The causes of suicides in Pakistan are multifaceted, rooted in a complex interplay of social, economic, cultural, and individual factors. Socioeco-

nom challenges, such as poverty and unemployment, have a significant contribution towards this, given the economic crisis in the country with high inflation rates and political instability. Gender disparities, prevalent in aspects like workplace harassment of women, rape cases, and instances of domestic violence, also play a role in elevating suicide risks.

Cultural pressures and societal expectations, including the pressure to conform to traditional norms and meet familial expectations also drive a sense of isolation. All of these issues ultimately cause severe mental health problems. In the majority of cases, no medical assistance is sought due to a lack of awareness, social stigma attached to it and limited opportunities created by the government to address this cause. As a result, people often see suicide as the only option.

The government can play a pivotal role in fighting this issue and adopting strategies to deal with it. A high suicide rate in the country reflects the government's failure to take measures to develop a strong and effective mental health policy. Initiatives

that prioritize mental health funding, training healthcare professionals, and establishing mental health facilities can be supported through legislative measures.

Follow-up care by health workers for people who have attempted suicide is critical since they are at great risk of trying again. Social support within communities can help protect people who are vulnerable to suicide by building their coping skills. Communities must provide nurturing environments to those who are vulnerable, and governments can set a good example to enable them to do so.

A major aspect of this is awareness among people regarding the sensitivity of this issue and the ways to deal with it. Responsible media reporting has also been shown to decrease suicide rates. This includes educating people about suicide, risk factors and where to seek help, and avoiding the detailed descriptions of suicidal acts.

Governments can help the media with these efforts by releasing public service announcements that raise awareness, identifying and treating mental disor-

ders as early as possible, and ensuring that those vulnerable to suicide receive the care they need before it is too late. Mental health policies should be integrated into overall healthcare services, and governments should ensure sufficient funding to improve these services.

The existing major legislative framework governing mental health is the Mental Health Ordinance of 2001 under which each province has adopted its own legislation. However, the missing factor is that none of these frameworks lay out a detailed scheme or plan to handle issues which are the major factor of high suicide rates in Pakistan.

It is crucial to adopt a holistic approach that encompasses mental health awareness, socioeconomic development, legal reform, and cultural shifts towards fostering a more supportive and understanding society. By integrating legal measures with broader societal initiatives, Pakistan can work towards creating an environment that prioritizes mental wellbeing and provides support for those in need.

One of the initiatives

undertaken by the Pakistan government is the launch of a mental health app called 'Humraaz' in March 2023. This app aims to give access to and help anyone with suicidal thoughts or any form of a mental health emergency, providing treatment to patients under complete confidentiality. This app allows arranging appointments with psychiatrists and psychologists, and the government has pledged to work towards hiring and training professionals to combat the epidemic of mental health illness.

Improved surveillance and monitoring of suicide attempts is required for effective suicide prevention strategies. This includes registration of suicide cases, hospital-based registries of suicide attempts and nationally representative surveys collecting information about self-reported suicide attempts. All these measures collectively can have an impact on improving the living standard in Pakistan and fighting mental health issues over time to develop a flourishing society that provides a safe breathing space to all. -- Courtesy TheNews

## Winners and losers

### Dr Niaz Murtaza

Who will the winners and losers be in the 2024 polls? Some jokingly say that even though the polls themselves are not certain, the winner is...

But if a (favourable) winner is certain, why would anyone try to delay them, especially as the US may link a critical new IMF loan to polls? So, barring a national calamity, polls on Feb 8 look certain, still months late unconstitutionally. And yet there is doubt.

There is often uncertainty even in the US despite credible opinion and actual polls. In our context, a recent poll shows the PTI and PML-N close in Punjab. But are our opinion polls reliable? The 2013 and 2018 ones were reasonably so. Such polls take national or provincial samples and not constituency ones. So, they predict the vote ratios of parties overall but not their number of seats.

The average of four polls (Gallup, Pulse, IPOR and SDPI) completed within two months of the 2018 polls had the PTI, PML-N and PPP getting 28.3 per cent, 27.5pc and 16.5pc votes respectively. They actually got 31.8pc, 24.4pc and 13pc. So, they erred from the actual ratios by less than 4pc, which is common even in the US.

In 2013, the average of two polls (Gallup and IRI) showed the PML-N, PPP and the PTI getting 36pc, 15.5pc and 16pc of the votes, even closer to the 33pc, 15pc and 17pc actual ratios. So, the polls of such firms can't be rejected outright as biased or unscientific, despite the many constraints in carrying out accurate surveys in Pakistan.

But how did the vote ratios translate into seats? The party with the highest actual vote ratio

got 10-15pc more seats: the PTI 43pc seats in 2018 and PML-N 46pc in 2013 but the PPP got only 2pc more in 2008.

What can we expect in 2024? Gallup has with-held national results this time. But its recent poll shows the PTI at 34pc and PML-N at 32pc in all-crucial Punjab, ie, close as in 2018 nationally. Given the 2013 and 2018 trends, the PTI may win 40-45pc of seats there.

The PTI got 45pc support in KP (the PML-N and JUI-F together got 24pc) and 19pc in Sindh (PPP got 42pc) in this poll. It would suggest a PTI set-up nationally and in Punjab and KP, a PPP one in Sindh, with Balochistan unclear.

There are two big caveats though. Polling over the months in 2018 had shown the PTI's vote ratio increasing but PML-N's falling. Gallup polls over the months in Punjab now show the reverse. This momentum may mean a PML-N win. But both trends are odd. In 2017-18, the PML-N had given 6pc growth, low inflation, CPEC and a cut in terrorism and power outages. In 2022-23, it gave near-zero growth and record inflation.

So, neither trend reflects party outcomes. But the commonality is that in 2018, the PML-N faced the establishment's wrath which now PTI faces even more. This may have played a key role in changing the choices of voter blocs watching for such signals.

The bigger caveat is there is no PTI in the polls, unfairly removed by the party symbol case verdict. No law allows the Election Commission of Pakistan to reject party poll results. But it did so twice with the PTI. Laws allow the ECP to handle national polls disputes via tribunals run by

judges, as it isn't a judicial body. Arguably, the ECP nixed the PTI's party polls without law and capacity. PTI horses must run as independents though it's unclear if any law says so.

Party symbols don't represent their registration but are given in elections due to illiteracy. The ECP says PTI is still registered with it. So, its winners must be treated as its assembly representatives, subject to party loyalty laws, even if the PTI's symbol doesn't appear on ballots.

Forcing them to run as independents may confuse voters, and more critically, make PTI winners open to poaching by others waiting with their nets. It all appears designed. It follows the imprisonment of the PTI's top leaders, forced desertion and rally bans. More novel ploys may emerge to undercut the party until and after polls.

All this may make 2024 polls more rigged than the 2018 and 1990s ones and on a par with those held in 1985 and 2002 by unconstitutional regimes. Similar rigging can apparently happen even under constitutional rule.

This may usher in an inept and weak PML-N regime reliant on small parties, more so than the PTI in 2018. Even if the PTI wins by magic, we will still have an inept set-up with uneasy ties with all key internal and external forces.

The only (tiny) hope is if the winner is allowed to appoint a competent cabinet, letting the Sharifs or Imran Khan run the parties, as Congress did after Rajiv Gandhi's death to usher in India's progress under Manmohan Singh. Otherwise, even if the winners are not certain, the losers are the masses. -- Courtesy Dawn

### Shahzad Sharjeel

Blinding pretenders to the throne has been an age-old favourite in our part of the world. In addition to making the aspirant an example for other external adventurers and curbing in-house ambition, the injury also added to the challenge of running chaotic kingdoms that frequently experienced uprisings the monarch usually had to quell, leading the forces at the empire's disposal personally in the battlefield.

Lest anyone assume that the despicable practice was limited to kings and their sons or brothers, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Mallu Adil Shah of Bijapur was blinded on his Maratha grandmother's orders to promote another brother in the line of succession.

In an age when physical prowess was at least as much, if not more, important than the intellectual capacity to mount a credible challenge, blinding an opponent must have appeared as sufficient a minimisation of future risk as possible, short of outright extermination. Maybe, in their sick minds, they occupied a status one rung higher than those of murderers.

