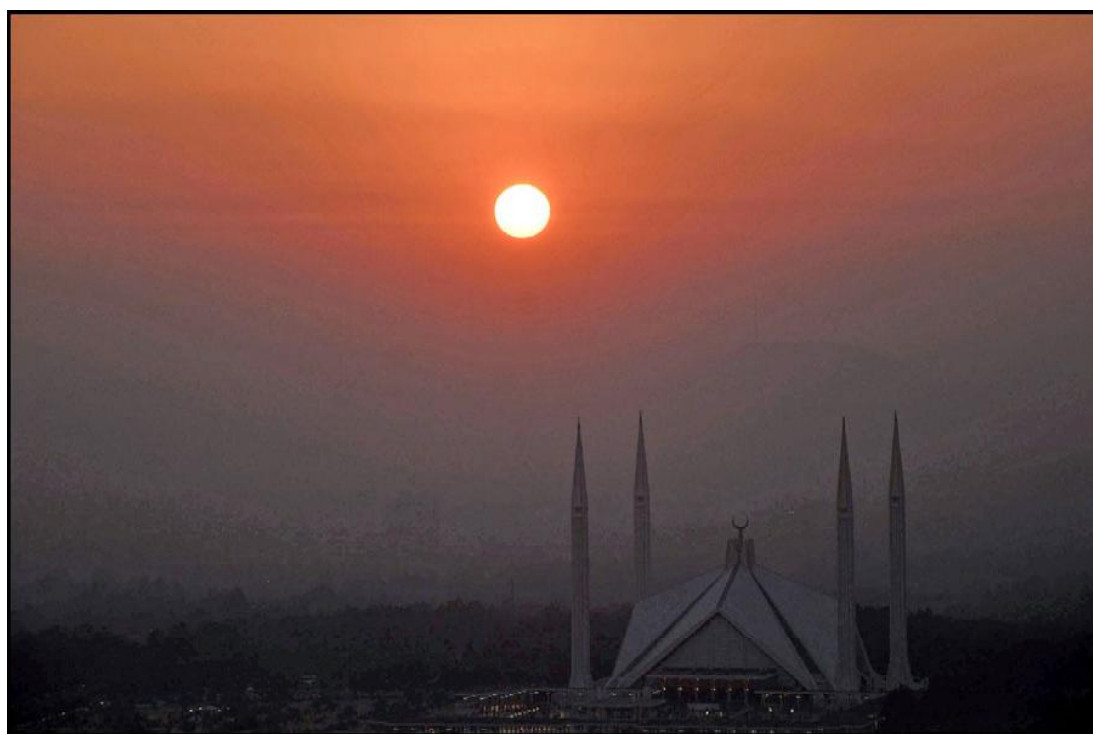


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ISLAMABAD: A stunning view of last sunset of 2023 in the Federal Capital.

Five terrorist killed in Awaran operation Three terrorists killed for attempting to sneak into Pakistan from Afghanistan

Terrorists tried to infiltrate Pak-Afghan border in KP's Bajaur; Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered; In separate incident, Pakistan Army soldier martyred in border post attack by terrorists from inside Afghanistan

RAWALPINDI (APP): Three terrorists were killed by the security forces on Sunday who were trying to infiltrate the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, in the general area Batwar of Bajaur District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a news release said that their movement was picked up by the security forces in the general area Batwar and in the ensuing exchange of fire all three terrorists were killed. Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from them.

Meanwhile, a soldier of the Pakistan Army embraced martyrdom while valiantly thwarting terrorists' firing attempt on the border post in the general area of Spinwam, North Waziristan District, KP. The Army troops responded in a befitting manner causing considerable losses to the terrorists.

Meanwhile at least five terrorists were killed in an intense exchange of fire during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted by the security forces on December 30-31 in general area Mashkai, Awaran District of Balochistan province. "During the conduct of the operation, after intense fire exchange between

own troops and the terrorists, 'Five Terrorists' were sent to hell. Terrorists' hideout was also busted and a cache of arms, ammunition and explosives was recovered," an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release on Sunday said. The sanitization operation is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area. "Security Forces of Pakistan, in step with the Nation, remain determined to thwart attempts of sabotaging peace, stability and progress of Balochistan," the ISPR said.

Fazlur Rehman escapes armed attack in Dera Ismail Khan

Monitoring Desk
DERA ISMAIL KHAN: In a disturbing incident on Sunday, the convoy of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman was targeted in a brazen attack at the Yarik Interchange in Dera Ismail Khan, party officials said.

The assailants opened fire on the convoy, aiming from two sides, according to preliminary information. Fortunately, all individuals, including Maulana Fazlur Rehman, emerged unharmed from the attack.

The JUI-F chief was reportedly passing through Dera Ismail Khan as part of his election campaign when the incident occurred. After the attack, Fazl successfully reached his ancestral home in Abdul Khel, where he is reported to be safe.

JUI-F spokesperson Aslam Ghori condemned the attack, describing it as a cowardly act. Ghori expressed frustration over what he perceives as a lack of concrete action by the administration despite repeated warnings about the threats faced by the party's leadership.

"We have repeatedly warned that the situation is not favourable for our leadership," Ghori stated in a press release. He criticized the administration for writing threat letters daily without taking effective measures.

Ghori urged an immediate investigation into the incident, questioning the institutions responsible for ensuring the safety of political figures.

Furthermore, Ghori highlighted the deteriorating law and order situation in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, expressing concerns about the escalating security challenges faced by political leaders in the wake of general elec-

President felicitates Nation, Muslim Ummah on new year

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi Sunday felicitated the Pakistani Nation, the Muslim Ummah and the international community at the beginning of the new year 2024.

In a message, he said, "I would like to extend my heartfelt felicitations to the entire Pakistani Nation, the Muslim Ummah and the international community at the beginning of the new year."

"As we bid farewell to the passing year and welcome the dawn of a new year, I pray to Allah Almighty that may the coming year bring prosperity, political and economic stability for Pakistan as well as the entire world."

"At the beginning of the new year, we should not forget our brothers and sisters in Palestine who continue to face the brutal and barbaric attacks at the hands of the Israeli forces."

He urged the international community to take urgent steps to stop genocide in Gaza and work for just and lasting peace in Palestine.

"Similarly, my thoughts are with the people of the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir, who have been enduring atrocities and the longest siege by the Indian occupation forces."

"It is essential that the international community should take practical measures to resolve these longstanding disputes in accordance with the UN resolutions to promote global peace and security."



Federal Health Minister Dr. Nadeem Jan addressing National Conference on Integrated Approach for Evidence Based Public Health and Role of National Health Data Centre in Islamabad.

