

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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World Court orders Israel to prevent acts of genocide in Gaza

International Court of Justice fails to order ceasefire, says it would not throw out the case, as Israel requested; Pakistan welcomes provisional measures by ICJ in Gaza

Monitoring Desk

THE HAGUE: The World Court ordered Israel on Friday to prevent acts of genocide against the Palestinians and do more to help civilians, although it stopped short of ordering a ceasefire as requested by South Africa.

While the ruling denied Palestinian hopes of a binding order to halt the war in Gaza, it also represented a legal setback for Israel, which had hoped to throw out a case brought under the

genocide convention established in the ashes of the Holocaust.

The court found that Palestinians were protected under the convention, and that there was a case to be heard about whether their rights were being denied in a war that the court said was causing grievous humanitarian harm. It also called for Palestinian armed groups to release hostages captured in the Oct. 7 attacks that precipitated the conflict.

Palestinian officials

largely hailed the decision. The Palestinian Foreign Ministry said it was a welcome reminder "no state is above the law". Sami Abu Zuhri, a senior Hamas official told Reuters the decision would contribute to "isolating the occupation and exposing its crimes in Gaza."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that the court had "justly rejected the outrageous demand" to deprive Israel of what he called the "basic

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SIBI: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki addressing inaugural ceremony of DigiBizz Freelance Training Program

No one can be restrained from contesting election on basis of abscondment: SC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) while allowing PTI leader Umar Aslam to contest election has remarked no one can be stopped from contesting the election on the basis of being absconder.

A 3-member bench of SC presided over by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah took up the case for hearing Friday.

The counsel said nomination papers of Umar Aslam were rejected being absconder in May 9 cases.

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah remarked tell us where it is written the absconder person cannot contest election. How can any one be

deprived of basic rights without law.

Justice Athar Minallah remarked people have to decide the election. Contesting election is fundamental right. People have to decide who will contest election and who will not and not the Election Commission (EC).

He further remarked let people of Pakistan decide the petitioner who has come before us is not important. The rights of people are being affected. People have to conduct accountability and not the EC.

Counsel for EC said ballot papers work has been completed.

Nawaz pledges massive job & income opportunities to mitigate inflation effects



BUREWALA (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on Friday said that there had been great transformation since his ouster from power with massive inflation and price hike disrupting the social fabric of society and pledged to fully mitigate their effects by ensuring job and income opportunities for all following the mandate on February 8.

Addressing a public meeting in Burewala, the thrice elected prime minister said that "Roti" (bread), which was available for Rs 4 per piece during the last PNL-N government, was now priced at Rs 20, while the electricity bill of Rs 500 had now jumped to Rs 20,000, with no gas supply.

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Chairman PkMAP addresses corner meeting: Free, fair and transparent elections necessary for changing fate of country

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chairman Pashtoonkhaw Milli Awami Party (PKMAP) Mehmood Khan Achakzai has stated that the free, fair and transparent elections are necessary for changing fate of the country.

If fate of the country has to be changed then free, fair and transparent elections would be necessary.

The Chairman PKMAP was addressing a corner meeting and reception arranged by the party's Shaldira unit on Friday.

Besides Chairman, other senior leaders of the

party also participated and addressed the public gathering.

Mehmood Khan Achakzai said that we want that general elections are conducted in democratic manner and there should be no element of rigging in the same (elections).

The Chairman PKMAP said that we believe in equality and as such equal treatment should be meted out with all the nationalities in country, he stressed.

A large number of the party workers and other people participated in the gathering.

Section 144 imposed owing to security threats in Quetta

Independent Report

QUETTA: In view of the security threats, section 144 has been imposed in the provincial metropolis.

According to the caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai, the section 144 has been imposed for two weeks in the metropolis.

Jan Achakzai said that public gatherings would not be held under the section 144.

All the concerned departments and agencies have been directed to ensure protection of the life and property of the common men.

The caretaker Minister Information announced that it would be essential for all the political parties to get No-Objection certificate (NOC) before holding the public meetings in Quetta. Jan Achakzai said that it is top priority of the interim government to maintain law and order in the province.

SC allows Sanam Javed, Pervaiz Elahi to contest elections

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Supreme Court (SC) of Pakistan on Friday allowed five candidates of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), including incarcerated activist Sanam Javed, to contest the upcoming general elections, slated for Feb 8, 2024.

Besides Sanam Javed, the top court approved appeals of PTI candidates Umer Aslam, Major (ret) Tahir Sadiq, and Shaikat Mahmood Basra against returning officers' (ROs) decisions to reject their nomination papers from different constituencies.

A division bench comprising Justice Irfan Saadat Khan and Justice Muneeb Akhtar overturned the rejection of PTI leaders' nomination papers by the Lahore High Court (LHC) and the election tribunal.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court also allowed incarcerated party president Pervaiz Elahi to contest the upcoming February 8 elections.

A three-member SC bench headed by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah allowed the PTI leader to contest the general election from the PP-32 constituency of Gujrat district.

Elahi had filed a petition in the Supreme Court to seek permission to contest the general election.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Rotary International calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

Interim Govt. determined to provide quality health facilities to masses at official level: Ali Mardan Domki

CT CM inaugurates freelance training programme in Mir Chakar Rind University; Says technical training being imparted to youth of province in different fields

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has stated that the interim government is determined to provide quality healthcare facilities to the masses at public sector level.

The caretaker Chief Minister was speaking on occasion of the inauguration of Mir Hazoor Bakhsh Domki dialysis Unit, new ward of Pediatrics and Intensive Care Unit established in the District Headquarter Hospital Sibi on Friday morning.

Mr. Domki reached Sibi on one-day official visit to Sibi. He formally inaugurated the Mir Hazoor Bakhsh Domki dialysis Unit, new ward of Pediatrics and Intensive Care Unit in the DHQ Hospital.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister said that the government is endeavouring to provide quality healthcare facilities to the masses.

He said that the patients suffering from the kidney diseases would get the facility of dialysis with establishment of dialysis unit at the DHQ Hospital Sibi.

In addition to this, the children patients would also get the quality healthcare facilities with establishment of the pediatric ward in the Hospital, adding he believed.

Meanwhile the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has inaugurated the



QUETTA: A MoU being signed between BUITEMS and BRSP in presence of Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Big challenge to overcome severe energy crisis in Balochistan: Governor

We have to adopt scientific innovation, just because we would be able to overcome the energy crisis by adopting modern means

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that there is a severe energy crisis in the country including Balochistan, and it is a big challenge for us to overcome it.

In this regard, we have to adopt scientific innovation, just because we would be able to overcome the energy crisis by adopting modern means.

For the purpose, we have to adopt modern means to generate solar energy.

The Governor was speaking on occasion of the ceremony of signing of memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS) and Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP), here on Friday.

It may be mentioned



Special Representative to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony & Islamic Countries and chairman Pakistan Ulema Council Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi offering special Dua for Rain after Namaz e Istasqa prayer on the special directions of caretaker Prime Minister, today's Friday observed to offer Namaz e Istasqa.

freelance training programme "DigiBizz" in the Mir Chakar Khan Rind University Sibi on Friday.

While speaking at inauguration of the freelance programme, the Chief Minister said that technical training is being imparted to youth of all over of the province in different sectors.

He mentioned that the freelance digital programme has been launched in Quetta, Sibi, Zhob and Loralai.

He said that better results could be acquired by imparting technical education to the youth.

The Chief Minister said that it is very necessary to provide guidance and opportunities to

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ECP Balochistan chief calls on IGP

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Election Commissioner Balochistan, Muhammad Farid Afridi met the Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh here at the Central Police Office on Friday.

During the meeting, the PEC offered fataha for the departed soul of police cop martyred in the firing incident took place at the Office of Regional Election Commissioner Turbat the other day.

Speaking on the occasion, PEC paid rich tributes to the martyr police cop saying that he foiled the attack at the office of Election Commissioner Turbat by sacrificing his life.

Mr. Afridi said that there is a very important role of police in conducting the elections in peaceful manner.

The IGP said that we are resolute to make the exercise of elections peaceful.

CEO cancels leaves of doctors, paramedical staffs in view of election

QUETTA (APP): Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dr. Saeed Ahmed Mirwani on Friday chaired a meeting of hospital consultants and doctors under the implementation of medical emergency regarding the upcoming elections.

In the meeting, an emergency was imposed in the hospital regarding the general elections, leaves of doctors, medical and paramedical staff were canceled.

In this regard, instructions were issued to the doctors and other staff of the hospital.

They were directed to take emergency measures to deal with any unpleasant incident.

At the same time, instructions were also given to keep the ambulances on standby. The administration was also directed to ensure the presence of doctors, paramedical staff and all kinds of medicines in the hospital, during the meeting.

Feb 8 election to bring political stability, says PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Friday said that the general election on February 8 would bring political stability in the country.

The prime minister, in an interview with a private television channel, said after the elections, the new government would work to achieve political and economic stability.

He said his government successfully achieved most of the targets set by it and a white paper would be issued to enlist those successes.

"The biggest challenges were economic issues," he said, adding the next government would have to work with the International Monetary Fund and bring reforms in the taxation system to take the economy forward.

He said the government carried forward the process



ISLAMABAD: The outgoing Ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan Ismatullo Nasredin called on President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President for greater cooperation on Islamophobia, science among OIC countries

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday stressed the need for increasing cooperation among Islamic countries to overcome the issue of Islamophobia in the world.

The president, in a meeting with outgoing Ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan Ismatullo Nasredin, who paid a farewell call on him, emphasized greater cooperation among the OIC member states in the areas of science and technology to meet modern-day challenges.

He said that Pakistan attached great significance to its relations with



MULTAN: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addresses to his supporters during public gathering meeting as a part of Election Campaign in connection of the General Election 2024 coming ahead, in Multan.

PPP to bring CM from South Punjab if voted into power: Bilawal

MULTAN (INP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto on Friday pledged to bring chief minister (CM) from South Punjab if his party came to power in the upcoming general elections 2024 while outlining the party's plans for governance.

Addressing a public gathering in Multan in connection with elections 2024, Bilawal Bhutto - who is contesting from Lahore NA-127 - urged the voters to support his party to end the "politics of hatred and division".

Highlighting the unprecedented levels of inflation and unemployment, the PPP chairman claimed, "At present, no party, except the PPP, has a comprehensive plan to tackle these issues. Other political entities are solely focused on elections for their own gains, neglecting the well-being of the people."

"I have personally crafted PPP's economic plan, and our first priority upon assuming power will be their swift implementation to curb inflation and unemployment," he added.

Bilawal also lauded the sacrifices made by the military and police to eradicate terrorism but pointed out, "The resurgence of terrorism today is a consequence of the social division sown by old politicians. It's time to bury the politics of hatred."

The former foreign minister also said that 17 federal ministries had become redundant after the 18th Amendment, and would be abolished if his party came to power, adding that the Rs300 billion saved in this way would be utilised for the people's welfare through the kissan, mazdoor and youth cards.

Bilawal Bhutto also vowed to stop the annual subsidy of Rs1,500 billion for the elite, opting to impose taxes on capitalists to ease the burden on the poor.

PM lauds role of Rotary int'l, world community for polio eradication in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday lauded the Rotary International, world community and development partners for their role in the eradication of polio in Pakistan.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation of Rotary International led by Stephanie A. Urchik, also appreciated the organization's services for the promotion of education and other sectors.

The delegation briefed the prime minister about the Pakistan Smart Village Programme and performance of the Rotary International for polio eradication.

The prime minister congratulated Stephanie

for becoming the first female president of Rotary International and expressed good wishes.

He also reiterated his government's resolve to make every Pakistani children safe from polio.

He assured the Rotary International for his government's all-out cooperation in the execution of its programmes, and expressed the hope that the organization would expand the accessibility to their programmes.

The prime minister was told that Rotary would help uplift the living standards of the people while taking advantage of innovation and technology.

It was told that the Smart Villages would help promote the agriculture



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Interior Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz chairing a briefing at National Action Plan Secretariat.

Pakistani envoy's team facilitates survivors of Sharjah fire incident

SHARJAH (APP): Under the directions of Ambassador of Pakistan to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, an official team of the Welfare Wing of the Consulate General, Dubai led by Community Welfare Attaché (CWA) Imran Shahid visited Al Qasimi Hospital Sharjah Friday morning to inquire about Pakistani survivors of a fire incident. A Pakistani father and his daughter died in the fire incident on Thursday. The team held detailed meeting with the Hospital's management including Hamdan and Abdullah and also met the doctors treating the survivors of the tragic incident. The survivors include wife of the deceased, Fatima Imran Khan and two children Asma Imran Khan (about 9 years old) and Ahmed Imran Khan (about 6 years old).