In the Bhagalpur district of Bihar in 1980, police officials, with the knowledge of at least one minister and active indifference of officers as senior as DIG and IG, went about blinding as many as 87 suspects in custody over a nine-month period. They claimed this was the only way to stem the tide of criminal activities in the area. The readers shall be spared the gruesome details of how these protectors of life and honour went about

## Blinding rage

their gory business. It took some brilliant and courageous investigative reporting to expose the case. Inquiries were initiated, and 15 police officials, including the superintendent of Bhagalpur Central Prison, were suspended.

The superintendent, who had forwarded the victims' petitions for relief to the chief judicial magistrate, along with his forwarding letter, was accused of failing to record and report the undertrials' condition upon receiving their custody at the jail. The paity bhais (people wearing the same belt/badge) closed ranks and claimed that enraged mobs man-handled all the victims and that they were brought to the police stations already blinded.

The Indian supreme court heard the matter for three years. It used 'grandiloquent' language to express its anguish, as Arun Shourie, former editor of the Indian Express, puts it in his book *The Commissioner For Lost Causes*. However, the court did little by way of punishing the policemen whose suspensions were, one by one, revoked, and some were even promoted to more important positions. Those victims who survived the ordeal got Rs30,000 deposited in their bank accounts as compensation to live off its interest, a grand amount of Rs750 a month at its highest point before it was discontinued altogether in 2019.

Recently, the caretaker chief minister of Punjab approved action against 18 Directorate of Drug Control officials in the Avastin eye injection case. More than 60 people have lost their vision completely or partially because of the

administration, without consent, of apparently contaminated supplies of the drug. The inspectors were responsible for ensuring safety standards.

Some people would consider it unfair to equate the Bhagalpur atrocity with Punjab officialdom's failure. Consider that expired stents were put in people's hearts not too long ago. Technicians and, in one case, a security guard were found to be performing surgeries. According to media reports, a doctor and a motor mechanic were running a kidney transplant racket. Inquiries and 'action' will be initiated; however, 'gonn brothers,' too, have each other's back. Even if the culprits are apprehended, tried, and punished, how do you bring back the dead or compensate for a limb or an organ?

The days of absolute monarchs and tyrants may have been over, and the modern state guarantees rights and protections to its citizens. However, in the absence of constant vigilance, accountability, and timely justice, tiny state officials and common criminals can turn diabolical.

One is reminded of Iqbal's poem *Ghulam Qadir Rohilla*, in which he laments the brutality of the invader who gouged out Mughal emperor Shah Alam II's eyes upon overthrowing him. The Rohilla at least had an old grove to hide behind, as his erstwhile retainer had purportedly gotten him castrated in childhood to serve inside the royal harem. What harm did Punjab's hapless citizens bring the health officials to deprive them of their sight? -- Courtesy Dawn



## No citizen should feel like a minority on account of religion: CM Sindh

KARACHI (APP): The Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice @ Maqbool Baqar speaking at a conference for Minority Rights said that no citizen should feel like a minority in their own country on account of religion.

The CM that he has always believed that confronting uncomfortable truths and introspection is the key to a better future. He added that conferences like these also have another crucial function: they reiterate our commitment to upholding the rights of non-Muslim citizens, particularly their right to freely profess, practice, and propagate their faith.

The conference was organized by the Department for Minorities Affairs in collaboration with the Pakistan Arts Council at its auditorium on Tuesday.

Today, fundamental rights and civil liberties are in jeopardy throughout the world as right-wing regimes attempt to further marginalize vulnerable communities, the CM said and added that the Indian

Supreme Court validated the regime's decision to build a temple on the site of the Babri mosque. "At the same time, courts throughout Pakistan have done well to uphold religious liberties," he said.

Baqar said that in 2014, the Supreme Court took suo motu cognizance of an attack on a church in Peshawar. While laying down clear directions for the protection of religious sites, the Supreme Court held that "We are all members of one race of humans with common challenges, and we cannot confront these challenges without forging a common alliance. This paradigm shift in the world around us can be achieved at the international and domestic levels only by discouraging sectarian, racial and ethnic biases which are violative of shared values and fundamental rights, and by the promotion of and strict compliance with these values and rights."

The CM said that in Salamat Mansha's case, the Supreme Court granted bail to a person accused of

offences against religion.

Maqbool Baqar said that the Supreme Court in Salamat Mansha's case also highlighted how such allegations were often levelled to settle personal scores and the tendency of violent mobs to pronounce judgments before the courts of law have declared a person guilty. "The significance of these judgments however exceeds their jurisprudential value," he said and added that to the contrary, their significance was underscored by the Court refusing to be swayed by the prevailing winds of extremism. Furthermore, judgments like these are also significant in assuring citizens that their rights do not rest on tenuous footings.

Baqar said that unfortunately, extremism and bigotry have seeped across large segments of our population. He said that concerted efforts and forging alliances with progressives would allow us to reverse the tide of violent extremism.



LAHORE: Federal Health Minister Nadeem Jan called on Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House.

## Governor emphasizes importance of alternative medicine in Punjab

**Independent Report**

LAHORE: Federal Health Minister Nadeem Jan called on Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House Lahore. During the meeting, a detailed discussion was held about the measures taken in the health sector. Punjab Governor appreciated the services rendered by Federal Health Minister and gave suggestions for reforming the system in view of misuse of health card in the past. Governor Punjab also emphasized the importance of alternative medicine.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that providing basic health facilities to the people is very important. He emphasized the situation is continuously improving

due to the measures taken in the health sector. He said that Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) should also pay special attention to the cleanliness of infrastructure, kitchens, and washrooms of medical colleges, hospitals and student hostels.

On this occasion, Federal Health Minister Nadeem Jan informed Governor Punjab about the measures taken in the health sector. He said that revolutionary measures are being taken along with the policy of producing the basic ingredients of medicines at the local level in Pakistan.

Later, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman/Chancellor presided over the 19<sup>th</sup> Convocation of Lahore College for Women University. Speaking on this

occasion, Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that our religion has laid great emphasis on education. The first word revealed to our last Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) from Allah Almighty was Iqra, which means to read, to seek knowledge. Governor Punjab urged the students to develop a penchant for knowledge.

Governor Punjab said that education provides opportunities to get a job, but the real success is one's character that guarantees success in life and hereafter. He said that the students should develop qualities like truthfulness, honesty, and tolerance in their character. Governor Punjab said that there are many positive things in our , we should look at the positive aspects of society .

## Launches Bannu Economic Zone Caretaker CM vows zero tolerance for corruption

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Justice (Retd) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah, has taken notice of complaints regarding undue problems in the Inteqal of land (land transfer deeds).

He has directed the Board of Revenue Land to obtain records of land Inteqal deeds from the last four months.

The Chief Minister has instructed the records to be scrutinized in the CM Complaint Cell, and individuals should be contacted by telephone to ensure that no additional amounts were wrongfully taken from them during the Inteqal of land process.

He announced a zero-tolerance policy of the government against corruption and warned of strict action against officials involved in corrupt practices.

Meanwhile, Caretaker

Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Justice (Retd) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah formally launched the Bannu Economic Zone here on Tuesday.

The launching ceremony was held here in the Chief Minister's Secretariat wherein the Caretaker Chief Minister also distributed plot allotment letters among intending investors. Bannu Economic Zone is 14<sup>th</sup> zone of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Besides, Caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Dr Amer Abdullah, Secretary Industries, Commerce & Technical Education, Zulfikar Ali Shah and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KP-EZDMC).



HYDERABAD: Member Rabita Committee MQM Pakistan Abdul Rouf Siddiqi talking to newsmen during a press conference at Pakka Qila Ground.

## Work is in progress on Orange train to solar power: Hasan Murad

**Independent Report**

LAHORE: Provincial Transport Minister Ibrahim Hasan Murad said in a statement that on the instructions of the Chief Minister of Punjab, the work on the project to shift the Orange train to solar in Lahore in the first phase is going on rapidly.

The provincial minister said that on the recommendation of the Energy Department, the talks with NESPAK have entered the final stages, but after signing the agreement with NESPAK, the study will be completed within 3 months and after the study,

the solarization project will be started.