Justice Mazahar's plea to stop SJC proceeding to be held on Jan 8

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court of Pakistan (SC) will hear the application filed by Justice Mazahar Naqvi against stopping the proceedings of the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) on January 8, 2024.

Earlier, the court had not given relief on stopping the proceedings on December 15, 2023.

First hearing was held in the open court on his petition regarding the complaints against Supreme Court (SC) Judge Justice Mazahar Naqvi in Supreme Judicial Council. Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhel observed that lawyer of Justice Mazahar Naqvi raised objection to the formation of the bench.

The matter of the three-member committee is administrative.

Acceptance or rejection of nomination papers constitutional process: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Caretaker Federal Minister of Information, Muratza Solangi, has said that the approval or rejection of nomination papers of the candidates is a constitutional process, and any decisions in this regard fall within the legal framework.

In an interview with a private TV channel, he said the majority of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) candidates have successfully submitted their nomination papers. He clarified that the acceptance or rejection of these papers is a constitutional process. He said that the caretaker government has no involvement in these matters, and only the Election Commission of Pakistan can act in such electoral affairs.

Reiterating the adherence to constitutional boundaries, Muratza Solangi emphasized that all political parties, including

PTI, receive fair coverage based on ethical editorial policies.

He further noted that registered political parties are receiving unbiased coverage on state media, adhering to ethical journalistic standards.

Muratza Solangi also expressed the commitment to provide necessary support to the Election Commission for financial and administrative facilitation.

He informed that the Election Commission's financial needs were initially met with an allocation of 10 billion rupees, followed by an additional disbursement of 17.4 billion rupees.

Talking about the progress in the negotiations with Baloch protesters, the Information Minister revealed that in the first phase, all children and women were safely released.

Gilani says: PPP key player for formation of govt

MULTAN (APP): Former Prime Minister and PPP Central Leader Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani said on Sunday that no government could be formed in the country without the Pakistan Peoples Party.

He said this while talking to journalists on the occasion of the participation of a good number of people from the Christian Community in PPP.

Gilani stressed the need for a level playing field in politics. He called on the Election Commission to ensure transparent elections.

Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani thanked the Christian community in South Punjab, particularly in Multan, for their support for PPP.



MULTAN: PPP Leader, Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani talking to media persons

BRI, CPEC practical manifestation of win-win cooperation, shared prosperity: Ambassador Hashmi

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi has said that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its flagship project - China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), is a practical manifestation of win-win cooperation and shared prosperity for both China and Pakistan and the countries participating in the initiative.

Sharing his vision for collaboration between China and Pakistan in the upcoming decade, he told CGTN in an interview that there is an excellent foundation that already exists in the last 10 years or before. "So, going forward, we have the essential constituents, which is the infrastructure and energy in place."

Expressing a need to intensify focus on industrial cooperation, he said, it means special economic zones, enhanced trade and investment and cooperation in Information Technology and agriculture, adding there are also areas within these bigger fields.

Expressing his resolve to deepen the economic relationship between the two countries, he said, Pakistan and China have signed a free trade agreement. They have signed five protocols on agriculture this year. Pakistan's exports to China have increased. Trade volume between the two countries has increased.

On connectivity projects from the Karakoram Highway to the Gwadar port to enhance ties between the two countries, he said, these projects are essentially about connectivity and infrastructure development. But more than that it is a vehicle or a means for people-centred development to use it as a platform to enhance livelihoods for people.

FBR collects over Rs.1trln gross revenue in a single month

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has created history by collecting Rs.1021 Billion in December 2023 and after adjusting refunds of Rs.38 billion issued during the month, reached net collection of Rs.984 billion.

Targets for the month as well as for the first six months of the current financial year were also surpassed, said a news release here on Sunday.

The target for the first six months was Rs.4425 billion (as agreed with IMF), which was surpassed by 43 billion and recorded a collection of Rs.4468 billion.

FBR in the corresponding six months of the previous year collected Rs.3428, thus registering an increase of more than Rs 1 trillion. This is despite the fact that refunds of Rs.230 billion have been issued against Rs.177 billion during the corresponding period of the previous year and continuous import compression.

Contraction in imports continues to impede revenues collected at the import stage. In the past, the revenue mix at the import stage and domestic taxes used to be 50:50.

This has now changed to 36:64 and FBR has absorbed the entire impact of import compression through raising more revenues domestically.



LAHORE: Special Assistant to Prime Minister and Chairman Pakistan Ulema-e-Islam Council Allama Tahir Ashrafi addressing a Press conference.

Tahir Ashrafi calls for accountability of May 9 culprits

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister's Special Representative and Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi demanded punishment for those involved in attacks on the state and military installations on May 9.

Addressing the media at the Lahore Press Club on Sunday, Ashrafi announced a ban on New Year celebrations in solidarity with Palestinians, urging citizens to support them financially instead of fireworks.

Expressing concern about the justice system, he appealed to the Chief Justice of Pakistan to address issues faced by the lower-income population and emphasized the need for a just legal system and the improvement of the Zakat system to combat poverty effectively.

Highlighting the importance of righteous caliphate (Khilafat e Rashida), he stressed the principles of justice, equal treatment for all, and protection of non-Muslims' rights. Ashrafi commended efforts to enhance security for the Christian community during Christmas.

Addressing contemporary challenges, he called for legal action against triple talaq (divorce) issuers, combating obscenity's role in divorces, and countering fake news damaging homes. Ashrafi urged a focus on justice, education, health, and equal food provision for the implementation of a true spirit of righteous caliphate (Khilafat e Rashida).

He acknowledged the government's efforts to reduce Hajj costs and proposed further reductions. On international matters, Ashrafi revealed military leaders' warnings regarding the global repercussions if an immediate ceasefire is not achieved in Palestine.

Follow rules to get 'bat' symbol, Saad tells PTI

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Khawaja Saad Rafique on Sunday asked the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to follow the right direction to get "bat" symbol for the upcoming elections.

Addressing the workers' convention in Lahore, Saad said: "The PTI should court their feats in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) for the last 10 years. The uproar has caused us to rule the country for 40 years. How could we rule the country for 40 years as the country witnessed martial law four times? The PTI founder was also a part of the martial law."

Speaking about the upcoming polls, he said: "We will lock horns against those who put the country into crisis."



PESHAWAR: Members of Civil Society are holding protest demonstration against Israeli cruel and inhumane acts and express unity with the innocent people of Palestine, at Peshawar press club

TTP using US leftover weapons in terrorism on Pakistani soil: Analysts

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weapons left over by the US forces in Afghanistan are being used in Pakistan (TTP) in cross-border terrorist activities against Pakistan.