The visiting team requested the concerned authorities in the Hospital, police, and forensics departments to expedite issuing the requisite medical reports enabling issuance of death notifications at the earliest. The family hailing from Lahore have desired to take the dead bodies to Pakistan for burial. Zaheer, the brother in law of deceased Imran Khan and other relatives of the bereaved family were assured of full cooperation and support by the Consulate General in this difficult and testing time.

Army Medical Corps organizes free medical camp for marginalized rural community

By Rafiullah Mandokhail

ZHOB: Army Medical Corps organized a day-long free medical camp in Kill Appozai - on the outskirts of bordering district Zhoib to provide free medical examination and medicines to the local people.

According to a press release, the camp was set up at the basic health unit (BHU) Appozai for the marginalized rural community, where hundreds of male, female patients and children suffering from various ailments were examined by Army medical corps specialist doctors. The patients were also provided free medicine.



'Apart from protecting the frontiers of the country, Pak Army is also providing health facilities to the people living in far-flung areas. AMC has played its due role and will continue to do so,' the press release stated.

Meanwhile, the health officials in Zhoib, community members and notables have appreciated the provision of free medical facilities to the poor and indigent patients at their doorsteps. They thanked the AMC and camp organizers for setting up a free medical camp.

Dry spell continues; Zhoib in grip of dust allergy, seasonal diseases:

The district that also falls in the 'monsoon' range has not received rain for the last couple of months. The prolonged dry spell and weather change have led to a significant increase in dust allergy, cough, chest and throat infections, especially among children and infants. Both the public and private hospitals are packed with patients suffering from flu, coughing, sneezing, high fever and chest congestion.

A renowned pediatrician in Zhoib told journalist Rafiullah Mandokhail that, the current weather change and fall in the temperature causing dry cough, fever, sore throat and chest infections, adding the influx of patients continued to increase with each passing day as most of the patients visiting the hospitals and private clinics complained of cold related diseases. The weather is in a transition phase, it contributes to the transmission of viral infections. The parents should keep their children warm and make sure their head, neck and hands are fully covered.

Prices of petroleum products likely to go up from February 01

ISLAMABAD (Online): Petroleum products prices are likely to be increased in Pakistan in next week owing to surge in prices in international market.

As per sources of ministry of petroleum prices of oil have increased by 4.37 dollar per barrel in international markets during the last 12 days.

The oil price has been enhanced from 77.78 per dollar to 82.15 dollar per barrel in international markets.

The price of petrol is likely to scale up Rs 7 per liter and diesel Rs 5 per liter from February 01.



SIBI: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki inaugurating cricket ground at Mir Chakar Khan Rind University

Pakistani, Iranian envoys discuss ties in Belarus

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan's Ambassador to Belarus Sajjad Haider Khan held a meeting with Ambassador of Iran to Belarus Alireza Sanei in Minsk, Belarus discussed matters of mutual interest.

During the courtesy call, they explored the two nations' strong and deep rooted brotherly ties and rejoiced in their return to their respective embassies by January 26, 2024.

Honored to receive Alireza Sanei, Ambassador of Iran to Belarus who paid a courtesy call today. Explored our nations' strong and deep rooted brotherly ties and rejoiced in the return of Ambassadors of Pakistan and Iran to their respective Embassies by January 26, 2024.

In a post on X, the Pakistani ambassador said, "Looking forward to the

visit of Iran's Foreign Minister to Pakistan on January 29, 2024. Celebrating the lasting Pakistan-Iran friendship!"

Iran violated Pakistan's airspace on Jan 16, Tuesday, by firing a missile at Balochistan, resulting in the tragic death of two children and injuries to three girls. Tehran's unilateral move prompted Islamabad to recall its ambassador.

Islamabad also conveyed to Tehran that their envoy might also not return for the time being.

Pakistan launched strikes on terrorists' hideouts inside Iran in a retaliatory attack two days later on Jan 18.

The tit-for-tat strikes across the porous border between the two neighbours fueled fears of wider instability in the region since the war between Israel and Hamas erupted on Oct 7 last year.

Snowfall blankets Neelum Valley

NEELUM VALLEY (INP): After a long dry spell, Neelum Valley on Friday morning received snowfall and rain; however, dense fog gripped Punjab cities including Lahore creating difficulties for commuters.

Spokesman of Motorway police said that amid poor visibility in order to ensure the safety of passengers, motorways remained shut at various sections between Faisalabad to Pindi Bhattian and Lahore to Feroqabad. Road users are advised to avoid unnecessary travel.

Slow snowfall and rain is reported at Neelum Valley's headquarters Ath Muqam, Gajran and Shunthar areas.

According to Met Office, the spell of rain and snow will continue sporadically till evening in the valley.

The experts forecast severe cold due to continuous low daytime temperatures in fog-blanket areas. People have been advised to be cautious.

According to the Met department, the weather will remain cold and dry in Islamabad, while Murree, Galiyat and adjacent areas will experience very cold and cloudy weather.

DROs, ROs assigned powers of first grade magistrate

ISLAMABAD (Online): District Returning officers and returning officers were assigned the powers of first class magistrate.

Election Commission (EC) has issued notification regarding the powers of first class magistrates of DRO's and RO's.

According to sources of EC, District returning officers and returning officers will continue to have the powers of first class magistrates until the declaration of election results.

It is said in issued notification that under section 193 of election act 2017, the powers of magistrate have been given.

The powers have been assigned in relation to general elections of National Assembly (NA) and provincial assemblies from Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtun Khwa (KPK) and Baluchistan.

These officers will be authorized to take immediate notice of any action against the rules.



SIBI: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki inaugurating ICU at DHQ

Nawaz pledges massive job...

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Similarly, vegetables were available at Rs 10 per kilogram during his tenure, he added. Likewise, a urea fertilizer bag was now being sold for Rs 5,000 against Rs 1,200 during his tenure, while the price of a tractor had risen to Rs 3.8 million from Rs 900,000. The situation would not have worsened had he not been expelled from the government for not taking any salary from his son, Nawaz regretted.

It was the result of a bunch of people who disrupted the country's social fabric like brutally axing a body, he said in an apparent reference to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf regime. Nawaz said that he loved the younger generation and would take steps for their betterment. He said after forming the government, he would again visit Burewala and give it the status of a district.

A motorway would be built in the area and if possible a new airport would also be constructed in the city, he further promised.

Caretaker Interior Minister directs to ensure law, order during general elections

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Interior Minister Dr Gohar Ejaz has directed to ensure providing fool-proof security to foreigners.

During his visit to the National Action Plan Secretariat in Islamabad today, he directed bringing further improvement in the code of conduct of security of foreigners and its implementation.

Dr Gohar Ejaz said mutual cooperation between law enforcement agencies is very important for protection of all citizens which is the prime responsibility of the state. He said all resources should be utilized to ensure law and order during the elections.



KARACHI: Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM-P) Senior Deputy Convener, Mustafa Kamal and Sarwat Ejaz Qadri, Chief of Sunni Tehreek are addressing a press conference, at Qadri House in Karachi.

World Court orders Israel to prevent acts...

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right to defend itself", by ordering it to halt fighting.

"But the mere claim that Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians is not only false, it's outrageous, and the willingness of the court to even discuss this is a disgrace that will not be erased for generations."

Israeli Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir mocked the ruling in a two-word social media post with a Yiddish-style putdown: "Hague shmague."

South Africa brought the case to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) earlier this month, asking it to grant emergency measures to halt the fighting, which has killed more than 26,000 Palestinians and displaced the majority of the population in a more than three-month campaign of intensive bombardment.

It accused Israel of state-led genocide in its offensive, begun after Hamas fighters stormed into Israel killing 1,200 and kidnapping more than 240. Israel sought to have the case thrown out.

The judges ordered Israel to take all measures within its power to prevent its troops from committing genocide, punish acts of incitement, take steps to improve the humanitarian situation and report back on its progress in a month.

It did not decide the merits of the genocide allegations, which could take years. Although the ruling cannot be appealed, the court has no mechanism to enforce its decision.

Israel had demanded the case be thrown out, calling South Africa's allegations false and "grossly distorted". It says it has acted in Gaza in self-defence against a foe that attacked first, and blames Hamas for harm to civilians for operating among them, which the fighters deny.

The South African government, allowed to make the case under the legal principle that genocide is such a grave crime that all countries are duty-bound to prevent it, hailed the court order as a "decisive victory" for international rule of law.

"South Africa sincerely hopes that Israel will not act to frustrate the application of this Order, as it has publicly threatened to do, but that it will instead act to comply with it fully, as it is bound to do," its foreign ministry said in a statement.

APP adds: Pakistan Friday welcomed the provisional measures ordered by the International Court of Justice (ICJ), whereby it had concluded that, prima facie, it had the jurisdiction to entertain the case against Israel and that South Africa's claims of genocide were "plausible".

The Foreign Office in a statement said that the ICJ had ordered Israel to urgently undertake a series of measures in relation to Palestinians in Gaza to prevent the commission of acts prohibited by the Genocide Convention, including killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; and imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group.

The court also ordered Israel to take immediate and effective measures to enable the provision of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance to address the adverse conditions of life faced by Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

The implementation of the provisional measures required an immediate and unconditional ceasefire to bring about an end to the suffering faced by the people of Gaza.

Since 7th October 2023, Israel had engaged in military aggression and criminal actions against the Palestinian people. "We consider the ICJ's ruling timely and a significant milestone in the pursuit of justice for the Palestinian people and international accountability of Israel," the Foreign Office said.

Pakistan called for the full and effective implementation of the ICJ's decision so that basic human rights, dignity and identity of Palestinian people as a distinct group were upheld and protected, as stipulated by the United Nations Charter, relevant UN resolutions, and international law.

"Pakistan reaffirms its unwavering support to the Palestinian people in their just and legitimate struggle for the realization of their inalienable right to self-determination."

RE-TENDER NOTICE

The SANDEMAN PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL, QUETTA invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items... TSE-23240137371 Only electronic bid will be submitted. No physical bid is required. Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB. Tender Fee Rs.1000/-

S.No	Class of Object	Bid Security
1	Medical Equipment and Accessories	5%

(Total Item(s) Count: 3)

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014. Eligibility of Bidders: 3 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity 5,000,000 in Previous 05 Years. Turn over of at least 5,500,000 PKR in 3 Subsequent Previous Years. Presence in Active Tax Payer List. Sales Tax Certificate. The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan. Must have Office in Quetta City. Must be registered with Industry department. Firm/Company must have completed Audit from any Audit firm for the financial year 2021-22. Duly signed Affidavit from Oath Commissioner on Rs. 100/- Original Stamp Paper declaring that their firm is currently (during 08/22-23) non-Blacklisted or Penalized for any Default or any delivery to Govt./non-Govt. Institutions throughout Pak. Firm/Company must agree with all the terms & conditions (Must unconditionally agree with all the instructions, terms & conditions specified in the bidding documents & contract agreement. Green Challan Receipt. JV is not permissible. Procedure of Procurement: Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure. Bid Security: The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Deposit at Call of 5% specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. Tender Documents: The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppra.gov.pk Issuance of tender Documents: Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bppra.gov.pk Last Date of bid submission: Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by 06 February, 2024 till 12:00 PM through supplier dashboard. Tender opening: All tenders will be opened on same day at 01:00 PM on EPPS System Address: Office of the Medical Superintendent, Sandeman Provincial Hospital, Quetta. Phone no: 0819202639 Email: ms.sph2013@gmail.com

PRO No.1386/26-1-2024
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NOTICE FOR BLACKLISTING.

M/S, Prime Construction Co Govt Contractor regarding the work, Construction of Sports Stadium Srinjavi District Zariat PSDP No.9561 Z2019.1169. In this connection your personal and immediate invite to the following chain of correspondence, Office letter (01) No. E.E. Building No.210-12/AB dated 03/11/2023 (02) No.294-96 dated 23/11/2023 (03) No.328-30/AB dated 08/12/2023 It is regretted to say that despite of chain of Notices mentioned above issued from the office of the Executive Engineer, Building Communication & Works Department District Zariat. You are failed to start the work till to date. Therefore, you are lastly directed to start the work immediately and submit the detailed Construction Schedule for the work. All abandoned activities should be start within a week time after issue of this Notice and intimate this office. Failing in which this office initiates the Case to Higher authorities for Blacklisting of your firm as per Clause of the Contract Agreement.