The provincial minister further said that solar panels will be installed at Depots, stabling yards and stations of Orange train while solar grid stations will be constructed at stabling yards and orange train Depots.

Ibrahim Hasan Murad said that along with the Orange train, the stations will also be transferred to solar energy, while according to an estimate, it will be possible to save more than 3 billion rupees annually.

## Kundi promises people for resolving their issues

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Central Information Secretary and Candidate for NA-44, DI Khan-I constituency, Faisal Karim Kundi vowed to address all the major issues being faced by the people of his constituency.

He stated this while addressing a public meeting organized here at the residence of renowned businessman Haji Ghulam Subhani in Mohallah Dabba Tabakhi.

Kundi said the worst electricity loadshedding was being carried out in Dera Ismail Khan, adding,

most of the areas here were facing up to 16-18 hours and some areas up to 22 hours of power outages. Besides, the Gas facility was also not available for the people of this area during winter, he added.

He promised that all the issues including electricity load shedding and gas outages would be resolved by empowering the people if his party would come into power.

He said the PPP believed in the public mandate and it would form the next government with the help of the people.



KARACHI: A view of massive traffic jam at nursery area in Provincial Capital.

## Two killed, three injured in Karachi shooting incident

KARACHI (APP): At least two people were killed while three others sustained bullet injuries on Tuesday when some unknown motorcycle assailants opened indiscriminate fire on a milk and confectionery shop located on Abul Hassan Isphani Road Karachi.

The lethal gunfire claimed the life of a shopkeeper Abdul Bari on the spot, while another individual, Muhammad Ayub, and two more injured were currently undergoing treatment at a

nearby hospital, according to a private news channel. Eyewitnesses from the milk shop, who suffered injuries during the assault, claimed that the assailants were masked and swiftly fled the scene immediately after the shooting.

The police recovered a 9mm pistol with 12 bullets from the crime scene, while an investigation is underway to apprehend the perpetrators and determine the motive behind this act of violence.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Hajji Ghulam Ali talking to traders and shopkeepers those who are fire affected during his visit to Saddar Bazaar.

## KP Governor writes to caretaker CM for provision of medicines to hospitals

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Ghulam Ali has written a letter to the interim Chief Minister Arshad Hussain Shah urging immediate provision of essential and emergency medicines to government hospitals.

Drawing the attention of the KP CM to the issue, the Governor said that the shortage of emergency medicines including life-saving drugs, anti-rabies vaccines and immunoglobulins in the government hospitals was a matter

of grave concern and posing a threat to the poor and vulnerable population of the province.

He said the issue was also highlighted by the leading newspapers and needed decisive action and intervention

of the interim CM as the issue was tarnishing the public image of the caretaker set up.

The Governor urged the caretaker CM to take prompt action and ensure the provision of emergency and essential medicines in the government hospitals.

## Interim bail of PTI leaders extended

PESHAWAR (APP): The interim bail of PTI's former Deputy Speaker Mehmood Jan, cabinet members and MPAs in corruption and illegal appointments cases was extended till February 13.

PTI's former Deputy Speaker Mehmood Jan, Taimur Saleem Jhagra, Fazal Elahi, Kamran Bangash and Muhammad Asif, MPAs Ajmal Khan, Guldad Khan and Aftab Alam were having allegations of corruption and illegal appointments in different districts.

The court had already granted them interim bail which was further extended.

## Efforts to be made to regularize slums: Alwari

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Renowned intellectual, ex-parliamentarian and candidate for NA-168, Syed Tabish Alwari has said that he would make serious efforts for the regularization of slums in Bahawalpur.

He said this during his meeting with the Christian community in Islami Colony Bahawalpur here. He said that tens of thousands of poor people used to live in slums. He emphasized the need for practical measures should be taken to regularize slums.

He said that if he won the general elections from NA-168, he would make serious efforts for the regularization of slums. He further said that people should vote for honest candidates who were sincere to resolve their issues.

## Naqvi inspects public welfare projects

**Independent Report**

LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi inspected Lahore Ring Road's southern loop-III, Babu Sabu toll plaza, Liberty's Capri cinema and inaugurated the SPU's operations room at city traffic police lines at Manawan.

The CM conducted a detailed visit of 8-KM long LRR's SL-III from Maraka to Adda Plot to check the progress, said a handout issued here on Tuesday.

He checked the quality of asphalt work at various locations. Expressing optimism, he anticipated the project's swift completion, ensuring seamless traffic flow, given the accomplishment of both major and minor structures.

## ANF seizes 190 kg drugs in six operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in its crackdown against drug traffickers managed to recover over 190 kg drugs and arrested seven accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday.

He informed that 3 kg Ice drug was recovered from three Doha-bound passengers in two different operations at Islamabad Airport. 500 grams heroin was recovered from a passenger going to Bahrain at Bacha Khan Airport.

52 heroin-filled capsules were recovered from the stomach of a passenger going to Doha at Allama Iqbal Airport.

In another operation, 186 kg hashish was recovered from Toor Dara border Khyber area.

In the sixth operation,



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Raza Naqvi along with Inspector General Police Punjab inspecting latest Security Cameras after inaugurating Special Protection Unit (Special Operation Room) at city traffic Police Lines Manawa.

## ECP holds media session regarding elections reporting

**Independent Report**

PESHAWAR (APP): Joint Provincial Election Commissioner of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Aziz Bahadur on Tuesday highlighted the importance of media in the transparent conduct of elections in the current era. He said this in a Media Session at Peshawar Press Club regarding the Election Commission of Pakistan's code of conduct for media during electoral proceedings.

Aziz Bahadur highlighted the importance of media in the transparent conduct of elections. He said that the collaboration between the media and the Election Commission of Pakistan is crucial and important. He said that accreditation cards are being issued to media representatives according to the prescribed procedures to cover elections properly. Aziz Bahadur informed the

journalists that preparations for the elections on February 8 are in their final stages, and arrangements for peaceful and free elections are being made in continuous coordination with administrative bodies and other relevant authorities.

Responding to media queries, Joint Commissioner Bahadur mentioned that accreditation cards for reporters and observers carrying out training for polling staff and security personnel provide access to polling stations.

He also clarified that the results of postal ballots will be counted alongside the preliminary results. Asif Ali Yasin, Director Elections, presented a comprehensive overview of the ethical framework and legal framework concerning elections, ensuring fair and reliable elections.

## Governor visits fire affected Time Center Plaza

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali, was here Tuesday when the fire affected Time Center Shopping Plaza Saddar and listened to the complaints of people. He expressed sympathies with shop owners and said that the government desires the restart of activities in the fire-affected plaza.

Assuring cooperation to shop owners, he said that the provincial government would be contacted to provide financial assistance, including interest-free loans, to owners whose shops were gutted in the fire. On the occasion, the governor was informed that 65 shops and 17 godowns in the time center have been turned to ashes, while 60 shops are gutted in United Market. Mobile phones and accessories worth millions of rupees were destroyed during the blaze.



RAWALPINDI: Special Representative to the Prime Minister for Religious Harmony & Islamic Countries and Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi addressing the religious scholars and students at Rawalpindi Jamia Masjid.



## BOI assures support for transferring of 'Nantong HiTide Biotechnology'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Secretary Board of Investment, Dr. Muhammad Sohail Rajput on Tuesday assured full support for the establishment and transfer of Nantong HiTide Biotechnology's to Pakistan.

Secretary Board of Investment, Dr. Muhammad Sohail Rajput, hosted a distinguished delegation led by Lin Xuyue, President of Nantong HiTide Biotechnology, in a productive meeting at his office, said a press release issued here.

Nantong HiTide, Biotechnology is engaged in Veterinary bio-product manufacturing and supply. There is an emphasis on innovation and R&D other than production, sales, technology consultation, and service of biological solutions for

animal disease control. Their commitment to providing safe and high-quality products aligns with their dedication to serving farmers in addressing animal health challenges.

The discussions during the meeting centered around a potential collaboration for the development of a foot and mouth disease vaccine in Pakistan.

The proposed collaboration includes potential avenues such as establishing a lab in Pakistan, joint ventures, and research and development partnerships.

Nantong HiTide Biotechnology aims to bring its advanced technology and personalized support to Pakistan's agriculture and livestock sector.