It was evident from the recent terror attacks by the TTP from the Afghan soil in Pakistan that its terrorists were blatantly using the weapons left behind by the foreign forces in Afghanistan to damage peace and security in the region, the well-informed political and defence analysts said on Sunday.

They said the Pakistan Army had been fighting the war against the TTP for the last two decades. However, it was a known fact that its terrorists had full access to the weapons, which the US and NATO forces had left behind after facing humiliating defeat in the so-called war against terror. It had significantly damaged the security of the region, particularly in Pakistan which had seen an surge in terrorist activities since the fallout of Afghan defence forces.

An intelligence-based operation was conducted against terrorists in Mir Ali area of North Waziristan district on December 29, 2023. At least, five terrorists, including their commander Rahzaib Khurray, were killed in the exchange of fire during the operation. Foreign weapons, including M4 Carbine and Ak-47 along with ammunition were recovered from the terrorists. Such type of foreign arms had been used in many terrorist attacks in Pakistan in the past also.



GWADAR: Pakistan's Ambassador to Beijing Khalil Hashmi visiting GDA Pak-China Friendship Hospital. Chairman Gwadar Port Authority Pasand Khan Buledi is also present

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Kashmir killings

While India continues to push the fiction that it has brought normality to held Kashmir through the constitutional subterfuge of August 2019, periodic acts of violence perpetrated by its security forces in the disputed region point to a much darker reality. Over the past few days, the custodial killings of three Kashmiri men, apparently by the Indian military, have highlighted the state-sponsored violence that Kashmiris are being subjected to, while Indian officials have sought to 'pacify' the region in the aftermath of these crimes. The killings occurred after Indian troops were ambushed by fighters, resulting in the deaths of at least four security men. Following this episode, eight civilians were picked up for questioning in the Poonch region. A week ago, the families of three of these detained men received calls to collect their bodies. The families say their loved ones were tortured by Indian forces. A highly disturbing video circulating on social media appears to show Indian troops sprinkling chilli powder on the exposed body parts of detained men. The Indian military says it is investigating, while Defence Minister Rajnath Singh travelled to Indian-occupied Kashmir to 'condole' with the families of the victims, promising them 'justice'.

Sadly, justice has eluded the people of Kashmir since partition; their wishes have been ignored, and India has sought to create new facts on the ground to cement its illegal occupation of what remains an internationally disputed region. The Indian supreme court's recent validation of the BJP government's dubious decision to annul the region's limited autonomy has further emboldened those in New Delhi who wish to subjugate Kashmir like a conquered territory. International human rights bodies have frequently been pointing to the use of torture and violence by Indian forces in the region. Unfortunately, the Indian state uses 'counterterrorism' as a convenient alibi to deny the Kashmiri people their rights, and inflict odious violence upon them. How many more Kashmiris will have to be tortured and killed for the international community to realise that India must be held to account for its cruel policies in the held territory? Instead of taking the path of dialogue and engaging Pakistan and the Kashmiris to arrive at a peaceful solution, India insists on flexing its muscles, and crushing the Kashmiri struggle through the use of gratuitous violence.

New challenges

By Mohammad Ali Babakhel

In Pakistan, technological innovation has altered the nature of crime, yet law enforcement remains mired in an outdated organisational structure, legal framework, and procedures, reflecting its colonial past.

Former colonies with dense populations, like Pakistan, rely heavily on a numerical policing model. This approach is increasingly ineffective against the tougher challenges posed by globalisation and technological advancements. In contrast, organised criminals and terrorists are proficiently utilising technology for nefarious purposes. This scenario calls for a balanced approach, combining traditional numerical policing with innovative, technology-led solutions. Technology can be instrumental in enhancing interactive community relations and preventing and detecting crime.

Law enforcement faces new challenges due to disparities between external and internal security policies. Historically, negotiations with militants resulted in escalation of violence against police and negatively impacted the peace index.

Bridging the gaps between internal and external security policies is crucial and needs effective communication coupled with a democratic ethos.

Historically, some administrative decisions, including administrative and police reforms, impacted the quality of law enforcement in Pakistan. Such decisions negatively impact policing standards and performance. For instance, the merger of FATA with KP increased the number of personnel in KP Police but posed new challenges. Likewise, con-

verting 'B' areas into 'A' in Balochistan and reversing the decision in 2008 adversely impacted law enforcement. Since its inception, policing in Pakistan has been a contentious subject, oscillating between bureaucratic and political control, which has adversely affected organisational integrity, public interest, and safety.

Pakistan's low ranking in the recent Rule of Law Index, particularly in categories like order and security, criminal justice, and human rights, underscores the urgent need for comprehensive reforms supported by political commitment, public backing, and increased funding.

The post-9/11 era has significantly increased the security duties of police, burdening them and affecting their preventive and investigative functions. Police Order, 2002, and KP Police Act, 2017, which provide a legal framework for external accountability, are yet to be fully implemented. The US exit from Afghanistan has facilitated militants' access to advanced weaponry. KP Police's establishment of an explosives handling school is a proactive measure in building capacity to counter these threats. However, the rise in militancy has also led to police becoming increasingly militarised, affecting public service delivery and widening the gap between police and community.

Pakistan has seen the loss of thousands of police officers in the line of duty, reflecting the militants' deadly proficiency. This situation necessitates a critical examination and improvement of police recruitment, training, and supervision processes.

Additionally, the structural design of police stations, especially in areas located in the peripheries, has made them more vulnerable to militant attacks.

The 'war on terror' has also brought to light several human rights issues, tarnishing the image of the police as custodians of fundamental human rights. The widespread availability of weapons, influenced by both internal and external factors like preferential arms policies and a tribal and feudal social fabric, has aggravated challenges in crime, disorder, and terrorism. A comprehensive, long-term de-weaponisation strategy, including the revision of arms policies and voluntary surrender of illegal arms, is imperative.

Pakistan's tendency to over-legislate, often without effective enforcement, undermines the standards of governance. The gap between lawmaking and enforcement is particularly evident in laws where the police are direct or indirect stakeholders. Effective law enforcement demands stakeholder involvement in both the pre-enactment consultation and post-implementation review phases to ensure the effectiveness of laws.

To assess the quality of policing, a statistical approach is preferable over solely relying on public satisfaction metrics. The existing training facilities, including the National Police Academy, nine training colleges, and 22 schools, are inadequate to address the modern challenges faced by over 500,000 police personnel.

Training modules need to be updated to cater to contemporary issues such as the nexus between militants and organised criminals, sectarian violence, and terror financing. Emphasis should be placed on capacity building and public satisfaction, with a shift towards short-duration, focused online training programmes. — Courtesy Dawn

Pakistan beyond COP28

By Muhammad Asad Rafi

Every United Nations Climate Change Conference – or COP – carries the weight of expectation, the pressure to inch closer to a sustainable and climate-resilient future.