Executive Engineer, Building CWPP&H Department District Zariat.

PRQ No.1387/26-01-2024
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Transformative changes unveiled by NAB to enhance operations, transparency

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has implemented significant reforms in its hierarchy to enhance efficiency, transparency, and address public perceptions surrounding its operations.

Frivolous complaints under these guidelines will be treated as a cognizable offense, and legal action may be taken against such complainants in the Courts of Law.

The new guidelines specify parameters for submitting complaints, requiring comprehensive personal details from the applicant along with an affidavit.

The affidavit should acknowledge the accuracy of the information provided in the complaint, affirming its authenticity and absence of malafide intentions.

Further, the applicant will be liable to legal action under the law, if allegations are not proved. Considering damage of the self-re-

spect and self-esteem of persons against the moral code of ethics, the persons complained against, shall be addressed as "Defendants" in the new guidelines.

The new guidelines have been framed to ensure human rights as enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan. Further, identity of the defendant will be kept confidential until guilt is proven.

The new guidelines also establish the priority of complainants. Complaints that are incomplete or submitted anonymously will be dismissed at the initial stage.

The new guidelines will be available on NAB website and disseminated through SMS and other modes of communications, for general public awareness and guidance.

Dedicated Complaint Cells (CC) have been set up at NAB (HQ) and Regional Bureaus, directly overseen

by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of NAB, to commence investigations at the initial stage based on the complaints.

Initially, the process of complaint verification will be ensured completed within a prescribed period of 7 to 15 days. The defendant will not be called during this period.

The specific guidelines have been issued for processing the complaints against elected representatives, bureaucracy and businessmen.

Identity of defendants/Government officials, etc will be kept strictly confidential during complain verification process.

It is mentioned that complaints against officials upto BPS-19 shall be authorized by Regional DGs, whereas approval of process on complaints against BS-20 and above officers will be authorized by Chairman NAB.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Gilgit-Baltistan, Syed Mehdi Shah, called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Dr. Amjad Saqib terms BISP's 15 years journey a milestone to serve deserving families

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib Friday said that BISP has achieved numerous milestones during the last 15 years with the support of its International Development Partners, particularly the World Bank. Welcoming the World Bank delegation led by Senior Social Protection Specialist Amjad Zafar Khan, Dr. Amjad Saqib highlighted the critical role of BISP as Pakistan's largest social security program, providing financial assistance to 9.3 million needy families. The WB mission

has conducted a comprehensive five-day visit to BISP from January 22-26, 2024. The primary focus of this mission was to deliver insights and recommendations on the implementation of the Crisis Resilient Social Protection (CRISP) program. Emphasizing the strategy of lifting poor households out of poverty through skill development and microfinance programmes, Dr. Amjad Saqib underscored the importance of the BISP Savings Scheme, promoting a saving trend among consumers.

In line with BISP's commitment to economic empowerment while preserving the dignity of needy women, Dr. Amjad Saqib discussed the introduction of a New Banking System to address the challenges faced by needy families. He credited the National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER) for collecting authentic data of deserving households out of poverty through skill development and microfinance programmes, Dr. Amjad Saqib commended the BISP Savings Scheme.

Delay in issuance of Passport Wafaqi Mohtasib terms inquiry report as unsatisfactory

ISLAMABAD (APP): Wafaqi Mohtasib Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi has expressed his dissatisfaction over the inquiry report submitted by the Passport Office in compliance of his earlier directions in response to a large number of complaints regarding delay in the issuance of passports, said in a press release issued here on Friday.

Terming the report as unsatisfactory and lacking in substance, he directed the senior officials concerned of the Passport Office to address the issue expeditiously. The people pay for provision of these services directly to the Passport Office but unfortunately, they are not getting what they have expected in return, he observed and added, the exhaustion of lamination paper, ink etc were petty issues and the Passport Office should have foreseen its precise requirements much earlier to cater to the needs of growing number of passport seekers.

It may be recalled that taking suo motto notice of very large number of complaints against delay in issuance of passports, an Inspection Team of the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat had visited the Passport Office, Islamabad on the directions of the Wafaqi Mohtasib to ascertain the causes of the delay and breakdown of efficient delivery of services in the Passport Office.

Headed by the Senior Advisor, the Team discussed in detail the entire process of issuing passports with the officials besides interviewing a large number of people, who had come to collect their passports in the Passport Offices located in the Federal Capital.

The people informed the Inspection Team that they had been visiting the Passport Office for the last couple of months and many of them had complained that their visas expired during the process.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of South Korea Park Ki Jun in a meeting with Chief minister GB Haji Gul Bar Khan at GB House.

Senate body on Parliamentary Affairs convenes

ISLAMABAD (Online): A Meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Parliamentary Affairs, chaired by Senator Taj Haider was held today at the Parliament House.

Present at the meeting were Senator Kamran Murtaza, Senator Abida Muhammad Azeem, Senator Walid Iqbal, Murtaza Solangi, Federal Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, the Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, and senior officials from the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.

The committee engaged in a detailed discussion on the Public Petition regarding the status of "The Protection of Family Life and Wedlock Bill, 2023." Various aspects of the proposed legislation were thoroughly examined, with committee members actively participating in the deliberations.

The Chairman of the committee emphasized the distress that families face when spouses are posted in different cities, noting that this situation instills fractures in family institutions. Three petitioners pleaded their cases, asserting that they and their families have been adversely affected by deportation for the past 25-30 years. The Committee assured the petitioners that both Houses of Parliament empathized with the issue. He further mentioned that in pursuance of Article 75 of the Constitution, the status of said bill should have been cleared after its passage from both Houses of Parliament. The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs also outlined the timeline of the bill, from its passage in the Parliament to its submission to the President wherein it was also stated that the "The Protection of Family Life and Wedlock Bill, 2023" was not assented to and has now been returned by the President to the Parliament for reconsideration under Article 75(1)(b) of the Constitution.

During the meeting, committee members extensively discussed the matter, taking Article 75 of the Constitution, the Rules of Business, 1973, and the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Senate, 2012 into consideration regarding the procedure currently adopted for forwarding Bills to the President for Assent.



ISLAMABAD: President of The Rotary International Stephanie Urick addressing a press conference at a local hotel in the Federal Capital.

SC allows PTI leader Tahir to contest election

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has allowed PTI leader Tahir Sadiq to contest election.

He is the second leader of PTI whom relief has been given on Friday. PTI leader Sana Ullah Masti Khel from Bhakkar was allowed to contest election on Thursday.

A 3-member bench of SC presided over by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah took up the case for hearing Friday. Tahir Sadiq has filed nomination papers from NA-49 Attock.

Ashrafi led Salat al Istisqa to seek relief from drought, diseases

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Special Representative on Religious Affairs and Pakistani Diaspora in Middle East and Muslim Countries, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, on Friday led a special prayer for rain (Salat al Istisqa).

Ashrafi, who is also the chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council, said Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar had instructed to offer Namaz-e-Istisqa across the country for rains across the country, necessary to deal with drought like situation causing serious threats to the health of human lives, especially the children.

The caretaker Prime Minister said that Faisal Mosque was a national asset of Pakistan and its beautification needed special attention. He directed the Chief Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner Islamabad to complete the decoration work of the mosque as soon as possible.



ISLAMABAD: Activists of All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) holds a banner during protest as they observe Indian Republic Day as Black Day during an anti-Indian protest in front of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Federal Capital, to show their solidarity with people of Indian-administered Kashmir.

GB governor calls on president; wheat subsidy, other issues discussed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor of Gilgit-Baltistan Syed Mehdi Shah on Friday called on President Dr Arif Alvi and discussed the overall situation in the region including wheat subsidy and other issues.

The federal secretary of information expressed heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family over his demise.

Shahera Shahid said, "It is sad to hear that Pervaiz Shaukat's is no more. Indeed, he was a talented and hardworking journalist."

She said the deceased dedicated his entire life to the profession of journalism and the rights of the journalist community.

up the matter of wheat subsidy with the caretaker prime minister and finance minister and expressed the hope that the problems would be resolved soon.

The elected members of the GB Council had also called on the president on Thursday to discuss the wheat subsidy and other matters. President Alvi had assured the delegation to take up their issues at the relevant forums.

Kashmiris expressed strong disapproval, resentment towards India; Mushaal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) Mushaal Hussain Mulick stated that Kashmiris across the Line of Control (LoC) marked Indian Republic Day on Friday as a Black Day, expressing their strong disapproval and resentment towards India.

In her special message on Black Day here Friday, she stated that the people in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) along with the rest of the world, marked Indian Republic Day as a Black Day. She criticized the RSS-

led Indian government for celebrating the abrogation of the constitution, targeting minorities and undermining the so-called scholarly democracy.

Mushaal further commented that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the idol of Lord Ram at the new temple constructed on the site where the Babri Masjid stood for centuries before being demolished by a Hindutva mob.

She also predicted that India would eventually disintegrate due to divisive RSS policies.



Federal Minister for Interior Dr Gohar Ejaz offering Friday prayer at Faisal Mosque in Islamabad.

CG COMSTECH says: SESAME can transform entire scientific landscape of Middle East, OIC region

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator General of COMSTECH, Prof Dr M Iqbal Choudhary, said on Friday that SESAME has the potential to transform the entire scientific landscape of the Middle East and OIC region for good.

Inaugurating the OIC SESAME Users two-day meeting, Prof Choudhary said that the SESAME (Synchrotron Light for Experimental Science in the Middle East) is the most important and expensive scientific facility available in the entire developing region. He said that SESAME is an elaborate, expensive, and impactful facility in the OIC region. He expressed his thanks to the government of Jordan for hosting

this facility. Prof Choudhary said that by using this huge infrastructure, researchers can perform experiments not only in a much better, more precise, and more efficient manner, but they can also conduct scientific studies that are not possible without such a facility. He said that OIC-COMSTECH is pleased to work with SESAME and its users to facilitate its use in the least developed member states.

Prof Choudhary mentioned that we are discussing the possibility of holding three SESAME user meetings in Nigeria for Anglophone Africa, Senegal for Francophone Africa, and Kazakhstan for Central Asia.

Dr. Gohar offers Jumma prayer in Faisal Mosque

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Interior Dr. Gohar Ejaz on Friday offered Jumma prayer in the capital's largest and beautiful Faisal Mosque.

The caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar had instructed to offer Namaz-e-Istisqa across the country for rains across the country, necessary to deal with drought like situation causing serious threats to the health of human lives, especially the children.

After the prayers, the minister said that Faisal Mosque was a national asset of Pakistan and its beautification needed special attention. He directed the Chief Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner Islamabad to complete the decoration work of the mosque as soon as possible.

Shahera expresses condolence over demise of senior journalist

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Secretary of Information and Broadcasting, Shahera Shahid, expressed grief and sorrow over the death of senior journalist Pervaiz Shaukat on Friday.

The federal secretary of information expressed heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family over his demise.

Shahera Shahid said, "It is sad to hear that Pervaiz Shaukat's is no more. Indeed, he was a talented and hardworking journalist."

She said the deceased dedicated his entire life to the profession of journalism and the rights of the journalist community.

Much awaited-rain to bring respite to citizens; reduce fog

ISLAMABAD (APP): After the prolonged dry period, the much-awaited rain with snowfall over the hills in upper parts of the country during the coming days, as per weather experts forecast, will weaken dense foggy conditions and provide relief to the citizens by improving air quality.

According to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), rain of light to moderate intensity with snowfall over the hills will lash upper parts of the country with occasional gaps.

The rain will also reduce travel hazards in the fog bearing areas of the country and prove as a sigh of relief for those suffering from viral diseases especially allergy patients.

A westerly wave was likely to enter western

parts of the country on January 27 (night), and may persist over upper parts till January 31. Under the influence of this weather system, light to moderate rain with snowfall over the hills is expected in Gilgit-Baltistan including Diamir, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche, Shigar while in Kashmir including Neelum valley, Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haveli, Sudhanoti, Kotli, Bimber, Mirpur from January 27-31.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, light to moderate rain with snowfall over the hills is expected in Chitral, Dir, Swat, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Haripur, Kohistan, Shangla, Bunner, Karak, Peshawar, Charsadda, Nowshera, Swabi, Buner, Bajaur, Kurram, Waziristan.



ISLAMABAD: Charge d'Affaires of Indian Embassy to Pakistan Geetika Srivastava, Dean of Diplomatic Crops CARs Ambassador of Turkmenistan Atadjan N Movlamov and others cutting the cake on the occasion of the 75th Republic Day of India, at a local hotel in Federal Capital.