Chen Shang, a Board

Member of HiTide Biotechnology, highlighted the effectiveness and affordability of their vaccines, aiming to enhance animal health for farmers in Pakistan.

The company plans to establish a new facility in Pakistan, focusing on the development and production of high-quality vaccines for cattle, pets, poultry, and other animals.

The company will establish its lab in Pakistan and transfer technology. Nantong HiTide Biotechnology was established in 2017 by Dr. Lin Xuyue, the company stands as a leading private high-tech enterprise, specializing in animal vaccines and adjuvants. Notably, some of the company's products have outperformed industry giants like Pfizer and Boehringer Ingelheim.



ISLAMABAD: CEO EnerTech Abdullah al-Mutairi called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

## Pakistan offers vast investment opportunities in energy, IT sectors: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday said Pakistan offered vast opportunities for international investment in energy, Information Technology and other sectors.

He was talking to Chief Executive Officer of EnerTech Abdullah al-Mutairi who called on him here. During the meeting, the prime minister welcomed the investment by the international companies like EnerTech.

## Sauqib Fayyaz says: FPCCI to support look Africa initiative & FTAs

**Independent Report**  
KARACHI: Mr. Saqib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI, has stressed the absence of free trade agreements (FTAs) with the African nations should be addressed; which, in turn, has limited our trade volume with a huge continent comprising of 54 countries. There are significant economies in Africa with whom we can multiply our trade volumes within years – both bilaterally & exports to the region cumulatively, he added.

Mr. Saqib Fayyaz

Mr. Saqib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI, maintained that the apex body will fully support Look Africa Policy Initiative of the Ministry of Commerce, Pakistan; and, will advocate signing of free trade agreements (FTAs) with the African nations. He specifically emphasized to have bilateral FTAs with the

top 7 economies of Africa; i.e. Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa, Algeria, Ethiopia, Morocco and Kenya – accounting for approximately 78 percent of the total GDP of Africa; with each having country GDP in upwards of \$100 billion.

It is pertinent to note that The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) and Pan African Chambers of Commerce & Industry (PACCI) have held a high-profile interactive session to identify and explore the areas of mutual interests:



trade promotion activities; chamber-to-chamber linkages; investments & JVs; business tourism and economic cooperation.

Mr. Saqib Fayyaz Magoon, Acting President FPCCI, apprised that Pakistan's exports to Africa, as a whole, demonstrated stagnation at around \$1,500 million in 2022.

## Chairman says: PARC using tech to empower farmers, agriculture sector

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali on Tuesday said that technology is rapidly reshaping agriculture in Pakistan and creating more investment opportunities which would lift rural areas and empower traditional farming techniques.

Talking to the PTV news channel, he said that PARC continued leading capacity-building programs for individuals engaged in agriculture across various regions of the province on modern agricultural techniques.

"The agriculture sector needs investment. Connecting agriculture with technology is the need of the hour," he said.

"There is a need to improve agricultural productivity through farm mechanism and promote agricultural credit for rural

economies, especially to purchase modern technologies," he added.

PARC has also been organizing training programs to provide knowledge on the application of gain-sharing tools and share best practices to make agribusiness enterprises more productive and profitable. He also stressed that the farmers should not only adopt this technology but they should also create awareness among other farmers and guide them properly regarding the hydroponics technology to avoid food shortages in our country in the future.

Replying to a question, he said that agricultural research can play a major role in improving the productivity of these crops to enhance their profitability for the farmer, adding that it is the need of the hour to strengthen industry-academia ties.



LAHORE: Vendors busy in preparing party flags of political party Pakistan People's Party in their shop Ganpat area in Provincial Capital, ahead of the country's general elections 2024.

## POL import bill declines by 13.78% in 1st half of FY 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): The imports of the overall petroleum group contracted by 13.78 per cent during the first six months of the current fiscal year (2023-24) compared to the corresponding period of the last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. The total imports of the petroleum group during July-December (2023-24) stood at \$ 8,005.784 million against the imports of \$9,285.522 million during the same period of last year. Among petroleum commodities, the import of petroleum products declined by 24 per cent, from \$ 4,202.185

million last year to \$3,193.849 million during the period under review. Likewise, the imports of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) declined by 4.96 per cent from \$ 1,949.704 million last year to \$ 1,852.996 million this year whereas petroleum crude dipped by 5.94 per cent from \$ 2,776.186 million to \$ 2,611.179 million. The import of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) went down by 2.69 per cent in the first six months of the current fiscal year and stood at \$347.669 million compared to \$357.267 in the corresponding period in 2022.

## Pakistan to facilitate Chinese companies in field of smart city construction

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan is actively promoting digitization and embracing new technologies and industries to foster comprehensive economic and social development.

"The Pakistan Embassy in China will continue to provide comprehensive support and assistance to Chinese companies, including Beijing Urban Construction Intelligent Control (BUIC), in facilitating the implementation of big data projects in Pakistan and promoting cooperation between China and Pakistan in the field of smart city construction,"

said Aslam Chaudhary, Economic Minister in Pakistan Embassy in Beijing.

Aslam Chaudhary led a delegation to BUIC to enhance bilateral cooperation in the field of digital city development.

During the visit, the delegation toured BUIC's state-of-the-art facilities, which encompassed the Digital Experience Center and the Urban Rail Transit Cloud Intelligent IoT Laboratory.

They were highly impressed by the digital transportation and smart city-related products, with a special focus on the

integrated intelligent control center.

The integrated control center incorporates a range of facilities and functions, such as station control rooms, customer service centers, fire control rooms and ticket booths, contributing to intelligent operation and maintenance, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Tuesday.

Following the visit, both parties engaged in an in-depth discussion encompassing topics such as the upgrade and renovation of the railway system within Pakistan and the development of the Gwadar Port.

## Vegetable dehydration initiative can help generate handsome income

MULTAN (APP): The National Productivity Organization (NPO) arranged an awareness session on vegetable dehydration to improve farmers' income and improve exports.

General Manager NPO Wajeeha Ahmed Abbasi while addressing the participants at Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) remarked that NPO was imparting information about vegetable dehydration across the country. The government is committed to enhancing

vegetable exports, she added.

President Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mian Rashid Iqbal stated that there were immense opportunities in foreign markets for vegetable export. He lamented that about 50 percent of vegetables perished due to a lack of different facilities.

He stated that vegetables' dehydration was a good project and it would surely help not only save the vegetables but also lead to improvement in exports.



ISLAMABAD: Visitors look Kinnow during Orange Festival, at COMSTECH in the Federal Capital.

## SCCI welcomes opening of Torkham border for trade

PESHAWAR (APP): Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) welcomed opening of Torkham border for trade early morning on Tuesday after successful Pak-Afghan talks and said that bilateral trade will be promoted after this important move.

In a joint statement issued here on Tuesday, Fuad Ishaq, president Sanaulah Khan, senior vice president and Ijaz Khan Afridi, vice president of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said the opening of Pak-Afghan Torkham will not only promote mutual trade but difficulties were faced by traders and exporters owing to closure of the border since last 10 days will be removed.

The SCCI office bearers hoped bilateral trade and export process will be sped up after the opening of Torkham border as result of successful talks between Pak-Afghan governments and administration.

It is noted to mention here that the Torkham border had remained closed since the last ten days. Fuad Ishaq was of the view that hundreds of trucks-loaded with goods, especially perishable items were being stranded at Torkham border, and caused huge financial losses to traders and exporters and also bilateral trade and export.



RAWALPINDI: A woman is buying children warm wool caps from a street vendor alongside Murree road in the city.

## Sargodha Citrus Fest kicks off in Federal capital

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: The first-ever two-day 'Sargodha Citrus Fest' kicked off at COMSTECH on Tuesday displaying around 45 varieties of citrus fruit and its products attracting a large number of visitors.

The fest is being organized by the University of Sargodha and COMSTECH jointly where the visitors enjoy the products, especially citrus fruit-made cakes, juices, desserts, candies and green tea besides a variety of citrus fruit.

The varieties of citrus fruit including Rangpur Lime, Carrizo Citrange, Gada Dahi, Rangpur, Gilgil, Mitha, Pishawari Mittha, Kinnow, Seedless Lemon, Jati Khati, Bara Masii, Ornad Blood, Mosambi, Murcott and many others were exhibited through several stalls.