COP27 delivered the Loss and Damage Fund, a vital lifeline for communities already bearing the brunt of a changing climate. COP28, which came at the heels of the warmest year recorded in human history, witnessed a different kind of milestone – the mention of "fossil fuels" in the final text, a first in nearly three decades. But the euphoria quickly dimmed upon closer inspection. The language, watered down to "transitioning away from fossil fuels in a just, orderly and equitable manner", lacked the teeth needed to bite into the heart of the issue. Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative reported about fossil fuel expansion and exploration just 24 hours after COP28 concluded, and the International Energy Agency has warned that emissions-cutting pledges made by more than 100 countries and 50 fossil fuel firms at the start of COP28 aren't enough to limit global warming to 1.5 C, a key target enshrined in the Paris Agreement.

While the inclusion of fossil fuels in the final text is a step forward, it's a small one, leaving countries like Pakistan, on the frontlines of a climate crisis despite negligible emissions. For Pakistan, transitioning away from fossil fuels might ease the burden on its import bill. However, the scars of climate change – floods, droughts, and heatwaves – run deeper than energy dependence. Even if Pakistan becomes a beacon of green energy, the damage wrought by the current trajectory will be irreversible.

The final text's silence on mandatory action, mainly around climate finance and adaptation, from

major polluters exacerbated the existing inequities in the global response to climate change. Finance and fairness, the fuel that drives adaptation and resilience, were woefully absent from COP28's engine room. Developing countries like Pakistan pleaded for resources to leapfrog the fossil fuel era and build climate-proof communities. But the developed world, responsible for this crisis, looked the other way. While the Loss and Damage Fund marks a positive step, it seems akin to a drop in the ocean. The pledges made (\$770 million) barely cover 0.2 per cent of the annual losses faced by vulnerable nations, and its reliance on voluntary contributions is a recipe for uncertainty.

While Pakistan's voice resonated loud and clear in Dubai, the time for outward appeals has passed. Vulnerable nations stand at the precipice of a climate cliff and cannot afford to be mere bystanders. Instead, for Pakistan, it's time to turn inward, harness our own resources, and build a climate-proof future based on a combination of governance, innovation, and resourcefulness. This doesn't require billions of dollars; it requires a strategic shift and a commitment to action. First, we must tackle the governance gap when it comes to climate action. Climate change is a multi-headed beast, demanding collaboration across federal, provincial, and local levels. Pakistan's vulnerability to climate change places adaptation at the forefront of our agenda. Unlike global mitigation efforts, adaptation is inherently local. While policymakers often emphasize Pakistan's susceptibility to climate change and its limited access to climate finance, they seldom discuss the structural deficiencies within our nation.

What we urgently require are inclusive decision-making processes, not stifling bureaucratic silos. Bridging the governance gap hinges on empowering local governments and providing them with the necessary resources and authority. This empowerment fosters an inclusive decision-making process that amplifies diverse voices and perspectives, particularly those closest to the ground, serving as a vital catalyst to unlock finance and implement grassroots-level adaptation.

Second, the potential of the 2017 Climate Change Act remains untapped. It is time to breathe life into this vital document by establishing the Pakistan Climate Change Authority (PCCA), which can become the engine of climate action in Pakistan. The Act not only embodies our commitment to addressing climate change but also grants the PCCA extensive powers and responsibilities. Under its mandate, the PCCA can lead the charge in both mitigation and adaptation efforts, taking a proactive role in shaping our climate policies. Moreover, the PCCA is well-positioned to play a crucial role in crafting bankable projects that not only benefit our environment but also our economy. By leveraging its authority, the PCCA can attract both domestic and international support, fostering collaboration and partnerships that drive sustainable initiatives. Third, Pakistan cannot afford to wait for the mirage of foreign finance to shimmer into reality. While international funding is crucial, we must also take charge of our own climate destiny. It is imperative that we proactively climate-proof every existing and upcoming development project. This responsibility falls squarely on the shoulders of the Ministry of Planning and provincial planning departments. These entities wield the authority and influence to ensure that every step we take in our development journey aligns with a sustainable and climate-resilient future. Let's start with what we have, and what we can. — Courtesy The News

Commerce News

Pak earns \$892.972m from IT services' export

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan earned US \$892.972 million by providing different Information Technology (IT) services to various countries during the first four months of the current fiscal year 2023-24.

This shows a growth of 4.45 per cent as compared with the US \$854.918 million earned through the provision of services during the corresponding months of the last fiscal year 2022-23, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

During the months under review, the export of computer services grew by 4.81 per cent as it surged from US \$688.078 million last year to US \$721.162 million during July-October 2023.

Among the computer services, the exports of software consultancy services witnessed an increase of 93.76 per cent, from US \$1.009 million to US \$1.955 million this year while the export of hardware consultancy services also surged by 1.13 per cent, from US \$253.543 million to US \$256.408 million.

The export of repair and maintenance services increased by 3.16 per cent from US \$0.443 million to US \$0.457 million whereas the export and imports of computer software services also surged by 4.01 per cent, from \$190.228 million to \$197.862 million.

Meanwhile, the export of information services during the months under review dipped by 25.18 per cent from US \$1.390 million to US \$1.040 million.

Among the information services, the exports of information-



PESHAWAR: Secretary Energy & Power Nisar Ahmad Khan and CEO PEDO Engr. Naeem Khan took oath from the newly elected cabinet of PEDO's Officers Association.

Newly elected cabinet of PEDO's Officers Association took oath

Employees should work to take PEDO to the highest revenue generating institution of province: Nisar Ahmad, Naeem

Independent Report

an additional income of more than Rs. 10 billion to the province. He stressed on all officers to devote all their energies to make the institution as number one.

The Chief Executive Naeem Khan reiterated that he has taken measures to solve all the problems of employees and will continue to work for the welfare of the organization in the future. Later on, the newly elected President, Habib Ullah Shah and Chairman Muhammad Ibrar presented the charter of demand, in which the association has included the gratuity of employees, health facilities for employees and residential colony etc. in the future agenda and expressed hope that they will devote all their energies in the best interest of the organization. They will do their best to solve the problems of the employees.

New policies, reforms required for ease of doing business in 2024: APBF

ISLAMABAD (INP): President All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF), Syed Maaz Mahmood has stressed the need for new policies and widespread structural reforms in the upcoming year of 2024 to help investors launch their ventures with ease and comfort, as the country has been lagging behind in the ease of doing business index over the years and especially in the concluding year of 2023.

In his new year message issued on Sunday, he observed that a policy should be finalized after incorporating inputs from real stakeholders of the business community, including the APBF, with the sole aim of facilitating foreign and domestic investment by removing the unnecessary bureaucratic and administrative hurdles that slow down the process of starting new business ventures and hinder economic growth.