Kashmiris observe Indian Republic Day as black day in front of Indian Embassy in Brussels

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Kashmiri diaspora in Belgium observed India's Republic Day as Black Day on Friday by holding a protest demonstration in front of the Indian Embassy in Brussels. According to a press release received here on Friday, the protest march was organized by the Kashmir Council (EU), the European Union, Brussels, and an indigenous NGO representing the people of Kashmir.

The Kashmir Council Europe, with backing from other organizations, organized a demonstration that drew a sizable number of supporters and Kashmiris despite the cold and heavy rain. Slogans supporting Kashmiris and denouncing Indian crimes were written on posters and banners held

by the demonstrators. The demonstrators asked that India halt its crimes against the Kashmiri people and keep its word to provide them the right to self-determination. The large-scale protest rally was headed by a number of people, including EU chief Ali Raza Sye, Khalid Joshi, Rao Mostejab, Nadeem Mahmood Iqbal, Nadeem Mahar, Syed Aslam Shah, Zahid Shah, Zaheer Zahid, Shazia Aslam, and many more.

Speaking at the event, Chairman of the Kashmir Council EU Ali Raza Sye urged that in order to resolve the Kashmir dispute amicably and fairly, human rights violations in Occupied Kashmir cease and that Kashmiris be granted their rights. It should be noted

that residents of Azad Kashmir, Occupied Kashmir, and Kashmiris residing abroad celebrate Indian Republic Day annually as a black day. According to Ali Raza Sye, in order for Kashmiris to lead peaceful and successful lives, they must be granted their rights, injustices must be stopped, and the Kashmir dispute must be settled amicably as soon as possible. During his speech, Ali Raza Sye stated that India is complicit in grave crimes against Kashmiris and cited notable political, social, and journalistic figures from the region who were wrongfully imprisoned. Because of fabricated accusations made against them under the black laws, a significant number of Kashmiris are imprisoned.

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Historic address of COAS to youth

The Pakistan National Youth Conference held at Jinnah Convention Center, Islamabad recently turned out to be a historic event mainly because of address of the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir to the youth there.

Indeed, it was a historic address delivered by the Army Chief. In his key-note address at the National Youth Conference, General Syed Asim Munir spoke passionately about the crucial role of the youth in shaping the future of Pakistan.

During the address, General Syed Asim Munir stated that he was greatly pleased to address the future builders of Pakistan. He further said that the purpose of creating Pakistan was that its religion, culture, and civilization were different from those of the Hindus in all respects, instead of the citizens adopting Western civilization and culture.

In his address, the Army Chief said that youth were the guardians of the bright and sublime traditions of the nation and country, the epitome of Allama Iqbal and Quaid-e-Azam's visionary leadership.

Addressing the National Youth Conference, COAS said: "It gives me great pleasure to address the future builders of Pakistan and Shaheen of Iqbal."

The Army Chief said the establishment of Pakistan highlighted the core issue that Islamic culture and civilization were different from Hindus in all respects and Muslims might not adopt Western civilization and culture. The youth, he said should have immense confidence in their country, nation, culture, civilization and themselves. "The youth should be sure that they are scion of a great homeland and nation," he added. He said Pakistan Army could fight against terrorists, but the cooperation of the entire nation was imperative in that regard.

The COAS said that the main objective of social media and propaganda was to spread uncertainty, chaos and despair, whereas social media news verification was critical as without research and positive thinking, society remained chaotic. Citing verses of the Holy Quran on disinformation, he said.

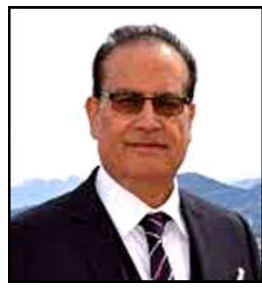
"Allah Almighty says: 'O believers! If a transgressor brings news, you should firstly confirm it.'" The establishment of Pakistan was just like the Tayyaba state (referring to Islamic State of Medina), that were founded under the sublime banner of Kalima-e-Tayyaba, the Army Chief said. "Allah Almighty has blessed Pakistan with abundant natural resources, agriculture and young manpower," he added.

He said that a Muslim always offered gratitude to Allah Almighty for patience in turbulent and good times adding, "Our forces are always ready against any kind of threat and conspiracy. If Pakistan exists, so we do, if there is no Pakistan then we are nothing."

He said that Pakistan would not compromise on its sovereignty. "We need to have full faith in the bright future of Pakistan and maintain the legacy of our ancestors," he added.

He urged the youth for having full faith in the bright future and maintaining the legacy of the ancestors.

During the address of COAS, the students kept on raising slogans of Pakistan Army Zindabad, Pakistan Zindabad and Quaid-e-Azam Zindabad.



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

Rogue India and benevolent China

separatist movements by use of brute force and has resorted to a global killing spree with total impunity.

India's actions in IIOJ&K particularly following the revocation of the region's special status, have drawn international scrutiny and criticism. Human rights organizations including Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International (AI) have documented a range of serious rights violations in the region. These include arbitrary detentions, a communications blackout, and severe restrictions on freedom of movement and peaceful assembly, alongside the suspension of internet and telecommunication services.

The reports from AI and HRW also highlight a crackdown on media and civil society, with cases of relentless interrogation of journalists, lawyers, and human rights defenders, as well as arbitrary travel bans and detentions. The rampant and arbitrary use of laws like the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), Public Safety Act (PSA), and Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) has led to pre-trial detentions and arrests without judicial review, coupled with unlawful killings lacking accountability. These developments have damaged India's reputation as a state committed to ethical practices and human rights, drawing parallels to historical instances of oppression and leading to significant international outcry.

The story does not end here, HRW and other international HR organizations have recorded mistreatment of religious minorities under the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s government. They have documented horrendous incidents of communal violence, such as the outbreak in Nuh district in Haryana, where state retaliation against Muslim residents, including illegal property demolitions and detentions, lynching, rape and mob killing. In Manipur, inter-communal violence led to deaths, displacement, and destruction of property. There are countless incidents of violence and discrimination against religious minorities, including Muslims and Christians, with

some states implementing "anti-conversion" laws and others engaging in actions like property demolitions without legal authorization. The Universal Periodic Review process by the United Nations Human Rights Council has raised serious concerns over regression in human rights under the Modi government, with increased attacks and discrimination against religious minorities and marginalized communities like Dalits and Adivasis.

The state sponsored majoritarianism in India has created wide spread discontentment amongst the populace belonging to minority groups which has given rise to over twenty five separatist and insurgency movements including the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN), Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF), Mizo National Front (MNF), Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), Hizbul Mujahideen, Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF), Babbar Khalsa International (BKI), Kamtapur Liberation Organization (KLO), Bodoland People's Front (BPF) and Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF).

Belligerent and hegemonic India does not enjoy good relations with any country of the region. It has border disputes with China along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), which resulted in increased tensions and military buildups from both sides. The India-Nepal dispute, reignited by India's road construction in a region has become politically charged, fueling nationalist sentiments in Nepal. During Doklam Standoff (2017) Bhutan and India armies came face to face when India started building hydro electric projects to divert water which was a lifeline for Bhutan. India was ward off only when China sided Bhutan. Maldives has been wary of India involvement in its internal affairs specially India's effort to change the Islamic character of Maldives has resulted in downgrading the relations.

Earlier, Indian hegemonic designs were confined to the region, but now emboldened by its economic upsurge and be-

coming darling of the USA as a counterbalancing force to China, it has enlarged its criminal ambit globally. Several countries are raising allegations about its involvement in extraterritorial activities. Canada has accused India of being involved in the killing of Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar. This was followed by the United States implicating India in the assassination of another Sikh leader, a development significant enough to influence President Joe Biden's decision to cancel a planned visit to India as the chief guest for the Republic Day celebrations. In the aftermath, India invited French President Emmanuel Macron to fill this role, a decision that was soon overshadowed by controversy when India revoked the visa of a long-serving French journalist. Adding to these diplomatic challenges, Pakistan has recently accused India of being behind the killing of Pakistani citizens on the basis of tangible evidence of India's involvement. These incidents point to a growing concern about India's foreign policy and its actions on the international stage, reflecting a shift from regional to broader global implications. China, as a global power, presents a contrasting approach in its regional and international relations compared to India. With its status as a nuclear power, the world's second-largest economy, significant military capabilities, achievements in space exploration, and industrial prowess, China has adopted a strategy of collaboration and support with its neighbors. The country is heavily investing in infrastructure projects across the region, including the construction of roads, highways, ports, bridges, and airports followed by deeper cooperation in space exploration, research and development, education and health, mining and agriculture and industrialization. This investment is part of a broader strategy to enhance regional connectivity and economic development. Furthermore, China has shown a willingness to provide financial support to neighboring countries in times of need, often extending generous loans and financial aid.

These efforts have fostered strong relationships with most of its neighbors. China's approach reflects its ambition to position itself as a benevolent and cooperative regional leader, contrasting with perceptions of India's criminal, unethical, hegemonic and belligerent state sponsored policies.

China's global investment strategy, particularly under its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), encompasses a vast and diverse range of development projects across various regions. In Pakistan, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) represents a significant commitment with an investment of \$65 billion. The strategic partnership with Iran, valued at approximately \$400 billion over 25 years, spans numerous sectors, reflecting China's deep economic involvement in the Middle East. In Afghanistan, China focuses on infrastructure and mining with an initial investment of \$7 billion. The relationship with the Maldives has been strengthened in 2024 with an investment portfolio of \$1.57 Billion. China's investment in Sri Lanka, including the Hambantota Port development, amounts to \$4.5 billion. In Africa, Chinese investments range from \$126 billion to \$273 billion, emphasizing its substantial economic presence on the continent. The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region sees China's involvement reach \$6.7 billion in investments with a significant trade volume. In Central Asia, Chinese investments lie between \$35 billion and \$60 billion, highlighting strategic interests in this region. Europe experienced a massive range of investments from \$1 trillion to \$3 trillion, covering various economic activities, while Latin America saw investments between \$150 billion and \$250 billion, indicating China's expanding global influence and diverse economic partnerships. These extensive investments reflect China's ambition to enhance global connectivity, create win-win situations, increase the capacity, capability and resource base of its partner and bring about prosperity across the board without bringing regime changes and med-

dling into the internal affairs of its partners, without having any desired to use its investment to force the partners to take decisions which serve its vested interests.

China's approach to its territorial and internal issues, particularly with Taiwan, Macau, Tibet, and Hong Kong, reflects a strategy contrasting sharply with more aggressive methods of India and even USA and the West. Emphasizing diplomacy and engagement, China has consistently advocated for peaceful resolution and dialogue. In its handling of these regions, China has shown restraint and a willingness to let time progress, allowing for the possibility of reconciliation and mutual understanding. This approach is guided by the belief that over time, differing perspectives might converge towards the goal of unity and shared prosperity.

Furthermore, China's policy towards its minority regions involves a focus on development and integration. Efforts are directed toward channeling resources, skills, industry, education, and technology into these areas aimed at addressing grievances by fostering socio-economic growth and assimilation into the broader Chinese society. This strategy is seen as a way to mitigate discontent and create a more harmonious and unified national fabric.

For India to emerge as a progressive and peaceful nation, it must focus on embracing and integrating its diverse ethnic, religious, communal, racial, and linguistic minorities into the national mainstream. Addressing the concerns and aspirations of separatist groups through democratic means and respecting human rights is essential.

India could benefit from emulating China's strategy of fostering partnerships for progress, especially in addressing conflicts in IIOJ&K and separatist movements. Prioritizing the rights of religious, ethnic, and linguistic minorities, and resolving conflicts through democratic means aligned with the United Nations charter, would not only avoid inhumane force but also reinforce India's image as a harmonious and inclusive society. This approach is pivotal for long-term peace and development.

The complicit western appeasement to indian arrogance

By Ahmad Ali

India a multi ethnic, cultural and religious country, despite its heterogeneous societal composition, has been in an internal friction since its making. From the pogroms against Sikhs in 1984 to the Gujarat riots against Muslims, almost all the religious minorities have been victim to totalitarian hatred. Sikhs with a population of 20 million in India, due to their demands of distinct recognition and political autonomy, have been target to continuous subjugation. The story of Sikh sovereignty begins with its founder, A Sikh's mission in this world, according to the teachings of Baba Guru Nanak, is to achieve personal liberation while making sure that everyone has the right to live in freedom, and that when political leaders interfere with the rights and freedoms of the people, it is the duty of a Sikh to resist that oppression. This is why the Indian leadership always viewed Sikhs with particular suspicion and disdain, recognizing they catalyzed anti-colonial efforts and played a leading role in them. On the other hand, India weakened Punjab's political power by carving out territory from it for other states, such as Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. In addition, in violation of riparian law, which is an international law, India transferred Punjab's river water to other states and areas, causing a huge economic loss to the state, which has long been known as India's bread-

basket, and threatening the livelihood of Punjab's agrarian community.