The citrus fest is set to captivate visitors especially fruit enthusiasts of all ages on Wednesday too offering citrus-infused culinary delights and



ISLAMABAD: Vendors busy in washing oranges at Pir Wadhai.

## Ahsan Zafar meets Hungary envoy to boost bilateral relations

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari leading a delegation on Tuesday visited the Embassy of Hungary and held a meeting with Ambassador of Hungary Bela Fazekas to explore avenues for promoting bilateral trade and economic relations between both countries.

Addressing the delegation, the Ambassador of Hungary welcomed the ICCI delegation and said that Hungary and Pakistan need to increase bilateral trade and economic relations to get mutual benefits, said a news release here.

He stressed close collaboration between the national and regional chambers of commerce of both countries to explore all untapped areas for business cooperation.

He said direct B2B meetings between the private sectors of both countries can play an effective role in strengthening bilateral

trade ties. He assured that his Embassy would cooperate in promoting business linkages between the two countries to further improve bilateral business and investment relations. Ahsan Zafar said that bilateral trade of around US\$ 80 million between Pakistan and Hungary is not reflective of their actual potential and there is a great potential to increase it. Both countries should develop close cooperation between their SMEs that will help boost business relations to their real potential, he added.

Ahsan said both countries should encourage Zoom meetings between their SMEs, which will help improve bilateral trade ties said adding that Pakistan can export many products to Hungary including pharmaceuticals, surgical instruments, sports goods, IT, and cutlery products, and stressed that Hungary should increase its imports from Pakistan to get quality products at competitive prices.

## SBP to announce monetary policy on January 29

ISLAMABAD (APP): State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will announce Monetary Policy on January 29 in a meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee.

According to the SBP's press release, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will meet on Monday, January 29 to decide about the Monetary Policy, a press release issued by SBP said.

Governor, SBP Jameel Ahmad will announce the monetary policy decision at a press conference on the same day after the MPC meeting.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Three ships, Conti Courage, Bolan and Kaisa I carrying containers, Gas oil and LPG, berthed at Container Terminal, Oil Terminal and Engro Terminal respectively on Monday, 22nd January-2024.

Meanwhile, three more ships MSC Vilda X, Marangas Asclepius and Limra with Containers and LPG also arrived at the outer anchorage of the port during the last 24 hours.

A total of 07 ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them, two Conti Courage and AAI Prelude left the port on Tuesday morning and three more ships, Ashika Victoria, Bolan and Mookda Naree are expected to sail on today afternoon.

During the last 24 hours stood at 90,133 tonnes, comprising 71,929 tonnes imports cargo and 18,204 tonnes export cargo, including containers cargo carried in 1,160 Containers (429 TEUs Imports and 731 TEUs export) handled at the port.

## Rupee gains 06 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistani Rupee on Tuesday witnessed an appreciation of 06 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs279.79 against the previous day's closing of Rs279.85.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs279 and Rs281 respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by 19 paise to close at Rs305.03 against the last day's closing of Rs304.84, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen went up by 01 paise and closed at Rs1.89, whereas an increase of Rs1.02 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound.



## At least 50 injured in major earthquake on China-Kyrgyzstan border

ALMATY (AFP/APP): At least fifty people were injured after a 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck along the mountainous China-Kyrgyzstan border on Tuesday, authorities said. The major quake was registered just after 2:00 am (1800 GMT Monday) at a depth of 13 kilometres in China's Xinjiang region, about 140 kilometres (85 miles) west of the city of Aksu.

Local authorities dispatched a team to the quake's epicentre, Beijing's Xinhua state news agency said, while around 800 people were on standby for any large disaster relief mission.

The health ministry

in Kazakhstan said that 44 people suffering "various" injuries had sought medical help in the city of Almaty, the country's largest city.

Images posted on social media and by local news outlets showed citizens streaming outside following the quake.

In China's Akqi County, six people suffered injuries—two of which were "serious"—according to a Weibo post by a Xinjiang government media account.

A total of 47 buildings in the county collapsed, while a further 78 were damaged, the post said.

Two residential houses and livestock sheds

collapsed in the area near the epicentre, in rural Wushi County, Xinhua reported, while electricity was temporarily knocked out.

Video circulating on Chinese social media showed household appliances crashing to the floor as wild shaking rocked homes.

More footage shared by state broadcaster CCTV showed firemen entering a damaged building with cracked walls and police helping an injured local.

Local TV channels in the Indian capital New Delhi reported strong tremors in the city, about 1,400 kilometres away.



Russian President Vladimir Putin takes part in the official ceremony for pouring the first concrete into the foundation of power unit 4 at Egypt's El-Daba Nuclear Power Plant with the participation of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, via video link at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia.

## US, Britain hit targets in Yemen as Huthis vow to strike back

SANAA (AFP/APP): The United States and Britain launched a second round of joint military strikes on Yemen's Huthis on Tuesday over their attacks on Red Sea shipping, as the rebels vowed to hit back.

The latest raids, heard by residents of the rebel-held capital Sanaa around midnight (2100 GMT), hit eight Huthi targets, a joint US-UK statement said, while the Huthis listed 18 strikes across their territory.

US and British forces carried out a first wave of strikes against the rebel group earlier this month, and the United States launched further air raids against missiles that Washington said posed imminent threats to both civilian and military vessels.

The latest US-UK strikes were against "eight Huthi targets in Yemen in response to the Huthis' continued attacks against international and commercial shipping as well as naval vessels transiting the Red Sea".

## Russian strikes kill four, wound dozens across Ukraine

KYIV (AFP/APP): Dozens of people were injured and at least four killed after a wave of Russian missiles targeted Kyiv and other cities across Ukraine, setting residential buildings ablaze and reducing others to rubble. Rescue workers in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city near Russia's border, hauled injured residents from the scene of an attack where smoke rose from smouldering piles of rubble, AFP journalists reported.

The regional governor said three residents were killed in the overnight barrage.

## New ambassadors present credentials to Turkish President Erdogan

WASHINGTON (AA/APP): Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan received letters of credentials on Tuesday from the new ambassadors of four countries.

At the presidential complex in the capital Ankara, Erdogan separately welcomed Gabriele Juen of Austria, Ahmed Ben Sghaier of Tunisia, Kok Li Peng of Singapore, and Maria Virginia Mendes Da Silva Pina of Portugal.

After the new envoys' credentials were presented, souvenir photos were taken.

## 12 injured as Myanmar military plane overshoots India runway

NEW DELHI: Twelve people were injured on Tuesday when a Myanmar military plane overshoot a runway while landing in India to collect soldiers who had fled armed insurgents fighting their country's junta.

The Chinese-made Shaanxi Y-8 turboprop skidded off the tarmac shortly before midday at Lengpui, the main airport of India's Mizoram state.

An Airport Authority of India (AAI) official at Lengpui told AFP that the flight was collecting 92 soldiers who had crossed into

India from neighbouring Myanmar last week.

Of the 12 injured, "four are stated to be serious," added the official, who requested anonymity as they were not authorised to speak to the media.

Footage of the crash's aftermath aired by local broadcasters showed the bent fuselage of the transport plane, which had cut a swath through tall grass after sliding down an embankment.

The crash was caused by "sudden engine failure" while landing at the airport, Myanmar's junta said in a statement.

## Biden, Harris blast 'extremist' Republicans in abortion vote battle

BIG BEND (AFP/APP): US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris put abortion rights at the center of their reelection campaign Monday, attacking Republicans over an issue that Democrats see as a powerful vote winner against Donald Trump.

"How dare he?" Harris said of former president Trump—who has boasted of his role in overturning the constitutional, federal right to abortion—as she traveled to Wisconsin at the start of a nationwide tour on the issue.

Biden meanwhile railed at "extremist" and "cruel" Republicans in a speech at the White House marking the 51st anniversary of Roe v Wade, the landmark judg-

ment legalizing abortion that the conservative-leaning US Supreme Court then stunningly overturned in 2022. Harris and Biden warned that Republicans will impose a nationwide abortion ban if the party wins the November presidential election.