Quoting the figures, Maaz Mahmood stated that in the recent Ease of Doing Business Index, Pakistan is considerably behind peer economies, ranking 108 out of 190. In the regulatory area of Starting a Business, Pakistan ranked 72 out of 190 countries.

The scope of the new policy intervention in 2024 should be limited to NOCs required by federal regulatory agencies for incorporation and starting operations of a business activity.

This policy should cover business registration and authorization required for business operations. The policy should be applicable on all public sector entities of the federal and provincial governments that regulate businesses.

The business leader said that World Bank Group's Doing Business project provides a measure of the "Ease of Doing Business" through a set of objective indicators that focus on the impacts of laws, regulations and their enforcement across 190 economies.

SNGPL cuts off another 485 connections for gas theft

LAHORE (APP): In a relentless effort to curb gas theft, Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) conducted a series of targeted raids in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), and Islamabad. During the operations, 485 unauthorized connections were disconnected, and fines totaling Rs 4.14 million were imposed.

According to a spokesman for the department, in Lahore, the regional team acted decisively, severing 25 connections for illegal gas usage and an additional 24 for compressor-related violations. Fines amounting to Rs 0.08 million were imposed on gas theft. In Rawalpindi, 183 connections were severed for unauthorized gas consumption, and 4 for compressor misuse, with fines totaling Rs 0.11 million.

The crackdown extended to Islamabad, where three connections were disconnected due to illegal gas usage. In Multan, the team disconnected 4 connections for unauthorized gas usage and 36 for compressor violations, resulting in fines of Rs 0.45 million. One FIR was lodged against gas pilferers. In Peshawar and Karak, SNGPL took stringent action by disconnecting 66 connections for direct and illegal gas usage, imposing fines amounting to Rs 2.33 million, and filing 2 FIRs against gas theft.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Industries and Chairman United Business Group SM Tanveer being welcomed at Lahore Airport after attending election of FPCCI.



LAHORE: A large number of people are busy buying warm clothes outside Impress market during cold weather in Provincial Capital.

Industry be prioritized in power, gas supply in winter: PFC

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Furniture Council (FC) has demanded the government to accord top priority to the industrial sector regarding uninterrupted power and gas supplies during the winter season.

PFC Chief Executive Officer Mian Kashif Ashfaq made this demand while talking to a delegation of industrialists led by Chaudhary Arah Arain here on Sunday.

He argued that the industrial sector plays a pivotal role in the economic growth and uninterrupted gas and power supplies are essential for its smooth functioning. It will not only sustain production but also safeguard jobs and contribute to overall economic stability besides help achieve export targets.

Pakistan in 2023: Another year of economic turmoil, political unrest, and security challenges

In the wake of last year's devastating floods, the revocation of a brittle truce with militants, the ousting of former-cricketer-turned-Prime Minister Imran Khan, public uproar over rising costs, and persistent economic challenges, 2023 has left Pakistan at a crossroads. As Pakistan navigates through these interwoven dilemmas, the economic turmoil, political instability, and security challenges form a symphony of uncertainty — underlined by the looming 2024 general elections. Pakistan wrestles with an enduring economic crisis, striving to fulfill its external financial obligations to avert default. Soaring inflation and minimal foreign exchange reserves have contributed to the economic downturn. Despite the steady flow of capital into the nation, top-level mismanagement and institutionalized corruption have steadily depleted foreign exchange reserves and increased the overwhelming debt. Ongoing negotiations between Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have repeatedly stalled due to the reluctance of both the former ruling party and the current coalition government to undergo adequate monetary and fiscal reforms. Several of Pakistan's partners, such as China and Saudi Arabia, have emerged as significant players by providing temporary loan rollovers and financial support.

The economic crisis further exacerbates basic security concerns, including fuel supply shortages and energy austerity measures, that have triggered widespread civil unrest. One significant indicator of a struggling economy is the grounding of nearly 400 flight operations by national flag carrier Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) in the fall. Several credible sources indicate that two decades of Chinese lending to Pakistan has contributed to more of the country's external debt than previously estimated. That Pakistan is one of the top three recipients of Chinese loans is particularly

concerning to leading experts. Political Unrest as General Elections Loom Large

In 2023, Pakistan's domestic politics went through numerous bouts of upheaval. Shehbaz Sharif, the brother of the longest-serving Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, was appointed as the prime minister in April 2022 after Imran Khan was ousted due to allegations of poor governance and policy mismanagement. Khan claims a falling out with the military elites led to his ousting, rallying a series of widespread protests in his defense. Shehbaz Sharif's tenure as the country's leader from April to August resulted in temporary political stagnation. During Shehbaz Sharif's tenure, a turning point occurred on May 9 following the detention of Khan. The protests, which erupted spontaneously in Lahore, Peshawar, and other major cities, witnessed participants blocking traffic and expressing vehement anti-military sentiments.

The May 9 protests were significant not simply because of the number of protesters but because of what they were asserting. For example, demonstrators in Mardan chanted "death to the Pakistani Army" outside a military facility, accusing the army of corruption. The aftermath of the protests witnessed a severe crackdown, with more than ten protesters killed and 5,000 PTI supporters detained. Khan, though distancing himself from the attacks on military installations, faced internal dissent as some of his party leaders and aides abandoned him, condemning the violence against the army establishment. The military's response to the protests was unprecedented, resulting in three commanders being dismissed and disciplinary actions against 15 top-level officers who exhibited outward displays of support for Khan. This move was one of the strongest actions taken by the military against its own leadership in decades, further intensifying the rift

between the army and the civilian leadership.

On August 9, 2023, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif recommended that parliament dissolve to trigger general elections, the dissolution signaled at least an outward commitment to democratic renewal. The turmoil has raised concerns among experts regarding the potential politicization of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) by military-backed elites. The delays in provincial and other polls fuel skepticism about the ECP's impartiality and its ability to ensure fair and timely elections.

In October, Nawaz Sharif returned from self-imposed exile in the UK, marked by a historic rally in Lahore. The timing of his return, combined with previous corruption allegations stemming from the Panama Papers leak, gives rise to credible speculation that he is receiving support from the army — especially considering the military's involvement in the May 9 protests. In November, a court overturned Nawaz Sharif's conviction in a corruption case, requiring only an acquittal from the Panama Papers corruption case to meet the eligibility criteria for participating in the upcoming election.

Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar is currently the appointed caretaker prime minister, and his credible links with the military are widely acknowledged. The appointment of a caretaker prime minister without a mandate raises doubts about governance legitimacy, especially in light of Nawaz Sharif's return and other recent developments.