With the Modi led BJP government formation in 2014, which draws its inspiration from Nazi Germany, the Indian government further deemed Sikhs as a danger to their 'nation-building' endeavors. But with the rising Indian influence globally, the Indian government driven by its false sense of superiority exported its vendetta against Sikhs in neighboring countries as well. Charanjit Singh, a prominent Sikh community member, was assassinated in Peshawar. Similarly, a vocal supporter of Khalistan movement, Paramjit Singh Panjwar or Malik Sardar Singh, was shot dead when he was out on a morning walk near his Lahore residence in Pakistan.

Now with India, world's 5th largest economy, expanding its political influence with the aid of its western allies, has taken its violent extremist moves to another height.

In November 2023, the U.S. Department of Justice has claimed to have thwarted an alleged plot by an Indian official to kill an American citizen and Sikh activist in New York City. According to Reuters a plot to kill Sikh separatists on U.S soil began in May with text messages between Indian security officials and suspected drug traffickers, according to a U.S indictment.

"Save my name," the official wrote to a man named Nikhil Gupta over an en-

crypted messaging application on May 6, according to U.S. prosecutors.

According to the indictment, the official told Gupta, an Indian national accused of drug and weapons trafficking, about a "target" in New York, and asked him to arrange the target's assassination in exchange for the dismissal of criminal charges in India. According to a statement from the Department of Justice (DOJ), the suspect was arrested in Prague in June and was then handed over to Czech authorities. In the midst of the US investigation into India's alleged plot to kill Khalistan activist Gurpatwant Pannun in America, FBI Director Christopher Wray visited India earlier this month.

Following a similar incident earlier this year, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau made public charge that the Indian government was involved in the June 18 assassination of Sikh Canadian leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar. Mr. Nijjar, a Canadian citizen, was shot and killed by gunmen outside a Sikh place of worship in Surrey, British Columbia.

Trudeau's rebuke garnered the attention of world leaders, and the story dominated headlines internationally. The majority of discussion has been on India's descent into authoritarianism. Some analyzes have rightly placed Nijjar's extrajudicial killing as part of a broader, state-sponsored persecution of mi-

norities in Modi's India, prompting Genocide Watch to warn that India is on the brink of genocide.

India's government's attempts to kill foreign nationals on foreign soil indicate a shifting approach. India under Modi is now prepared to carry out international repression and assassinate his detractors.

Sikhs in India and throughout the world have been reminded that this devolution is not unique to Modi's India as the country continues its decline from democracy to authoritarianism. It is India as they have known it their entire lives. The most recent attack on Sikh lives in New York City and the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada are part of a long history of abuses that highlight Sikhs' sense of insecurity and validate their long-held conviction that India is the biggest threat to its own national security.

The aforementioned incidents pose a serious question on the overt support of western democracies for India in order to contain China. Where the taxpayer money Europeans and Americans, and state of the art war machinery is being provided to a far right fascist regime on a sprint to cleanse all its minorities.

Writer is a student of Peace and Conflict Studies. Areas of interest include non-traditional security and foreign policy. He can be contacted on Ahi7664556@gmail.com

Strategic urban planning in Balochistan: A blueprint for sustainable development

By Manzoor Magsi

In a bid to chart a course for the future, the provincial government of Balochistan has undertaken a transformative initiative—the "Development of Master Plans for 32 District Headquarters/Towns of Balochistan." This comprehensive scheme aims to create a clear roadmap for the development and expansion of identified towns within short, medium, and long-term frameworks. As the project progresses under the public sector development programme, it becomes imperative to examine how strategic urban planning can contribute to reducing the pressures of urbanization and accommodate the province population's growth.

The key components of this ambitious endeavor encompass various vital sectors, ensuring an integrated approach to urban development. From Housing & Urban Development to Traffic & Transportation, and from Economic issues to Disaster Risk Management, each facet is meticulously addressed. The development of Master Plans involves the creation of Inception Reports, Topographic Surveys, Digitized Base Maps, Draft and Final Master Plan Reports, as well as rules and guidelines to manage future growth effectively.

One crucial aspect of this initiative is its emphasis on inclusivity. Authenticated data collected from the field and secondary sources play a pivotal role in the development of qualitative master plans. In this regard, the involvement of stakeholders such as government departments, non-

government organizations, academia, and the general public is deemed crucial. Collaboration with these entities ensures that the master plans are not only comprehensive but also reflective of the diverse needs and aspirations of the communities involved.

The ongoing activities, including liaisons with district administrations and the submission of Inception Reports and initial drafts of surveys and maps, showcase the commitment to a consultative and iterative approach. However, to achieve truly sustainable urban development, a continued and robust partnership with stakeholders is necessary. This collaborative effort will not only validate the collected data but also enhance the adaptability of the master plans to the evolving needs of the communities.

As the country grapples with the challenges of rapid urbanization and a growing population, Balochistan's initiative stands as a model for strategic, inclusive, and sustainable urban planning. By considering all aspects of development, from infrastructure to environmental conservation, the province is not just preparing for the future—it is actively shaping it. The success of this endeavor will not only benefit Balochistan but may serve as a beacon for other regions seeking innovative solutions to the complex issue of urbanization in the 21st century. —The writer is a former Press Secretary to Chief Minister Balochistan, currently working as Assistant Director of Public Relations at the Government of Balochistan

Art reminds us of beauty, emotions, stories in a world data: CM Baqar

KARACHI (APP): The Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar believed that in an era that is often dictated by numbers and data, the arts serve as a reminder of the beauty, emotions, and stories that make us human.

He said, "This is a special day, not just for the graduates, but for the entire community that supports and values the arts."

The disciplines are the heartbeat of our cultural identity—expressions of the soul, reflections of our rich heritage, and gateways to creativity, the CM said and added that in a world often dominated by numbers and data, the arts reminded us of the beauty, the emotions, and the stories that make us human.

This, he said on Friday while speaking at Arts Council Academic Convocation-2024 organised by the Arts Council of Pakistan (ACP), Karachi. The program was attended by Minister of Information & President Mohammad Ahmed Shah, diplomats from different countries, faculty, alumni, students and parents.

The CM said that this convocation was meant to celebrate the achievements of the talented graduates from the ACP Academies, who would be receiving their diplomas in music, theatre, dance, fine arts and textile.

Baqar told the graduates that their journey has been more than acquiring a diploma; it has been a voyage of self-discovery, a pursuit of passion, and a commitment to excellence. "You have poured your heart and soul into your work, and today, we celebrate the fruits of your dedication,"

Akmal Leghari says: Powers should be transferred to UC level for solving the issues

Tanveer Ahmed Soomro MIRPUR MATHELO: Powers should be transferred to the UC level so that the problems are solved. If there are schools, there are no teachers, if there are teachers, then they are not ready to teach. It is felt that people are being kept ignorant under a plan so that they cannot question the elected public representatives.

These views were expressed by Nadir Akmal Khan Leghari, an independent candidate of PS19, while talking to the media during the election campaign. PS19 candidate Nadir Akmal Leghari visited different areas where on arrival the people of the area were greeted by the people of the area was welcomed.

Expressing regret over the current situation of the constituency, he said that corruption is eating this country like a termite, from the construction of roads to the construction of government buildings, everyone is doing corruption, which is causing damage to the

country. Clean drinking water is not available to the people in the constituency, due to which the diseases like hepatitis and cancer are increasing. He said that people's trust is waning from institutions as well as representatives of the constituency. Talking about Ghotki, he said that Ghotki is an industrial zone and a district rich in mineral resources, which pays the Government billions of rupees in revenue, yet education in Ghotki district has been destroyed, due to lack of public health. In view of this, concrete steps have not been taken till date at the local level and the lack of employment opportunities for the youth is pushing the youth into despair. Nadir Akmal Khan Leghari said that he has returned to his constituency after a long time and the backward condition of the constituency shows the lack of interest of the elected representative of the constituency in the problems of the people and the region.



LAHORE: Customs official burning pile of seized drugs previously smuggled into the country, on the outskirts of Provincial Capital, on the eve of International Customs Day.

LHC stops planting of palm trees along highways, motorways

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday stopped planting of palm trees along highways and motorways.

Justice Shahid Karim passed the orders while hearing petitions, filed by Haroon Farooq and others against ineffective measures for controlling smog.

During the proceedings, the Environment Protection Department (EPD) director general appeared before the court and submitted that palm trees were ineffective barriers against pollution, adding that they did not prove successful on Islamabad motorways and highways.

The court questioned the bizarre renovation of

underpasses in the city, criticising the unconventional lighting that malfunctioned on the first day. The court also stressed the urgency for water conservation and observed that there were predictions about water scarcity by 2026-2027, envisioning a future where water tankers become a common sight in Lahore.

The court addressed the provincial law officer and asked what steps had been taken by the Water and Sanitation Agency for installing water meters.

To which, a member of the Judicial Water and Environment Commission stated that a one-year timeline had been given for installing water meters.



RAWALPINDI: SAPM Jawad Sohrab Malik lays foundation stone of new academic block of OPF School.



KARACHI: Caretaker Chief Minister Sindh Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar addressing the Arts Council Academic Convocation 2024.

Communication to foster global understanding: Governor

Independent Report LAHORE: Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that in the realm of media, communication plays a pivotal role in shaping societies and fostering global understanding.

He gave this message at the concluding ceremony of the 2nd International Media and Communication Conference organised by Punjab University Department of Communication and Media Research and University of

Management and Technology.

On this occasion, Chairman PHEC Prof Dr. Shahid Munir, PU VC Prof Dr. Khalid Mahmood, Rector UMT Dr. Asif Raza, Leads University VC Dr. Nadeem Ahmad Bhatti, DG PEMRA Ikram Barkat, Director School of Communication Studies Prof. Dr. Nosheena Saleem, Dean School of Media and Communication Studies, UMT Dr. Anjum Zia, researchers, eminent journalists, alumnus, faculty members and a large

number of students were present.

Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that intersection of academia and media is crucial for nurturing critical thinking and fostering innovation and he believes the insights gained here will pave the way for a more informed and interconnected world. He stated that the conference has been a testament to our commitment to exploring the dynamic landscape of media in the 21st century. He said the diverse

perspectives shared by esteemed speakers from around the world have undoubtedly contributed to a wealth of knowledge that will guide our future endeavors. He said the recommendations and discussions from this conference will serve as a roadmap for enhancing media communication practices, promoting ethical journalism, and addressing the evolving challenges in this digital age. Dr. Shahid Munir said that the transformative power of technology.

Jamal chairs Iqbal Academy governing body meeting

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah hoped on Friday that the guidance and recommendations of the Iqbal Academy governing body members would help the academy pursue its mission of promoting Iqbal's works and messages among the young generation.

Presiding over a meeting of the Iqbal Academy Pakistan governing body here at Aiwan-e-Iqbal, he said that it was due to efforts of scholars that the tradition

of understanding of Iqbal's works was progressing in a good way, adding that all concerned want to see Iqbal Academy, a national institution for promotion of Iqbal's thoughts, more strong and active and in this regard it would be provided all kinds of support so that it could play its role in a better way.

The governing body members offered Fataha on the demise of renowned scholar, former member governing body Prof Dr Rafiuddin Hashmi and paid him tribute over his services regarding Iqbal Studies.



KARACHI: Leader of Jamaat-e-Islami Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman is sitting with students during sit protest (Dharna) in favor of their demands outside Board of Intermediate Education office.

Governor urges doctors to work with dedication, assure cooperation to solve problems

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali Friday reiterated his commitment to address the problems of young doctors urging them to serve the ailing community with utmost dedication and professionalism.

He was talking to a 15-member delegation of the Young Doctors Association that called on

him at Governor House. The delegation included Dr. Faisal Barakzai, Dr. Adnan, Dr. Karamat and Dr. Mudassar Khan. The delegation apprised the governor about their issues including depriving them of training and inadequate facilities of induction in Post Graduate Medical Institute. The governor listened to their concerns patiently and assured them of cooperation and

assistance. He said that the significance of doctors could not be undermined owing to their profession adding their problems would be addressed promptly with the help of the provincial government.