Already, 21 states have brought in full or partial bans since the Supreme Court—where three Trump-appointed justices tilted the balance sharply to the right—issued its ruling.

"These extremists are trying to take us backwards. We are not having it," Harris, 51, said to a cheering crowd in Big Bend in Wisconsin, which is expected to be one of the most closely fought states in this year's election.

## Blinken sees Ivory Coast model on extremism on Africa tour

ABIDJAN (AFP/APP): US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Tuesday praised Ivory Coast for choosing a less militarised approach to security, on a tour to rally African democracies as crises engulf the region and world.

Blinken was meeting separately with two key leaders on the same day—Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara, a veteran leader who has won US praise for consolidating democracy, before heading to Abuja to see Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, elected last year on a platform of economic reforms.

derstand the needs, the concerns of communities," Blinken said alongside Ouattara. "I think that can serve as a very powerful model for other countries," he said.

Ivory Coast has not experienced a major terrorist attack for some two years, despite its troubled neighbourhood. Blinken nonetheless promised to boost cooperation on the ground with Ivory Coast, largely training of security forces.

He said that the United States would provide an additional \$45 million to West African nations as part of a plan to battle instability, bringing total funding under the year-old programme to nearly \$300 million.

Ouattara expressed appreciation for the US assistance and voiced alarm over a spate of coups in West Africa.

"Like the United States, we are very committed to democracy and justice," he said, promising that his government would do "everything possible to improve people's day-to-day lives."

## Riyadh to host 'Model of Care Forum' with participation of Saudi, International speakers

RIYADH (SPA/APP): The "Model of Care Forum" will take place on January 28-29 in Riyadh, under the patronage of the Saudi Minister of Health Fahd bin Abdulrahman Al-Jalajel.

The forum will witness the participation of all health clusters in the Kingdom and will feature a series of lectures and interactive sessions presented by 25 Saudi and international speakers.

The discussions will revolve around the modern healthcare model, care systems, and pathways such as palliative care, emergency care, optional care, maternal and child care, chronic disease care, preventive care systems, and their role in achieving health excellence.

Such pillars include excellence in building high clinical professional capabilities, excellence in constructing dynamic management capacities, excellence in the digital domain, as well as excellence in beneficiary satisfaction with the provided healthcare services and interaction with various stakeholders.

The forum includes an accompanying exhibition showcasing success stories resulting from the implementation of healthcare model initiatives and pathways in various health clusters across the Kingdom.

Specialized teams will present these stories, demonstrating their practical application in the field.

This will be the third edition of the forum, coinciding with the completion of launching 20 health clusters in the Kingdom. The forum aims to facilitate the exchange of experiences and expertise in common areas, advancing healthcare services in alignment with the goals of the Health Sector Transformation Program and the Saudi Vision 2030.

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A woman reacts while people bury bodies of Palestinians killed in an Israeli strike, at the Nasser hospital premises as Palestinians cannot reach the cemetery due to the Israeli ground operation, in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip.

## WHO chief warns pandemic accord hangs in the balance

GENEVA: The World Health Organisation chief fears plans for a global pandemic preparedness agreement will fall apart amid wrangling and disinformation, warning on Monday that future generations "may not forgive us".

Shaken by the Covid-19 pandemic, the WHO's 194 member states decided more than two years ago to start negotiating an international accord aimed at ensuring countries are better equipped to deal with the next health catastrophe, or to prevent it altogether.

The plan was to seal the agreement at the 2024 World Health Assembly, the WHO's decision-making body, which convenes on May 27. But WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the momentum had been slowed down by entrenched positions and "a torrent of fake news, lies, and conspiracy theories".

And he warned that if nobody is prepared to seize

the initiative or give ground, the whole project risks going nowhere. "Time is very short. And there are several outstanding issues that remain to be resolved," Tedros told the WHO's executive board in Geneva.

Failure to strike an agreement would be "a missed opportunity for which future generations may not forgive us," he said. Tedros said all countries needed the capacity to detect and share pathogens presenting a risk, and timely access to tests, treatments and vaccines.

He called for a "strong agreement that will help to protect our children and grandchildren from future pandemics".

Tedros said claims that the accord would cede sovereignty to the WHO or give it the power to impose lockdowns and vaccine mandates were "completely false". "We cannot allow this historic agreement, this milestone in global health, to be sabotaged."

## Yemen's Huthis say hit US ship, Washington denies attack

SANAA (AFP/APP): Britain and the United States have carried out strikes on the Yemeni capital Sanaa, the news agency of the Huthi rebels said Tuesday, after the group claimed to have hit a US military cargo ship.

The official Saba news agency said that "American-British forces are launching raids on the capital of Sanaa" and several other parts of Yemen, while Huthi TV outlet al-Masirah said four strikes targeted the Al-Dailami military base north of the capital, which is under rebel control.

Earlier on Monday, Huthi rebels claimed they had hit a US military cargo ship off the coast of Yemen—although the United States denied an attack had taken place.

The Yemeni rebels began striking Red Sea shipping in November, saying they were hitting Israeli-linked vessels in support of Palestinians in Gaza, which has been ravaged by fighting amid the Hamas-Israel war.



A placard reads, "deport AFD now", during nationwide protests against racism and plans of Germany's far-right Alternative for Germany (AFD) party to deport foreigners, in Bonn, Germany.

## Race to find dozens trapped in southwest China landslide

BEIJING: Rescuers raced on Tuesday to find dozens of people still trapped after a landslide struck a remote and mountainous part of southwestern China, killing 12.

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

More than 24 hours since the disaster, state news agency Xinhua said rescue

workers are now in a "race against time" to find those still missing, after a night of sub-zero temperatures.

"Search and rescue efforts persisted through the night," firefighter Li Shenglong told Xinhua. Twelve people have been confirmed dead, state broadcaster CCTV reported just after midday. Wu Junyao, director of the natural resources and planning bureau of Zhaotong, told Xinhua that the disaster "resulted from a collapse in the steep cliff area atop the slope".

## Wife of Malaysia former finance minister charged in assets case

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP/APP): The wife of a former Malaysian finance minister who has close ties to a political rival of Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim was charged Tuesday with failing to disclose her assets to anti-graft investigators.

Na'imah Abdul Khalid, the 66-year-old wife of businessman Daim Zainuddin who served as finance minister twice between 1984 and 2001, pleaded not guilty at a court in the capital Kuala Lumpur.

The offence of not disclosing her assets in response to an anti-graft agency request was allegedly committed last November, according to court documents seen by AFP.

## Dutch reporter suspects on trial

THE HAGUE (AFP/APP): The trial began on Tuesday of nine suspects in the murder of high-profile Dutch crime reporter Peter R. de Vries, whose killing stunned the Netherlands and spotlighted the country's drug gang underworld. De Vries, 64, was shot in the head on a busy Amsterdam street in July 2021, shortly after leaving a television studio where he was appearing as a guest. Authorities believe gang leaders ordered his murder due to his role as adviser to a key witness in the trial of alleged drugs baron Ridouan Taghi.

## Minister of Health participates in OECD meetings

PARIS (SPA/APP): Minister of Health Fahd bin Abdulrahman Al-Jalajel arrived on Tuesday in the French capital, Paris, leading a Saudi delegation to participate in the activities of the Ministerial Health Meeting, as part of the Economic Forum of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The agenda includes the attendance of the health minister at the High-Level Policy Forum, holding several bilateral meetings, and attending a ministerial dinner organized by the French Ministry of Health for OECD member countries.

On Tuesday, Al-Jalajel will participate in the

official sessions of the OECD Health Ministerial Meeting, held under the theme "Better Policies for More Resilient Health Systems," to discuss health challenges and enhance countries' resilience in facing epidemics.

During his visit, the health minister will also hold several meetings with ministers from various countries and international health officials on the sidelines of the OECD meetings to discuss areas of collaboration. The minister and the accompanying delegation commenced their visit with a tour of Paris Necker Hospital to explore the latest technologies and innovations in healthcare.

## Israeli forces storm hospital in Gaza's Khan Yunis

GAZACITY: Israeli forces, advancing deep into southern Gaza's Khan Yunis city on Monday in the heaviest assault of the new year so far, stormed one hospital and placed another under siege, cutting the wounded off from trauma care.