Nawaz's acquittals and potential political comeback, which appears to be backed by Pakistan's military, may draw international scrutiny. As Pakistan heads into 2024, democratic nations will likely call for anti-corruption efforts to mitigate the diplomatic backlash against the judiciary's overturn of Nawaz's corruption convictions. These unstable political transitions create significant uncertainty for crucial bilateral and multilateral lenders.

As Pakistan confronts

the multifaceted challenges of economic turmoil and political unrest, the rising rates of terrorism pose a critical threat to the country's stability. A recent report by the Islamabad-based Center for Research and Security Studies highlights a surge in militant attacks, resulting in over 700 fatalities in the first nine months of 2023. The provinces bordering Afghanistan, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, experience 92 percent of all fatalities, most of them security forces. The TTP, the so-called Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K), and various Baloch separatist groups typically claim responsibility for the attacks. While the violence is currently concentrated in the northwestern provinces, there are ominous signs of its potential spread to other regions, such as Punjab and Sindh. The impact of this uptick in violence on elections is a concern for all Pakistan watchers.

This symphony of domestic challenges has implications for Pakistan's foreign relations, as they have the potential to alter Pakistan's interactions with key regional players. Pakistan's evolving economic relationship with China, perhaps its most significant strategic partner, is particularly notable as Pakistan formally seeks membership in BRICS — a group of emerging economies that includes Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. As Islamabad seeks to deepen its ties with Beijing, the November high-level security meeting affirmed Pakistan's commitment to safeguard Chinese personnel in BRI projects. That same month, Pakistan hosted an advanced Chinese destroyer during the Sea Guardians naval drill, underscoring the countries' deepening bilateral defense cooperation.

Islamabad's relations with two of its other contiguous neighbors, Kabul and New Delhi, remain fraught. For Pakistan, there are three primary issues that persist in its relationship with Afghanistan.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi inspecting the on-going construction works at Lahore Zoo.

Naqvi inaugurates Jinnah Hospital's emergency unit

CM also inspects upgradation work of Lahore Zoo

Independent Report

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi Sunday inaugurated the newly equipped emergency ward at Jinnah Hospital Lahore on the eve of New Year 2024.

Addressing the media persons at the hospital premises alongside Caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce and Industries Dr. Gohar Ejaz, he said that the state-of-the-art emergency unit has been completed within a record time.

The CM said that the Board of Management of Jinnah Hospital, under the guidance of Dr. Gohar Ejaz completed the emergency unit on the last day of the year.

The expansive emergency wing, comprising 120 beds, is now operational and is expected to cater to the needs of more than 2000 visiting patients daily, he hinted, adding that Gohar Ejaz personally supervised the entire project.

He was all praises of Gohar Ejaz and said that Mr Gohar is running Punjab's largest dialysis center. "Jinnah Hospital is at the forefront in terms of treatment facilities."

Mohsin continued that the cancer hospital in Manawan will be of international standard.

Further enhancing the province's healthcare infrastructure, he said that the renovation work of Children's Hospital Multan and Nishtar Hospital Multan has been completed.

These facilities, along with others, including one in Dera Ghazi Khan, are slated to open in the coming days.

CM KP emphasises role of journalists in Society

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Justice (ret'd) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah on Sunday underscored the pivotal role journalists play in identifying societal issues, raising awareness, and fortifying democracy.

He expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of journalists from Abbottabad.

The chief minister emphasized the media's significance as a pillar of the state and acknowledged the vital function of journalists in highlighting prevalent issues. He commended their role in steering public awareness and contributing to the robustness of democracy.

The meeting was attended by key officials, including Commissioner Hazara Division Syed Zaheer-ul-Islam, Deputy Commissioner Abbottabad Khalid Iqbal, DPO Omar Tufail and others.

The CM asserted that journalists have the power to contribute to the eradication of corruption and steer the country out of crises.

He urged journalists to foster unity and consensus among themselves, providing leadership to the public and collectively working towards eliminating societal evils.

International News

Gaza death toll reaches 21,822 as Palestinians end dark year amid Israeli attacks

Monitoring Desk

GAZA STRIP: Israelis and Palestinians end a dark year on Sunday, with no end in sight to the deadliest military offensive on Gaza, triggered by Hamas' bloodiest attack on Israel.

There has been no respite from Israel's air raids, artillery fire or ground fighting with Hamas in the Gaza Strip, to the despair of Palestinians surviving the onslaught.

"We were hoping that 2024 would arrive under better auspices and that we would be able to celebrate the new year at home with our families," said Mahmoud Abou Shamma in a camp for displaced people in Rafah, on the Egyptian border.

"We hope that the war will end and that we will be able to return to our homes and live in peace," said the 33-year-old from Khan Yunis, an epicentre of the conflict in the south of Gaza. Gaza's Hamas-run health ministry says the Israeli military campaign has killed at least 21,822 people, mostly women and children — by far the heaviest death toll of any Israeli operation.

On Sunday the ministry reported numerous deaths in overnight strikes on central Gaza's Zawayda and the

nearby Al-Mughazi refugee camp.

The fighting began with Hamas' October 7 attacks, which left about 1,140 people dead in Israel, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally based on official figures.

Militants also took about 250 people hostage, and Israel says 129 of them remain in captivity.

The Israeli army says 170 soldiers have been killed in combat inside Gaza.

An Israeli siege imposed after October 7, following years of crippling blockade, has led to dire shortages of food, safe water, fuel and medicine in Gaza, with aid convoys able to offer only sporadic relief.

The UN says more than 85 percent of Gaza's 2.4 million people have fled their homes.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned of the growing threat of infectious diseases and the UN says Gaza is "just weeks away" from famine.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Saturday that Israel's war against Hamas will last for "many months" — until the Palestinian militant group has been eliminated.



Fireworks burst from the Sky Tower in Auckland, New Zealand to celebrate the New Year



Residents inspecting the damage outside an apartment building after the overnight Russian drone attack in Kharkiv.

North Korea's Kim vows to launch 3 more spy satellites

Monitoring Desk

SEOUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to launch three additional military spy satellites, produce more nuclear materials and introduce modern attack drones in 2024, as he called for "overwhelming" war readiness to cope with U.S.-led confrontational moves, state media reported Sunday.

Kim's comments, made during a key ruling Workers' Party meeting to set state goals for next year, suggest he'll intensify a run of weapons tests ahead of the U.S. presidential elections in November. Observers say Kim believes a boosted nuclear capability would give him another chance for high-stakes diplomacy with the U.S. to win sanctions relief if former President Donald Trump returns to the White House.