He also urged doctors to work compassionately to help out ailing community and treat them politely abiding by the principles of their profession.

Meeting discuss preparation for Kashmir Day

PESHAWAR (APP): Additional Chief Secretary Home Department, Abid Majeed here on Friday chaired a meeting to review preparations to observe Kashmir Day. The meeting among others was attended by administrative secretaries while commissioners and deputy commissioners attended the meeting via video link. Addressing the meeting, the Additional Chief Secretary said that rallies and walks would be carried out to mark the Day and to highlight tireless struggle of Kashmir people. He said that functions and various events would also be held in educational institutions and awareness creating banners would be installed.

Punjab to introduce first social welfare policy: Minister

Independent Report LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Health and Social Welfare Minister Prof Dr. Javed Akram revealed on Friday that the provincial government would introduce its first social welfare policy.

Addressing a dialogue on the policy draft at LUMS here on Friday, he highlighted the significance of the initiative for enhancing departmental services and performance. The minister, attending as the special guest, emphasised the policy's potential for welfare of people. Secretary Social Welfare and Baitul-Mal

Zahoor Hussain outlined plans for seeking cabinet approval post-consultation. DG Social Welfare and Baitul-Mal Mudassar Riaz Malik underscored the policy's alignment with Pakistan's Constitution, existing laws, and international agreements. Stakeholder, including Amin Bait ul Mal Jubir Ghani, participated in a comprehensive presentation on the proposed policy. Lawyers, academicians, NGO representatives, and other attendees contributed valuable insights and suggestions during the session.



LAHORE: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah presiding over the Governing Body meeting of Iqbal Academy Pakistan at Aiwan-e-Iqbal.

Killers get death penalty on two counts

FAISALABAD (APP): A sessions court handed down death penalty on two counts to each of five convicts for killing former president District Bar Association and his driver.

According to the prosecution, five accused including Suleman, Sajjad, Abdullah, Naem and Hasan Ali shot dead former President District Bar Naveed Mukhtar Ghumman and his driver Binyamin over an old enmity on January 10, last year.

Batala Colony police registered a case and submitted challan in the court. Additional Sessions Judge Inam Elahi pronounced the judgment after recording evidence and final argument from both sides.

The court also imposed a fine of Rs one million on each of the convicts.

NDMA organizes two-day workshop on Resilient Urban Planning

KARACHI (APP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has conducted a two-day workshop on "Resilient Urban Planning in Climate Extremes" at Karachi NDMA's National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), in collaboration with the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Sindh and UN-HABITAT.

The two-day workshop on comprehensive "Resilient Urban Planning in Climate Extremes" was held from January 23-24, a news release said.

The event witnessed active participation from a diverse range of stakeholders, bringing together key players in disaster management and

urban planning. Chief Coordinator NIDM, Tanveer Piracha inaugurated the workshop and briefed about proactive disaster management in Pakistan.

The workshop served as a collaborative platform, engaging participants from federal and provincial government departments, UN agencies, international NGOs, national humanitarian organizations, disaster management authorities, Rescue 1122, as well as representatives from academia, and civil society organizations.

The primary objective of the workshop was to enhance the understanding of resilient urban planning strategies in the face of climate extremes.

Mayor Karachi says: PPP participating in polls without crutches, it doesn't need alliance

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that Pakistan Peoples Party is participating in elections without crutches because the party does not need an alliance with any party as other parties are forming an alliance.

He said this while addressing the inauguration ceremony of the newly constructed Fatima Jinnah Park in North Karachi Sector 11-E on Friday.

After February 8, the PPP will formed government in the country if people gave mandate to the party. We will not cry for power and funds, he said. He said that he will

start the development projects of Karachi in a big way under the leadership of Bilawal Bhutto.

He said that all the citizens and areas of Karachi are equal for us and the PPP will not disappoint the people of any district. He said that restoring parks and playgrounds for the public is our priority and the reconstruction of Fatima Jinnah Park will provide quality recreation facilities to the residents of North Karachi. He said that Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) is running by the PPP and its mayor and we are fulfilling the promises we have made.

PPP Stands with People in every challenging situation: Aajiz Dhamra

HYDERABAD (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party Sindh spokesperson and candidate for PS 64 Hyderabad, Senator Aajiz Dhamra expressed confidence that opponents would face defeat on February 8. If the 15-year development plans of the People's Party in Sindh are removed, nothing will be left except ruins.

He expressed these views while addressing the corner meetings in different areas of PS 64, after participating in the cake-cutting ceremony on the

occasion of the birth anniversary of Ameerul Momineen Hazrat Ali Karam Allah Wajhahu.

District information secretary of PPP Ahsaan Abro, Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah, Asad Peshori, Daniyal Abro, Engineer Sikandar Hayat and others were also present on this occasion.

Senator Dhamra stated that whenever any calamity or disaster befall the people of Sindh, the PPP always stood by them.

Judges not caring how the case is running: Aleema

RAWALPINDI (Online): Aleema Khan sister of PTI founder has said it is worrisome situation that judges are not caring how the case is running.

Judge Dilawar awarded illegal sentence to PTI founder. We say to Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa that our appeal be heard, she said this while talking to media men outside Adiala jail here Friday.

She went on to say that judges are not caring case is running how. It

seems as if they have been given date that they have to announce decision at such and such date. Judge Dilawar awarded sentence to PTI founder illegally. PTI founder was arrested on August 15 illegally. Election Commission has disqualified PTI founder. What punishment was awarded by Judge Dilawar was suspended by high court judge Amir Farooq.

She went on to say it was also joke that judgment was not suspended.

FBR Chairman praises Customs Dept KP for increasing tax revenue

PESHAWAR (APP): Chairman of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), Malik Amjad Zubair Tiwana here Friday highly praised Pakistan Customs Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for increasing tax revenue besides countering illegal trade and contraband goods. Addressing as a chief guest in a function organized by Pakistan Customs Peshawar in connection with International Customs Day, Chairman FBR said the theme of this year of the International Customs Day was "customs engaging traditional and new partners with purpose".

Malik Amjad Tiwana said that the International Day of customs was a testament to the essential role customs plays in fostering global trade, ensuring financial security and upholding legitimate economic trade in the world.

This year's theme highlighted the important role of partnership within the customs community, emphasizing collaborative efforts for the progress of international trade and ensuring enhanced cooperation in the global customs arena.

He thanked Pakistan Customs Peshawar for organizing an impressive function in connection with International Customs Day. The smartly turned-out contingent presented a

salute to Chairman FBR Malik Amjad Tiwana who also paid a visit to Yagdag Shuhada at Customs House Peshawar where he laid a floral wreath.

Chief Collector Customs Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Saeed Akram said that during the first half year of the current financial year, the KP Customs Department has collected Rs21569 million of customs duty against a collection of Rs13,423 million during the corresponding period of the last fiscal year. "This is 60per cent increase in revenue collection year over year."



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman and others cutting cake on the eve of new Chinese year organized by Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori talking with shopkeeper during his visit Shama Shopping Center and Resham Bazaar of Shah Faisal Colony.

Kristin oversees seed technology agreement

LAHORE (APP): The United States Consul General to Lahore Kristin K. Hawkins on Friday oversaw agriculture seed technology distributorship signing ceremony between a Pakistani firm Jullundur and US based Agmor at a local hotel on Friday.

Under the agreement, Agmor Inc. USA will sell organic seeds to Jullundur (pvt) Ltd. Agmor Inc. is a Montana based company which deals in the manufacturing and export of organic fertiliser products with the brand name 'NEB'.

The distribution and First Purchase Agreement was signed between Kyle Robert of Agmor and Usman Bashir of Jullundur (Pvt).

Speaking on the occasion, US Consul General Kristin Hawkins welcomed the agreement, adding that the collaboration is a testament to long-standing

PSX witnesses bearish trend, loses 484 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Friday, losing 484.94 points, a negative change of 0.75 per cent, closing at 63,813.06 points against 64,298.01 points the previous trading day.

A total of 412,823,322 shares valuing Rs 16.185 billion were traded during the day as compared to 460,691,033 shares valuing Rs. 25.248 billion the last day.

Some 341 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 98 of them recorded gains and 221 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 22 remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Pakistan International Airlines Corp (PIAC) with 66,176,000 shares at Rs.10.34 per share, K-Electric Limited with 47,105,158 shares at Rs.5.15 per share and Oil and Gas Development with 31,070,396 shares at Rs.141.37 per share.

Atlas Honda Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.28.52 per share price, closing at Rs.408.77.

OGRA urged to ensure safety standards as petrol pumps, storage facilities

LAHORE (APP): The Oil Marketing Association of Pakistan (OMAP) has asked Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) to ensure safety standards and regulations compliance at petrol pumps and storage facilities. In a letter written to OGRA Chairman Masroor Khan, OMAP Chairman Tariq Wazir Ali requested him to treat the matter as a top priority and should implement it across the board as being a matter of prime concern.

He said, "First and foremost, safety is of paramount importance in our industry, and ensuring compliance with rigorous safety standards is crucial to protecting both our employees and the communities in which we operate. We commend OGRA's efforts in establishing and enforcing safety regulations, but we believe there is still room for improvement to further enhance safety measures across the industry. One area of concern is the safety of petrol pumps, which serve as critical points of

interaction between consumers and petroleum products. We urge OGRA to conduct regular inspections of petrol pumps to ensure compliance with safety protocols, including proper maintenance of equipment, adequate fire safety measures, and employee training in handling emergency situations.

"Furthermore, we emphasize the importance of implementing stringent safety measures in the storage and handling of petroleum products."



ISLAMABAD: People are buying warm shoes alongside a road at Aabpara area.

NESPAK achieves UN 2030 SDGs

LAHORE (APP): NESPAK, a leading global consultancy firm, has taken a significant step towards achieving the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by securing five projects and signing two Long Term Agreements (LTAs) with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

It was stated by Zargham Eshaq Khan, Managing Director NESPAK, in a press statement issued here on Friday. The LTAs, awarded to NESPAK, span across the Asia Region and Pacific/Oceania Region, leading to the firm's presence in its 40th country, Papua New Guinea.

In a groundbreaking move, NESPAK has actively pursued projects contributing to the UN's

SDGs both within Pakistan and globally. The comprehensive LTAs with UNOPS cover a wide spectrum of initiatives aimed at sustainable development, with a particular focus on infrastructure, environmental impact assessments, climate adaptation, and community engagement.

NESPAK has successfully secured five UNOPS projects under these LTAs, including two in Papua New Guinea and three in Pakistan. In Papua New Guinea, NESPAK is committed to providing services such as infrastructure mapping, electronic waste management, construction of electronic waste plant facilities, training centers, port storage structures, environmental and social impact assessments.

Weekly inflation falls by 0.14 pc

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed a decrease of 0.14 per cent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on January 25, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 318.55 points as compared to 319.09 points during the past week.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 43.79 per cent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs. 17,732, decreased by 0.33 per cent and went up to 313.09 points from last week's 314.12 points. The SPI for consumption groups from Rs. 17,732-22,888, Rs. 22,889-29,517; Rs. 29,518-44,175 and above Rs. 44,175, decreased by 0.29 per cent, 0.21 per cent, 0.17 and 0.08 per cent respectively. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 15 (29.41%) items increased, 13 (25.49%) items decreased and 23 (45.10%)

SECP proposes anti harassment measures for listed companies

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a bid to promote safety and respect in the workplace, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has issued draft amendments to the Listed Companies (Code of Corporate Governance) Regulations, 2019 for public consultation. The proposed amendments require the board of directors of listed companies to implement robust anti-harassment policies that align with the protection against harassment of women at the Workplace Act, 2010, and relevant provincial laws, said a news release issued here on Friday.

These policies will uphold the rights and well-being of all employees, fostering a more inclusive and equitable work environment. The amendments mandate several critical measures to ensure the effective implementation of anti-harassment policies as required under the Workplace Act, 2010, including development of a Code of Conduct, formation of Inquiry,

Energy Ministry to organize national-level career expo

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division), in collaboration with prominent Oil, Gas, and Mineral companies, is set to organize a national-level career expo scheduled for January 31 and February 1. Themed "Fuelling Futures," the Career Expo 2024 aimed to foster awareness and bridge the gap between students and companies in the Oil, Gas, and Mineral sectors.

The expo will provide a platform for meaningful interactions and access to career development resources.

Senior management and Human Resource representatives from leading companies will be present, offering attending undergraduates and graduates a unique opportunity to explore exciting career prospects in the energy and mineral sector.

Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali expressed high expectations for the upcoming event, highlighting its reflection of the government's commitment to talent development and innovation in the workforce. He said that investing in youth and skills development is crucial for the future energy roadmap, enabling the harnessing of the true potential of young engineers, subject specialists, and experts.

Muhammad Ali encouraged students to seize the opportunity to network with leading companies, explore diverse sectors, and gain insights from professionals at the forefront of their field.

The expo aimed to host over 5000 students from diverse disciplines of Engineering and Business Management, representing leading universities from across Pakistan.

High school students aspiring to gain insights into current trends and pursue careers in these fields are also welcome, contributing to the nurturing and encouragement of the next generation.

Rupee gains 07 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistani Rupee on Friday gained 07 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs279.59 against the previous day's closing of Rs279.66. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the Dollar in the open market stood at Rs279.1 and Rs281.3 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by Rs 2.01 to close at Rs302.46 against the last day's closing of Rs304.47, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs1.89, whereas a decrease of Rs1.20 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs354.62 compared to the last closing of Rs355.82. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal.



FAISALABAD: A European Union delegation is visiting in a local factory in the city.

Agricultural machinery imports grew by 70.42%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The imports of agriculture machinery and implements into the country during the first half of the current financial year grew by 70.42 per cent as compared to the imports of the corresponding period of the last year.

During the period from July-December, 2023 agricultural machinery costing \$36.475 million was imported as compared to the imports of \$21.482 million of the same period of the last year.

During the period under review machinery import into the country grew by 11.45 per cent as machinery worth \$3.605 billion was imported as compared to the imports of \$3.235 billion in the same period of last year, according to the data of Pakistan Bureau

of Statistics.

However, in the last 06 months of the current financial year, the imports of agricultural and other chemicals decreased by 18.07 per cent as these commodities valued at \$4.240 billion were imported as compared to the imports of \$5.175 billion in the same period of last year.

In the last two quarters of the current financial year, about 586,868 metric tons of fertilizer valuing \$314.887 million imported as compared to the imports of 672.816 metric tons worth \$476.182 million in the same period of last year.

The imports of insecticides and plastic materials were reduced by 5.62 per cent and 9.35 per cent respectively as 18,058 metric tons of insecticides.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity reported at the Port where four ships namely, Cosco America, MSC Adu-V, Sea Elegant and Nord Anthem carrying Containers, Chemicals and Coal, berthed at Container Terminal, Engro Terminal and Bulk Cargo Terminal, respectively on Thursday.

Meanwhile a Bulk Cargo carrier 'Pacific Merit' is also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim to unload Coal today morning.

A total of six ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them four ships, Cosco America, MSC Adu-V, Lusail and Sea Elegant are left the port on today morning.

Cargo throughput of 105,629 tonnes, comprising 81,065 tonnes imports cargo and 24,564 tonnes export cargo carried in 2,889 Containers (1,669 TEUs are Import and 1,220 TEUs are export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

There are 04 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them two ships, Theodra and Pacific Merit & three more ships, Silver Eburna, APL California and Addison scheduled to load/offload Rice, Coal.

5704 power pilferers caught, 634.7m fine imposed in 141 days

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) caught 5704 power pilferers during last 141 days and imposed a fine of over Rs.634.7 million for stealing electricity in various areas of the company during the ongoing special anti-power theft drive.

Spokesman Tahir Sheikh said here on Friday that over 13.8 million detection units were charged. A sum of over Rs.443.9 million was also recovered from defaulters. He said that 5360 cases were registered against power theft in various police stations whereas the police also arrested 4615 pilferers so far. Giving further details, he said that the FESCO teams detected electricity theft at 1405 points in first circle and imposed a fine of Rs.161.3 million on them under the head of 3633,000 detection units. In second circle, the teams detected electricity theft at 940 points and imposed a fine of Rs.105.9 million on them under the head of 2343,000 detection units.

China's banking sector assets up in 2023

BEIJING (Xinhua/APP): China's banks saw steady asset expansion in 2023, an official of the country's financial regulator said on Friday.

The assets of financial institutions in China's banking sector grew 9.9 per cent year on year to 417.3 trillion yuan (about 58.7 trillion U.S. dollars) last year, Liu Zhiqing, a spokesperson for China's National Administration of Financial Regulation, told a press conference.

The asset quality of these institutions was generally stable last year, he said, noting that outstanding non-performing loans (NPL) were at 3.95 trillion yuan by the end of 2023, with the NPL ratio at 1.62 per cent. Preliminary data shows that China's commercial banks raked in 2.38 trillion yuan in net profits last year, up 3.24 per cent from the previous year. And their provision coverage ratio, a backstop guarding against financial risks.



ISLAMABAD: Former President of ICCI Sardar Yasir cutting the ribbon during Inauguration of New Branch of Bank of Khyber, in the Federal Capital.

Gaza's Health Ministry blames Israeli troops for deadly shooting as crowd waited for aid

Monitoring Desk
RAFAH: Gaza's Health Ministry and witnesses said Israeli troops opened fire as a crowd of Palestinians gathered for humanitarian aid in Gaza City on Thursday, killing at least 20 and wounding dozens.

The Israeli military said it was looking into the reports. The Associated Press could not independently confirm the details of what happened.

Witnesses and health officials said the shooting took place at a roundabout on Gaza City's southern edge, where a large crowd had gathered for distribution of food. Footage posted online and confirmed to have been taken on the main road near the roundabout showed hundreds of people fleeing, as fire rang out in the background. Men loaded wounded Palestinians onto horse and donkey carts that took off charging down the avenue.



Injured people receive treatment in Gaza City's Al-Shifa hospital, following a reported Israeli strike, that according to Gaza's Health Ministry, killed at least 20 and wounded more than 150 as they waited for humanitarian aid.

Trump opens up lead over Biden in rematch many Americans don't want

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Donald Trump leads Democratic President Joe Biden by six percentage points in a Reuters/Ipsos poll that showed Americans are unhappy about an election rematch that came into sharper focus this week.

The nationwide poll of 1,250 US adults showed Trump leading Biden 40% to 34% with the rest unsure or planning to vote for someone else or no one. The poll had a margin of error of three percentage points.

India fetes France's Macron at annual military parade

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: President Emmanuel Macron was guest of honour Thursday for India's pomp-filled annual military parade, in a state visit aimed at bolstering France's strategic ties with the world's fifth-largest economy.

Thousands of minors abused by German Protestant Church, says study

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: The German Protestant Church on Thursday acknowledged it did not do enough to protect children after an independent study revealed thousands of cases of sexual abuse within the organisation.

The study is an indictment for the German Protestant Church (EKD), which had long managed to avoid the sort of scandal that engulfed the Catholic Church.

China's defence ministry spokesperson says India border issue 'left over from history'

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: A Chinese defence ministry spokesperson said on Thursday that India-China border tensions were "an issue left over from history and not the whole of China-India relations".



French farmers use their tractors to block the A1 highway as they protest over price pressures, taxes and green regulation, grievances shared by farmers across Europe, in Chamant, near Paris, France.



Judges at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) rule on emergency measures against Israel following accusations by South Africa that the Israeli military operation in Gaza is a state-led genocide, in The Hague, Netherlands.

Ukraine invites China's Xi to 'peace summit'

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukraine has invited Chinese President Xi Jinping to participate in a planned "peace summit" of world leaders in Switzerland, a top diplomatic adviser to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, as Russia's invasion approaches its second anniversary.

China has close ties with Russia and has refrained from criticising its invasion of Ukraine but has also said the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries must be respected and has offered to help mediate the conflict.

King Charles admitted to London hospital for prostate treatment

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Britain's King Charles went into hospital on Friday to have planned treatment to address an enlarged prostate, Buckingham Palace said, joining his daughter-in-law Kate who is recovering from surgery.

The king was pictured arriving with his wife Queen Camilla at the private London Clinic in west London, where Kate, the Princess of Wales, is also having treatment after undergoing abdominal surgery last week.



Ecuadorian authorities place drug packages in a container, as part of the more than 20 tons of seized drugs to be destroyed at an undisclosed location, in Ecuador.

Nepal asks Russia to send back Nepalis recruited to fight in Ukraine and the bodies of those killed

Monitoring Desk
KATHMANDU: Nepal has asked Russia to send back hundreds of Nepali nationals who were recruited to fight against Ukraine and repatriate the bodies of those who died in the conflict, Nepal's top diplomat said Thursday.

The Russian army is estimated to have recruited more than 200 Nepali nationals to fight in Ukraine and at least 14 of them have died there, Nepal's Foreign Minister Narayan Prakash Saud said in an interview with The Associated Press.

Colonial statues vandalised ahead of contentious Australia Day holiday

Monitoring Desk
SYDNEY: Two statues of colonial figures were vandalised overnight in the Australian city of Melbourne, ahead of a contentious national holiday on Friday marking the arrival of the British fleet that colonised the country more than 200 years ago.

A statue of British explorer James Cook, who mapped the east coast of Australia and claimed it for Britain, was cut at the ankles and defaced in St Kilda in south Melbourne. A second statue of the British Queen Victoria was also daubed in paint.

Canada to re-start Turkey arms exports

Monitoring Desk
ISTANBUL: Canada and Turkey have reached a deal to restart Canadian exports of drone parts in exchange for more transparency on where they are used, and it would take effect after Ankara completes its ratification of Sweden's NATO bid, two sources told Reuters.

US assails Israeli attack on UN facility in Gaza

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The United States has condemned the Israeli assault on a UN facility in Khan Yunis, emphasising the protection of civilians and the need to respect the sanctity of UN facilities.

Japanese craft makes successful, pin-point Moon landing

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: Japan's "Moon Sniper" craft made a pin-point lunar landing despite last-minute engine problems, the space agency said on Thursday as it released the first images from the mission.

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ISTANBUL: Canada and Turkey have reached a deal to restart Canadian exports of drone parts in exchange for more transparency on where they are used, and it would take effect after Ankara completes its ratification of Sweden's NATO bid, two sources told Reuters.

China-US talks: Taiwan reports Chinese 'combat patrols'

Monitoring Desk
TAIPEI: Taiwan's defence ministry said it detected 23 Chinese air force planes operating around Taiwan and carrying out "joint combat readiness patrols" with Chinese warships on Friday, ahead of high-level China-US talks in Thailand.

China, which views Taiwan as its own territory, has over the past four years regularly sent warplanes and warships into the skies and waters around the island as it seeks to assert sovereignty claims that the Taipei government rejects.

Alabama carries out first US execution using nitrogen gas

Monitoring Desk
ALABAMA: The southern US state of Alabama on Thursday put to death a convicted murderer using nitrogen gas, the first time the controversial method criticised by human rights advocates has been used in the country.

gas into a facemask, causing him to suffocate. According to media witnesses, he "began writhing and thrashing for approximately two to four minutes, followed by around five minutes of heavy breathing," local news outlet AL.com reported.

Kenneth Eugene Smith was pronounced dead at 8:25pm (0225 GMT Friday), according to the state attorney general. "Justice has been served. Tonight, Kenneth Smith was put to death for the heinous act he committed over 35 years ago," the statement by Attorney General Steve Marshall said.

Wisconsin Republicans make last-ditch effort to pass new legislative maps

Monitoring Desk
MADISON: Wisconsin Republicans made a last-ditch effort Tuesday to avoid having the liberal-controlled state Supreme Court put in place new legislative district boundaries for the November election.

The Republican-controlled Senate passed new Senate and Assembly maps just over an hour after unveiling them, not giving the public or Democrats a chance to review them ahead of their release.

British museums to return looted royal Ghana treasures

Monitoring Desk
ACCRA: The British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum will give back gold and silver artefacts looted during colonial times from Ghana's Asante royal court, the museums and the palace said on Thursday. The Ghana agreement for a long-term loan of the items comes as international momentum grows for museums and institutions to restore African artefacts from former colonial powers Britain, France, Germany and Belgium.

In yet another twist, Republican Assembly Speaker Robin Vos said he supports passing the maps as proposed by Evers with no changes. He said Republicans can win under the lines drawn by Evers.

Minster urges political parties to prioritize education in their election manifestos

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Madad Ali Sindi on Friday urged all the political parties to prioritize education and governance agenda in their election manifestos for the next five years to improve the quality of education in the country. We need to focus on developing educational infrastructure, improving learning system, framing sustainable policy and initiatives as well as ensuring training of teachers and enrollment of out of school children to achieve objectives of quality education for all, he underscored.