Troops advanced for the first time into Khan Yunis's western part, near the Mediterranean coast. There, they stormed the Al Khair hospital and arrested medical staff, a spokesperson for Gaza's health ministry said.

The Palestinian Red Crescent said tanks had also surrounded another Khan Yunis hospital, Al Amal, headquarters of the rescue agency, which had lost contact with its staff there.

Ashraf Al Qidra, the spokesperson, said 120 people were killed in Khan Yunis on Sunday night, while the sieges of medical

facilities meant many of the dead and wounded were beyond the reach of rescuers.

"The Israeli occupation is preventing ambulances from moving to recover bodies of martyrs and the wounded from western Khan Yunis," he said.

Residents said bombardment from air, land and sea was the most intense in the southern sector of Gaza Strip since October, as Israeli tanks surged across Khan Yunis towards the Mediterranean coast.

Video filmed from afar showed scattered civilians wandering a ghost city, crowded with tents, as gunfire rattled and columns of smoke rose into the sky.

Israel launched a military operation last week to capture Khan Yunis, which it now says is the principal headquarters of the Hamas fighters who carried out the Oct 7 raids.



French farmers block the A16 highway with their tractors to protest over price pressures, taxes and green regulation, grievances that are shared by farmers across Europe, near Beauvais, France. The slogan reads "Let's not import what is prohibited in France".



## Modern agri technology, effective decision making vital to cope with climate change challenge: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday citing the abundance of natural resources, said that adopting modern agricultural technology and effective decision-making were inevitable for Pakistan to cope with the challenge of climate change.

The president, in his inaugural address at the Regional Dialogue 2024 on "Climate Crisis: Shaping South Asia's Resilience" arranged by the Institute of Regional Studies, said that Pakistan was rich in water, renewable energy potential and other resources but it direly needed a driving force to implement the decisions and make it compete with the world.

He told the gathering of former diplomats, academicians and researchers that Pakistan had around 150 million acre-feet of water which was sufficient to meet its needs if modern

agriculture techniques like spray and drip irrigation were adopted and flood irrigation was done away with.

Emphasising the implementation of national water policy and other relevant legislation, he said a pricing mechanism could also lead to water conservation.

He said around 400 million gallons per day of water in Karachi was drained into the sea through sewerage which was a criminality.

He also highlighted the use of prohibited nets by the fishermen which also swept small fish resulting in a huge loss of marine life. He said due to the very reasons, Europe was not allowing fish import from Pakistan.

The president exemplified the Netherlands which was the second largest food supplier on earth

despite being 19 times smaller in size than Pakistan and not having such an abundance of water similar to Pakistan. Similarly, Vietnam has taken its fishery exports to around \$10 billion per annum by adopting international standards and techniques, he added.

He said by pushing the farmers to adopt modern agriculture technology, Pakistan could also feed the world.

He recalled Pakistan's successes in fighting COVID-19 through a data-based approach and national unity and said that the world would follow its footprints if the country set such an example as it had also achieved recognition through massive tree plantation.

He said the energy the sun provided to the earth every day was many times higher than the world's annual production.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi addressing the inaugural session of the Regional Dialogue 2024 on "Climate Crisis: Shaping South Asia's Resilience" organized by the Institute of Regional Studies.

## Strong institutions, competent teachers play crucial role in overall national progress: Sadiq

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani on Tuesday underscored the crucial role of strong institutions and competent teachers in expediting national progress and prosperity. Speaking at the convention "Youth — Pivot of National Integration" organized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC), he urged the nation to work diligently and said hard work would eventually be rewarded.

He lauded the HEC for bringing together a diverse group of individuals from across the country and ac-

knowledge the fact that Pakistan was a great country with robust institutions and armed forces.

Drawing on his global perspective due to travels worldwide, the Chairman Senate emphasized the value of Pakistan's skilled and hardworking population, as compared to the nations with profound resources, but lacking similar human capital. Recognizing the significant contributions of HEC in establishing universities in Balochistan, he noted the positive transformation in the province's overall narrative and mindset.

## Seerat Conference for promotion of values of forgiveness, tolerance

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed has stressed the need to promote Islamic teachings of forgiveness and tolerance to make society beautiful and peaceful.

He said this while addressing the 10th International Seerat-ul-Nabi Conference that was organized by Seerat Chair Faculty of Islamic and Arabic Studies at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur at Baghdad-ul-Jadeed Campus here on Tuesday.

The conference focused on human values and their impact on societies in the light of Seerat ul Nabi (Peace Be Upon Him) was inaugurated by the Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed, while presided over by the Vice-Chancellor of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur

Prof. Dr. Naveed Akhtar. Prof. Dr. Saleem Tariq Khan, former Vice-Chancellor of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur was the guest of honour. Prof. Dr. Ahmed Mohammad Al-Sharkavi Salem, Chairman the Department of Quranic Studies, Jamia Azhar Egypt and Prof. Dr. Muhammad Saad Siddiqui, Jamia Punjab also addressed it.

Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed said that values are a very important subject in Islam. "The last Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) said that the religion was complete and final guidance for the whole of humanity," he said adding that on the occasion of the conquest of Makkah in 8th Hijri, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) displayed the excellent human values of forgiveness and tolerance.

"Allah loves those who do good deeds". He said that modesty is also a part of values because modest people are the beauty of society. He said that we have learned scholars with us in the conference hall from whom we can gain a lot of knowledge about values.

Vice-Chancellor of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Prof. Dr. Naveed Akhtar said that the Islamia University of Bahawalpur has a century-long history and honour of dissemination of religious education in the Indo-Pak sub-continent. "In 1875, Madrasa Sadr Uloom Driyanet was founded. Later, it was called Jamia Abbasia, setting the standards of excellence in the academic field," he said adding that eminent scholars from the Indian sub-continent performed teaching in Jamia Islamia.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Shahid Ashraf Tarar visiting the Control Room established by Ministry of Interior to monitor the overall security situation during General Elections.

## Ministry establishes control room for General Elections 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister of Communications Shahid Ashraf Tarar on Tuesday visited the control room established in the Ministry of Interior for monitoring of security arrangements and law and order situation during the general election 2024. The caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar appointed Shahid Ashraf Tarar as the Chairman of the Committee for

the Security and Administrative Affairs of General Elections 2024.

The coordinator National Action Plan briefed the minister in detail about the functioning of the control room on behalf of the Secretary of Interior Aftab Akbar Durrani, who was also present in the meeting.

The minister appreciated the efforts of the officials of the interior ministry while expressing satis-

faction with the functioning of the control room and said that the security and law and order situation will be monitored during the elections in the country through the control room.

He said that it is the prime responsibility of the Election Commission of Pakistan, according to the constitution, to conduct transparent elections in the country and the caretaker government will provide full support.

## Police cops imparted training to ensure law & order in upcoming elections

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The training session was conducted for the police personnel assigned security duties during the upcoming general elections here in the metropolis the other day.

The session was participated by the master trainers to enable them to impart training to other security personnel at the district level.

The Director Headquarter, Provincial Election Commissioner office, Waseem Ahmed imparted training to the police personnel.

While delivering lecture, Waseem Ahmed exhorted the police personnel

to ensure peaceful, safe and conducive environment for the voters during the election process.

He also urged them to behave very well with the voters and polling staff while ensuring the implementation on law.

The police personnel have to ensure that no one can influence the voters outside the polling stations, adding Director Headquarter PEC stressed.

He also asked them to inform the presiding officers or other high ups about any irregularity or against the code of conduct immediately so as to address the same well in time.

## ECP prohibits erecting hoarding, banners on govt buildings, electric poles

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has directed the political parties and candidates to avoid erecting hoardings and banners on government buildings, on electricity poles and abide by code of ethics.



QUETTA: Former Federal Minister Agha Hassan Baloch meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

In a statement posted on social media platform X on Tuesday, the ECP spokesperson said that have fines will be imposed for any violations.

He said the Election Commission was determined to ensure adherence to the code of conduct with uniform enforcement across the board.