During the five-day meeting that ended Saturday, Kim said "vicious" anti-North Korea moves by the United States and its followers "have reached the extremes unprecedented in history," pushing the Korean Peninsula to the brink of a nuclear war, according to the official Korean Central News Agency. Kim cited the expansion of U.S.-South Korean military exercises and the temporary deployment of powerful U.S. military assets such as bombers and a nuclear-armed submarine in South Korea — steps the allies have taken in response to the North's weapons testing spree since last year.

Final bodies found after China's most serious earthquake in a decade

Monitoring Desk

BEIJING: The bodies of the two remaining people missing in the aftermath of China's most serious earthquake in nearly a decade were found on Sunday, a tragedy that has renewed concern over exposed populations in seismically active zones.

That raises official fatalities from the magnitude 6.2 quake that rocked the northwestern provinces of Qinghai and Gansu almost two weeks ago to 151. The final bodies were found in Qinghai at 1:16 a.m. (1716 GMT Saturday), state media reported.

The earthquake, whose epicentre straddled Qinghai and Gansu, was the most serious in China since a magnitude 6.5 temblor struck the southwestern province of Yunnan in 2014 and killed 617 people.

The tragedy in disaster-hit Qinghai and Gansu, home to many Hui people, a tight-knit ethnic minority characterised by its distinctive Muslim identity, has renewed concern over outdated and poorly built homes.

Many of the homes destroyed were made of earth-wood or brick-wood structures. Their load-bearing walls were constructed from earth, providing little defence against any earthquake, say local authorities.

Gansu, Qinghai, Tibet, Xinjiang and the rugged highlands in Sichuan and Yunnan are located on the fringe of the geologically complex Qinghai-Tibet plateau. Many populations living near the edge of the plateau, often atop active fault lines, are rural farmers and herders subsisting on very low incomes.

Han Ting, 33, whose village in Gansu was nearly wrecked by the quake, chose to stay put in an emergency tent set up by relief workers because of fears her partially damaged family home could still collapse on her.

"The prefab house assigned to us is also a bit far, so we still choose to stay here in the tent," said Han, one of the thousands of Hui people who live in the area. "It's not too cold at the moment, and we aren't lacking in daily necessities, and the children have also resumed school."

Russia launches fresh drone strikes on Ukraine after promising retaliation for Belgorod attack

Monitoring Desk

KYIV, Ukraine: Russia launched a fresh drone assault on Ukraine on Saturday night, after promising that strikes on the Russian border city of Belgorod earlier in the day "would not go unpunished".

The Ukrainian Air Force said Sunday that it had shot down 21 of 49 drones launched by Russian forces overnight.

Twenty-eight people were wounded in an attack on the eastern city of Kharkiv, regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said Sunday. A central hotel, apartment buildings, kindergarten, shops and administrative buildings sustained damage, according to the regional prosecutor's office.

Russia's Defense Ministry said that it had hit "decision-making centers and military facilities" in Kharkiv, reporting that its strike on the Kharkiv Palace Hotel had "destroyed representatives of the Main Intelligence Directorate and Ukrainian Armed Forces" involved in the "terrorist attack" in Belgorod.

In the Kyiv region that surrounds the capital, a Russian drone attack caused a fire to break out at a critical infrastructure facility, local officials said. They did not identify the facility further.

Shelling in the center of the Russian border city of Belgorod Saturday killed 24 people, including three children. A further 108 people were wounded in the strike, regional governor Vyacheslav Gladkov said Sunday, making it one of the deadliest attacks on Russian soil since the start of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine 22 months ago.

Russian authorities accused Kyiv of carrying out the attack, which took place the day after an 18-hour Russian aerial bombardment across Ukraine killed at least 41 civilians.

Russia's Defense Ministry said it identified the ammunition used in the strike as Czech-made Vampire rockets and Olkha missiles fitted with cluster-munition warheads. It provided no additional information, and The Associated Press was unable to verify its claims.

"This crime will not go unpunished," the ministry said in a statement on social media.

In an emergency meeting at the U.N. Security Council demanded by Russia Saturday night, envoy Vasily Nebenzya accused Kyiv of a "terrorist attack." In comments carried by Russian state media, Nebenzya claimed Ukraine had launched "a deliberate act of terrorism directed against civilians."

Ukrainians are bracing for further attacks. A blistering New Year's Eve assault by Russia last year killed at least three civilians.

Kashmiri leader welcomes South Africa's move to hold Israel accountable for Gaza massacre

ISLAMABAD (APP): A prominent Kashmiri leader has said that South Africa's move to sue Israel in the world court for "genocidal acts" in Gaza and a similar case filed by Gambia against Myanmar for atrocities against Rohingya Muslims were "significant" steps towards addressing human rights abuses committed against civilians.

"Filing of an application at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) may take the veil of secrecy off of the alleged human rights violations," Dr Ghulam Nabi Fai, Chairman of World Forum for Peace & Justice, said in a statement released on Sunday.

"Perhaps now the global community can share the outrage felt by the people of the region," Dr Fai said, hoping the world would now turn its attention to Kashmir where atrocities of a similar pattern are being perpetrated by the 900,000 Indian forces with impunity.

"The scale of the human rights atrocities in Kashmir dwarfs those in Kosovo, Bosnia, Sierra Leone, and East Timor which have triggered international interventions," he said.



RAWALPINDI: Women taking picture with the sign of new year 2024 outside a shop in the city



ISLAMABAD: A large number of people came to visit Lake View.

Islamabad's 3 constituencies: 122 out of 209 nomination paper approve for elections

ISLAMABAD (Online): List of candidates has been released after scrutiny by the District Returning Officer (DRO) Islamabad. A total of 209 candidates have submitted their nomination papers for the three constituencies of the National Assembly in Islamabad.

39 out of 61 nomination papers from NA48 were accepted while 22 nomination papers were rejected.

Nomination papers of former Deputy Mayor Chaudhry Rafat, Raja Khurram Nawaz, Sheikh Ansir Aziz, Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry and Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar have been accepted from NA 48. The nomination papers of PTI's Shoaib Shaheen have been rejected from the same constituency.

A total of 75 candidates submitted nomination papers in NA 47. Thirty-six nomination papers were approved by the DRO, while the nomination papers of forty-nine candidates were rejected. The nomination papers of Zeeshan Naqvi of PLMN, independent candidate Raja Khurram Nawaz, PTI leader Babar Awan and Amir Kayani of Stability Pakistan Party were also approved.

The nomination papers of independent candidate Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar from NA forty-seven have also been approved. Nayab Ali, a transgender candidate from the same constituency, will also be able to participate in the election, while Shoaib Shaheen's nomination papers have also been rejected from NA 47.