The minister expressed the views while

presiding over meetings during visits to the regional offices of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIQU) and Inter Board Coordination Commission (IBCC) at Karachi and talking to media persons on the occasion. The minister visited different sections of the regional offices where he received the briefing on the working, role, functions and issues being faced and future strategies of the organizations.

Madad Ali Sindi observed that over 25 million out of school children, the dilapidated condition of public sector educational institutions, disconnection between teachers and parents, non-utilization of ear-

marked funds and other issues indicate that the education sector could not get proper attention of political parties in the past and remained excluded from their manifestos while bureaucracy also failed to play a positive role in the regard. Now it has been inevitable that whichever political party comes into power after the upcoming general elections must dedicate its five year term to improve the education in Pakistan as it was the only option for development of the country, he maintained and emphasized that people should also urge their representatives for taking measures in the regard.

The minister said that

during the short tenure of the caretaker government, he had adopted a proactive approach to improve the educational standards and deal with the issues and 20 out of 50 schools of federal capital were selected for reforms. Those educational institutes were being transformed as model schools with provision of missing facilities and improvement of their management, he said and added that the caretaker government was also focusing on universities and boards and measures were taken to resolve their issues while chairmen of educational boards were directed to improve the system and ensure transparency in examination and assessment processes.



MUZAFFRABAD: Students of school and college hold placards during protest as they observe Indian Republic Day as Black Day during an anti-Indian protest in the city, to show their solidarity with people of Indian-administered Kashmir.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Interior Minister and Commerce Dr. Gohar Ejaz & Federal Minister for National Health Dr. Nadeem Jan visited PIMS Hospital.

Siraj seeks electoral support of public for JI's candidates in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD (APP): The Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Sirajul Haq has urged the people to cast their votes over the election symbol scale (Tarazoo) if they want accountability of the corrupt rulers. Addressing the party's public meeting in Latifabad here on Friday Haq vowed to change dispensation of government which replicated the Western governance model and to replace it with an Islamic system if JI formed the government.

"We don't accept the monarchy of 2 political families in Pakistan," he said.

He argued that the time of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, Pakistan Peoples Party and Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan was over, adding that his party would form the government after the February 8 polls.

He maintained that PML-N and PPP had ruled

Pakistan's UN envoy, WIPO DG discuss promoting IP ecosystem in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva Bilal Ahmed had a meeting with Director General World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Daren Tang and discussed ways and means to promote IP ecosystem in Pakistan.

During the meeting, the envoy appreciated the DG's people-centric vision, WIPO's IP projects in Pakistan and IP awareness programmes for youth besides incentivizing a culture of innovation.

The JI's Ameer asked did the Sindh government establish a public sector university or an advanced tertiary care hospital in Hyderabad during the last 15 consecutive years of their government?

"The people were deceived in the name of Karachi-Hyderabad motorway," he alleged.

'Pak effectively highlighting Ram temple issue at every global forum': Munir Akram

ISLAMABAD (APP): Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, Ambassador Munir Akram Friday strongly condemned the recent consecration of 'Ram Temple' on the demolished Babri Mosque's site and expressed commitment for effectively highlighting the gross rights violations in HIOJK and temple issue at every global forum.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries were supporting the efforts for preserving universally recognized and regionally important sacred sites, meetings with high level UN representatives were also being conducting to highlight the issue.

The ambassador said that Pakistan urged the top official for the U.N. Alliance of Civilizations to play their active role for the protection of Islamic sites in India.

The OIC Ambassadors had also acknowledged the importance of the issue, he said, adding, we were writing letters to seek urgent intervention for the protection of religious sites in India.

He further said "We are also demanding action plan over protection of religious sites," adding, Indian friendly countries also needed to mobilize more diplomatic efforts to control Hindua-like policies in India. He said UN officials were encouraging Pakistan efforts for raising Kashmir cause at world forums, adding, the right of the Kashmiri people to self-determination had been acknowledged.

Government fully prepared to conduct elections, declares Chief Secretary

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan has categorically stated that the interim provincial government is fully prepared to conduct the general elections in the province.

The Chief Secretary was speaking on occasion of visit and inspection of the provincial control room established in the Information Technology department on Friday. The Provincial Election Commissioner, Muhammad Farid Afridi, Additional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem, Secretary Local Government, Noor Ahmed Pirani, Secretary Finance, Babar Khan and Secretary Services and General Administration Department, Syed Faisal Ahmed were also accompanied with him. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Secretary maintained that it is an important responsibility of the interim provincial government to conduct general elections in the province.

He directed to the concerned authorities to show the data of termination of polling time or start of the voting process on screen of the control room.

PM told PTA revenue surges to Rs 850b; access to cellular services reaches 90pc

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA) Major General (Retd) Hafeezur Rehman on Friday called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar here.

In the meeting, the PTA chairman presented to the prime minister the annual report 2023 of the Authority.

The prime minister was informed that the PTA's revenue increased by 17 percent to Rs 850 billion comparing the last year while the access to cellular services in the country had reached 90 percent.

The PTA chief said that the number of cellular consumers had touched 192 million and high-speed broadband users reached 130 million during 2023.

The prime minister lauded the services of the PTA chairman and his team in extending mobile phone and Internet services to the common man.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman PTA, Major General (R) Hafeez-ur-Rehman calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

226 staff found absent in various districts: Departmental action initiated against absentee polling staff, maintains PEC Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Provincial Election Commissioner (PEC) Balochistan, Muhammad Farid Afridi has stated that departmental action has been initiated against the polling staff who remained absent from the training process continued in different parts of the province.

According to the PEC Balochistan, the departmental action has been started against the absentee staff in different parts of the province.

It was mentioned that action was taken against 15 absentee polling staff in Kachhi district, 107 absentee staff in Khuzdar, seven of Usta Muhammad, 70 of Killa Saifullah district and 27 of Chaman district.

These polling staff appointed as the presiding officers and polling officers had been found absent from the training sessions being conducted for the upcoming general elections.

The PEC said that all DROs have been directed to ensure attendance of the polling staff in the training sessions. He also directed to take strict action against the absentee staff including immediate suspension from their service.

SPL is a welcome initiative: Aseefa

KARACHI (APP): Former President Asif Ali Zardari's daughter Aseefa Bhutto Zardari has said that Sindh Premier League (SPL) will not only convey the potential possessed by the youngsters of Sindh to the nation, but also the entire world.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the SPL here as a chief guest on Friday night, she said that the Sindh Premier League is a welcome initiative in the province.

The youth of Sindh were capable of reaching new heights in all walks of life. The nation will elect the right people this time around.

Aseefa said that Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto taught the nation that Pakistan belongs to everyone.

Lehri requests people to make successful BNP's candidate from PB-44

QUETTA (APP): A social activist of Killi-Jio Mir Abdul Rahman Lehri on Friday requested the people of Killi-Jio to seal the axe on February 8 and make successful Balochistan National Party (BNP)'s candidate PB-44 Haji Mir Waheed Lehri.

In his statement issued here on Friday, he said that the leader of BNP's nominated candidate for PB-44 Mir Abdul Waheed Lehri has a personality dedicated to the people and the spirit of service.

He said that people of the circle would make it successful by sealing the axe. He said that after his success there would be a complete change in the PB-44 area saying that youth would get employment and peace and order situation would be established in the entire area. He said that he has always done the politics of principles and we were doing it and we would implement the vision of the people of PB-44.



QUETTA: Chief Custom Calculator Abdul Qadir Memon speaks during a ceremony to mark International Customs Day.



QUETTA: DG Legal Aid & Justice Authority Dr. Muhammad Raheem Awan meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar.

Yousafzai says "Provision of facilities in Balochistan historic achievement of Jam"

UTRAL: The former Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan is a progressive Nawab and political leader and provision of the basic facilities to the people in all districts of the province is his historic achievement.

This was stated by the leader of Jam Group, Umarzada Khan Yousafzai while speaking on occasion of launch of the election campaign in Revenue Colony, Uthal on Friday.

Mr. Yousafzai praised initiatives of the former Chief Minister Jam Kamal and said that he (Jam) had implemented the projects during his three and half years tenure. These projects are visible on ground.

Also present on the occasion were the leaders of Jam Group Akram Khaskhaili, Master Imam Bakhsh Seemab, general councillor Habibullah, Sabir Hussain, Jamil Ahmed besides others.



HYDERABAD: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Siraj ul Haq rising hands with party leaders to showing solidarity during a public meeting (Jalsa) in the city.

ANP to support IPP in Punjab for Feb 8 polls

LAHORE (INP): The Awami National Party (ANP) has committed its support to Istehkam e Pakistan Party (IPP) candidates in the upcoming polls on February 8.

Ameer Bahadur Khan, the general secretary of ANP Punjab, met with IPP President Abdul Aleem Khan and announced ANP's decision to support IPP in Punjab. Bashir Ahmed, the chairman of the Hazara Welfare Association, has also pledged support for IPP.

In another significant development, Mubshir Laal, the former president of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf Ravi Town, has joined IPP. Laal, along with his party workers, will actively participate in the election campaign for Abdul Aleem Khan in the NA-117 constituency.

PTI's Senator Saifullah Abro joins PPP

KARACHI (INP): PTI Senator Saifullah Abro called on Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and expressed his trust in his leadership. On the occasion, Senator Saifullah announced to withdraw from the election race in NA-194 constituency and promised to support candidate of Pakistan People's Party. Abro was elected as senator on PTT's technocrat seat from Larkana for March 2022 term.

PTI candidates from Sukkur announced to quit election race to support Pakistan Peoples' Party candidates in the district. PTI nominated candidate from NA-200 Noman Islam Sheikh planned to withdraw election race and support PPP senior leader Khurshid Shah.

ECP decides to make SMS service 8300 free of charge from Monday next

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has decided to make SMS service 8300 free of charge from Monday next. The announcement was made by ECP's Spokesperson, Syed Nadeem Hyder, Additional Director General Nighat Sadique, and the Project Director of Project Management Unit whilst participating in Suno FM network's talk show 'Forum' this morning.

They said the voters can check details of their constituencies and polling stations by sending the number of their computerized identity cards to 8300.

The ECP officials said the voters are required to bring their Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) to the polling station for voting. A vote can be cast even if the CNIC is expired or using the token issued for the issuance of a new CNIC.



QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Local Bodies Sheikh Mehmoodul Hassan meeting with Caretaker Provincial Health Minister Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan Jozgezi.

QESCO to hold online open court under Loralai circle on Jan 30

QUETTA (APP): The Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) will organize an open court (Khuli Kehchar) online for the consumers of Loralai and Killa Saifullah circles on January 30, 2024 (Monday) to address their complaints related to the electricity issues.

According to the press release issued here on Friday, Superintending Engineer QESCO Loralai Circle Engineer Syed Abdullah Shah will find out the complaints of consumers on telephone number 0824-400029 and mobile number 03198088024 from 11 am to 1 pm. Executive Engineers, Revenue Officers and Circle SDOs of Loralai and Killa Saifullah Divisions will also be present in the online open court. The QESCO has asked the consumers of Loralai Circle including Loralai, Duki, Ziarat, Mekhtar, Musakhel, Rakhni, Kohlu, Zhub, Killa Saifullah and Muslim Bagh to contact the Superintending Engineer QESCO directly on the above mentioned telephone numbers on Tuesday for registering their grievances through the online office and for their redressal.

Illegal weapons recovered

QUETTA (INP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), in a targeted operation against drug trafficking has recovered a significant cache of weapons along the coastal belt of Gwadar. The operation, carried out in the Padizar area, unfolded when an ANF team observed individuals unloading goods near the shoreline. Despite the team's prompt response, the suspects managed to escape in the cover of darkness. Upon inspecting the shipment left behind, the ANF discovered a trove of sophisticated weapons, leading to their confiscation.

Among the seized items were 259 9mm Glock pistols. The ANF spokesperson highlighted that these operations exemplify the agency's unwavering commitment to addressing threats to national security, extending beyond counter-narcotics efforts. This successful mission underscores the crucial role of ANF in safeguarding the region, demonstrating their determination to combat multifaceted challenges endangering the nation.

Mainly partly cloudy weather forecast for Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): The Met Office has forecast mainly partly cloudy weather conditions in most parts of the province with a very cold situation in the northern parts. Fog is likely to remain in southeastern districts during the next 24 hours. However, isolated light rain and drizzle may occur in Makran and its surroundings. According to the Met Office, the minimum temperature in Quetta was recorded at 5.5 degree centigrade and -01.0 degree centigrade in Kalat on Friday.