DMO Karachi and his teams have removed unauthorized hoardings and flags placed on electricity poles across different regions of Sindh, spanning from the areas of two sworn to Clifton. Monitoring teams, during their visit to Quetta-Kharan Road in Balochistan, removed banners and flags of various political parties, penalizing those who violated the code of conduct.

## Dr Ishaq says Medical preparations finalized in CHQ to tackle any emergency situation

QUETTA (APP)-Medical Superintendent (MS) Civil Hospital Quetta (CHQ), Dr. Ishaq Panizai chaired a meeting in view of the security threat during the upcoming general elections in Balochistan.

In the meeting said that medical preparations have been completed in Civil Hospital Quetta and Trauma Center to deal with any emergency situation.

The meeting was attended by Head of Department of Surgery Professor Dr. Shoaib Qureshi, Head of Department of Gynecology Professor Dr. Baligh Aslam, Head of ENT Department Professor Dr. Siddique and other concerned doctors.

Addressing the meeting, MS Civil Hospital Quetta Dr. Ishaq Panizai

said that the Accident and Emergency Department would remain alert 24/7, in case of any emergency, Accident and Emergency Department has been allocated for trench, 24/7 attendance of all doctors and medical staff in Surgery, Neurosurgery, Orthopedic, Plastic Surgery, Medicine, Burn Unit Consultants is ensured, he said. He said that all the medicines and medical equipment were available and according to the duty roster measures have been taken to ensure the presence of medical staff at their place. MS Civil Hospital Quetta Dr. Ishaq Panizai said that Civil Hospital Quetta was the biggest government hospital in Balochistan where continuity of provision of facilities was no less than a challenge.

## Quetta Administration launches land verification portal

QUETTA (APP): The Quetta Administration has launched land verification portal in the city to maintain transparency in land affairs. In the meeting, held here under the chairmanship Commissioner Quetta Division Muhammad Hamza Shafqaat was decided the launch of the digital portal and the procedure for the verification of all the public properties in Quetta.

On the occasion, Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafqaat said

that the launch of digital portal is an important initiative for the convenience of the public and the protection of public property, which will resolve the problems related to land revenue and land ownership. Later, under the chairmanship of Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafqaat, a meeting was also held regarding the connection of ambulance services to the Safe City Command and Control Center and to carry out all the work in an orderly manner.

## Tajik outgoing envoy in Pak calls on PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Outgoing Ambassador of Tajikistan in Pakistan Ismatullo Naserdin Tuesday called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

The prime minister, appreciating the role of Ismatullo Naserdin in promoting bilateral relations between the two countries, expressed his best wishes for him in future.

He hoped that the upcoming ambassador would also play a key role in strengthening the bilateral relations.



QUETTA: Caretaker Home Minister Captain (Retd) Muhammad Zubair Jamali in a meeting with Chairman Balochistan Public Service Commission Abdul Salik during his visit to office of BPSC

## Independent candidate withdraws from PB-46 in favor of JUI's candidate

QUETTA (APP) Central leaders of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), independent candidates from constituency PB-46, Malik Abdul Salam Shahwani and Abdul Wahab Kakar along with hundreds of their colleagues announced to join Jamiat-e-Ulama-e-Islam (JUI) after resigning from PTI.

Malik Abdul Salam Shahwani and Abdul Wahab Kakar announced unconditional withdrawal in favor of candidate Sardar Ahmed Khan Shahwani from constituency PB 46.

They made announcement in supervision of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) candidate for constituency PB-46 Sardar Ahmed Khan Shahwani in a press conference at Shahwani House in Saryab on Tuesday.

JUI's senior leaders and other workers were present on the occasion.

Malik Abdul Salam Shahwani said that we belonged to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf but PTI did not issue us tickets after which we decided to participate in the general elections as an independent.

He said that the JUI's candidate of constituency PB-46 Sardar Ahmed Khan Shahwani met us last few days and requested to join the JUI and to withdraw in favor him saying that after which we resigned from PTI along with our colleagues in view of consulting our friends. I formally announced today my unconditional withdrawal from joining the JUI and in favor of candidate Sardar Ahmed Khan Shahwani from constituency PB 46 of JUI party, he said. He also appealed to his friends and the public to vote for the JUI's candidates on February 8.

On this occasion, Abdul Wahab Kakar along with his colleagues Saullah Danna, Rais Junaid, Hanif Aqil, Dr. Malik Nichari, Imdadullah Shahwani and Dr. Habibullah announced to join the JUI.

The JUI's candidate from constituency PB 46, Sardar Ahmad Khan Shahwani congratulated Abdul Salam Shahwani, Abdul Wahab Kakar and their colleagues for joining the party.

## Pak calls for enhanced Int'l cooperation to achieve SDGs

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistan has called for enhanced international cooperation to achieve sustainable development goals and the climate goals.

Delivering a statement at the Third South Summit of the Group of 77 & China, in Kampala, Uganda, Additional Foreign Secretary Syed Haider Shah called upon developed countries to deliver on their historical commitments and support the Global South in achieving the SDGs. Syed Haider Shah expressed support for the UN Secretary-General's call for provision of adequate financial resources for the recently operationalized Loss and Damage fund. He underlined the need for G-77 & China to collectively work for a more just and equitable international order and reform of the international financial architecture.



LORALAI: Commissioner Loralai Division Balaach Aziz presenting a memorial to Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan

## People would lit torch of real freedom through vote on Feb 8, says Asif Tareen

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The senior leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Balochistan, Muhammad Asif Tareen has stated that the public enthusiasm is creating history in the PTI's election campaign and people would not only cast their votes on February 8 but would also make the party successful in the elections.

The PTI provincial leader was speaking to the media about election campaign of the party here on Tuesday.

Asif Tareen said that the Pakistani masses would lit the torch of real freedom through their vote on the Election Day.

He said that every

conscious person, media and even the opponents are saying that the public enthusiasm is worth seeing in election campaign of PTI.

The public response to the party's election campaign is unprecedented in the history, adding Tareen claimed.

He also said that PTI workers rather all segments of the society are considering the public interest in the general elections as source to rid of the slavery and gain real freedom.

He believed that the people would create history by voting to the PTI candidates and winning them with big margin on February 8.



QUETTA: Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafqaat holding dialogue regarding Chaman sit-in with the protestors who block road

## Commissioner Sibi Division takes notice of shortage & absence of doctors in Kohlu

QUETTA (APP)- Commissioner Sibi Division Bashir Ahmed Bqangulzai on Tuesday took strict notice of the shortage and absence of doctors and issued a letter to the Secretary Health to dismiss the absent doctors after taking action against them.

The Commissioner was taken this action when he visited the District headquarters Hospital Kohlu during visiting of Kohlu for one day.

He visited District Headquarters Hospital Kohlu and reviewed medical facilities provided to patients and supply of medicines where he took strict notice of the shortage and absence of doctors, issued a letter to the Secretary Health to dismiss the absent doctors.

The Commissioner also expressed his anger at the slowness of the Covid-19 projects under construc-

tion in the hospital.

Mr. Bashir Ahmad Bangulzai visited various under-construction development projects in the district and also took notice of Xen's absence and issued order to him to return his services. He gave orders to blacklist the contractors of all slow-moving schemes and various firms.

After completion of visiting, Commissioner Bashir Bengulzai also presided over the meeting of heads of all departments in the office of Deputy Commissioner Kohlu on the occasion of Kohlu's visit.

Later, Commissioner Sibi Division chaired the meeting of the officers of all law enforcement agencies in connection with Election 2024 and to maintain law and order situation.

Deputy Commissioner Kohlu Naqibullah Kakar gave a detailed briefing about Kohlu district.

## Mushaal says: Muslims must boycott India diplomatically over Ram Temple issue

ISLAMABAD (INP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) for Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick lashing out at the supremacist and RSS-inspired Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for inaugurating Ram temple at the site of demolished, five centuries-old Babri Masjid at Ayodhya has called upon the Muslim world to announce diplomatic boycott of India for wiping out Islamic civilization from its soil. In her strong reaction over the Indian government's action, she said that Narendra Modi was using the inaugural of 'Ram temple' event as a political gimmick because his popularity graph did witness alarming decline due to his anti-minority policies.



QUETTA: Secretary Finance Babar Khan presiding over a meeting regarding funds of employees working on internship in Directorate of Public Relations Balochistan