A total of 73 candidates submitted their nomination papers in NA-46. 41 nomination papers were accepted by the DRO. 32 nomination papers from NA 46 were rejected. The nomination papers of PPP leader Raja Imran Ashraf, Muslim League-N leader Zeeshan Naqvi and Anjum Aqeel Khan were also approved. Nomination papers of transgender candidate Nayab Ali were also approved. PTI leader Shoaib Shaheen's nomination papers were rejected. The papers of Dr. Babar Awan and his son Abdullah Babar Awan have been approved.

'Kashmiris struggling for right to self-determination'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Political experts and analysts have said that the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) are struggling for the exercise of their United Nations-pledged right to self-determination.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the political experts and analysts in their interviews and statements in Srinagar said the United Nations resolutions on Kashmir and International law give the Kashmiri people the right to struggle for freedom from Indian

bondage. They said the on-going freedom movement, which reflects the sentiments of the general populace of IIOJK, will continue till the implementation of the UN resolutions. India is striving to equate Kashmiris' freedom struggle with terrorism through false flag ops and concerted propaganda but will never succeed in its nefarious designs, they added.

They said the fascist Modi must remember that people struggling for freedom cannot be linked to terrorism.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor preparing tea for his customers in a local hotel.

5 days left for AIOU convocation registration

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is organizing a convocation, and the last date for registration is January 5, 2024.

According to the AIOU, the graduates who have secured at least 70% marks in their respective degree programmes from the semester of Autumn 2024 to the semester of Spring 2022 are eligible for registration. The students are directed to visit the convocation website 'convocation.aiou.edu.pk' to register or learn more about the convocation.

The convocation will take place on January 31, 2024, at the Jinnah Convention Center in Islamabad.

The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi, will award degrees and gold medals to graduates.

Many distinguished guests, including federal ministers, secretaries, senior officials of HEC, vice chancellors of various universities, rectors,



ISLAMABAD: Labourers along with their tools sitting on roadside waiting for clients to be hired for work during morning time at Khanna Pul.

ECP plea against RO suspension by PHC to be held on Tuesday

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) appeal against Peshawar High Court's (PHC) verdict to suspend Returning Officer Kohat will be heard on Tuesday.

3-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faiz Isa will conduct the hearing. Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musrat Hilali are also included in the bench.

PHC had issued a notification suspending the appointment of Returning Officer (RO) PK 91 Kohat 2 Infaullah, which was challenged by the ECP in the Supreme Court (SC) through Advocate Afnan Karim Kundli.

ECP took position that PHC gave its verdict without hearing us, at a time when the scrutiny of the nomination papers of the candidates is going on, the verdict is tantamount to derailing the elections process.

ECP further adopted the position that the election schedule of the Election Commission is time-bound, the ECP has to complete the examination of the nomination papers of the candidates by December 30. Election Commission banned transfer and posting of ROs, DRO through a notification on December 15.

23,928 accused arrested; cash, valuables worth Rs 2.49b recovered in year 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Police arrested 23,928 persons during 2023 and recovered stolen valuables worth Rs. 2.49 billion, including 568 cars and 1,106 motorcycles from them.

Islamabad Capital Police took various measures to enhance the effectiveness of the operational division, streamline crime control, increase police station capabilities, ensure effective patrols, and prioritize public issue resolutions, a public relations officer said.

He said that, steps included increasing the capacity of station police officers, establishing a Court Compliance Unit, and initiating an Anti-Robbery and Dacoity Unit. Before 2022, there was no separate investigation system in Islamabad Capital Police.

However, significant reforms were made in 2023 to improve the investigation system, notably establishing the Police Bureau of Investigation, which separated investigation and operational matters at the station level. Moreover, units for investigating crimes against women and children, combating robbery and dacoity, implementing court orders, and ensuring electronic attendance of suspects in courts were part of the investigation unit reforms.

A patrolling system is crucial for crime prevention, leading to the establishment of the new Dolphin Emergency Response Unit in Islamabad. This unit brought police response times down to 8 to 4 minutes. To address public

issues, five new police stations and a division were also established during the year 2023.

In accordance with the government's directives, Islamabad Capital Police conducted multiple operations against illegal resident foreigners, repatriating over 10,000 illegal residents to their home countries.

During 2023, the Islamabad Capital Police arrested 23,928 suspects involved in various crimes, apprehended 6,614 members of criminal gangs in financial cases, recovering stolen valuables worth Rs. 2.49 billion, including 568 cars and 1,106 motorcycles.

Over a year, 2,061 individuals involved in robbery and theft were arrested, recovering more than Rs. 295 million worth of cash and valuables, including 31 cars and 163 motorcycles.

Wani grieved over the death of Prof. Shawl

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior leader of All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) and Vice Chairman of Jammu Kashmir National Front, Altaf Hussain Wani has expressed his profound grief and sorrow over the death of renowned Kashmiri leader Professor Nazir Ahmad Shawl.

In his condolence messages, Wani, while paying eulogizing tribute to Prof. Nazir Ahmad Shawl, for his selfless services and efforts to highlight the Kashmir cause at the international level, said that the deceased leader had dedicated his whole life to the freedom of Kashmir.

Prof. Shawl, he said, raised his voice for the rights of the people of Kashmir at every world forum.

Wani said that the death of Prof. Shawl has caused a great loss to the freedom movement.

ment completing investigations on 20,148 cases, while 4,178 cases are still under proceedings.

Transparency in case investigations, maintaining merit, ensuring justice for criminals, and delivering justice to citizens are the primary goals of all these measures.

The police spokesperson said that Islamabad Capital Police is vigilant day and night in combating crime, with several officers and personnel demonstrating exceptional courage in the line of duty, earning them the title of martyrs and Ghazis by facing criminals' bullets.

Combating crime is impossible without the cooperation of the citizens, so citizens are urged to collaborate with the police, a police spokesperson concluded.

Around 24,326 cases were registered in police stations across Islamabad in 2023, with the investigation department

intake and provide practical tips for reducing consumption. "These efforts aim to empower individuals to make healthier food choices and adopt sustainable lifestyle changes," he maintained.

"Reducing sugar intake doesn't mean sacrificing taste or enjoyment. It's about making smarter choices and being mindful of what we consume. Small changes can lead to significant improvements in our overall health," added Dr Saleem.

He called upon the health authorities to encourage food manufacturers to reformulate products to lower sugar content. The goal is to create a supportive environment that facilitates healthier choices for consumers.

The nutritionist urged the masses to read food labels carefully, choose whole, unprocessed foods whenever possible, and limit the intake of sugary snacks and beverages.

Dr Saleem noted that many processed foods and beverages, often staples in modern diets, are laden with hidden sugars, contributing to the health crisis.

He underscored the need to launch awareness campaigns about the risks associated with high sugar