

# Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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Quetta

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## Issue of Baloch protesting families being painted wrongly: PM Kakar

Every citizen has right to protest within constitutional limits; Says not his mandate to respond to social media criticism.

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday said that issue of Baloch families from Balochistan was being projected in negative and in sharp contrast to realities as Balochs were standing with the state of Pakistan.

Responding to different media queries during his visit to Business Facilitation Center, the prime minister said that terrorists and armed militants had been involved in the killing of people of Balochistan. They were killing doctors, lawyers and teachers, he added.

He reassured the State would fight with them with all force as they could not be given license to kill people.

The prime minister, referring to criticism by a section of the media, said that the government was not fighting with the Baloch families and regretted that efforts were made to spread confusion and mingle things together.

The issue of families of Balochs had been blown out of proportion, he said, adding these terrorists had been

taking money and funding from RAW and killing people in the province.

The caretaker prime minister said that about 90,000 people had been killed in the fight against terrorism but hardly nine accused had been convicted so far.

The prime minister opined that the criminal justice system in the country required improvement.

To a question, he mentioned that there was no restriction on freedom of expression.

Replying to another question regarding an alleged firing incident in DI Khan over vehicles of Maulana Fazlur Rehman Amir of JUI-F, he said that it was alarming, adding the government was responding to security threats in the southern parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with all the available resources.

The caretaker prime minister said that all the resources and security apparatus would be utilized to ensure the holding of peaceful polls on the election date and expressed the hope that they would be successful in this regard.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting on Afghan Transit Trade and Anti-smuggling.



QUETTA: Provincial Secretary PHE Abdul Wali Khan and MD WASA Hamid Latif Rana meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

## Governor Balochistan calls for paying immediate attention to resolve civic issues of Quetta

Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has regretfully pointed out that the citizens of Quetta are facing numerous issues in the present developed era even, therefore, there's a dire need to pay immediate serious attention on their sustainable solution.

The Governor stressed the need to resolve the issues of poor cleanliness, drainage and sanitation system, deteriorated roads condition and traffic problems in Quetta.

The Governor was speaking to different delegations who called on him

## Aneeq to chair national conference on interfaith harmony & peace

QUETTA (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed will chair the national conference on interfaith harmony and peacebuilding to be held at a hotel Quetta.

Prominent scholars from across the country will participate in the national conference.

Meanwhile, the minister will also hold a meeting with the well-known religious scholars of Balochistan.

## SC to hear lifetime disqualification case today

ISLAMABAD, Jan 01 (INP): The Supreme Court's (SC) seven-member on Tuesday will hear a case pertaining to the matter of lifetime disqualifications under Article 62(1)(f) of the Constitution.

Headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa, the bench comprises Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Amin ud Din Khan, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarrat Hilali.

The top court has constituted a larger bench in the case of former MPA Mir Badshah Qaisrani against his lifetime disqualification.

## Five killed in firing incident in D.I Khan.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Five people were killed in a firing incident on Monday near Mutha Road, Dera Ismail Khan.

As the private news channel reported, the victims were individuals previously implicated in a violence-related case, and the shooting is believed to be a consequence of longstanding animosity.

According to police sources, the deceased individuals were nominees in a case related to violence against a woman. The victims had allegedly subjected a woman to violence in 2018, police said.

The police have transferred the bodies to the hospital for further examination, initiating an investigation into the incident.

## Senators demand national dialogue, highlight Balochistan protesters issue

Adopts resolutions about negative propaganda against armed forces, reforms in higher education curriculum

ISLAMABAD (APP): The members of the Upper House of the Parliament on Monday called for initiating a national dialogue and highlighted the issue of Balochistan protesters in the Capital.

The third convening of the 334th Senate session was held with Senator Sadiq Sanjrani in the chair that started with the call from Senators for allowing to speak on the issue of Balochistan protesters.

The Chairman Senate in his welcome remarks facilitated the members of the

House at the commencement of the New Year before initiating the proceedings.

Senator Muhammad Akram of the National Party said the protest had started from Balochistan and the protesters reached the Federal Capital after a long journey.

He pointed out the plight of the women and the protesters under open skies that also included children.

He also called for addressing the issues of the masses

## More than 5,000 terrorists arrested from all over country: Afghanistan exporting terrorism to world, asserts Jan Achakzai

Caretaker Minister for Information says 109 terrorists killed in different operations in Balochistan; some 0.5 million illegal immigrants sent back to Afghanistan till 31st December, 2023

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has pointed out that Afghanistan is exporting terrorism to the world, which is a very dangerous trend.

He said that the incidents of terrorism in Pakistan have linkages with Afghanistan.

Around 1,000 people including 260 security personnel have rendered sacrifices of their lives for the cause of protection of life and property of the masses

besides safeguarding the country's frontiers.

More than 500,000 illegal immigrants have so far been repatriated to their country Afghanistan till December 31, 2023.

These and similar information were shared and views expressed by the Minister for Information while addressing a scheduled press conference here at the civil secretariat on Monday.

The Minister Information noted that the law enforcement agencies made certain achievements against terrorism during the

year 2023.

He said that 566 terrorists were killed in different operations carried out by the security forces during the previous year.

He went on to declare that the terrorism occurring in Pakistan have links in Afghanistan.

Jan Achakzai said that the sacrifices of over 1,000 people including 260 personnel martyred in different operations and acts of terrorism would always be remembered, he maintained.

The caretaker Minister

Continued on page 2

## China's BRI project appreciated by world as progress possible by working together: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Monday that China's Belt and Road Initiative was appreciated by the world as progress was possible only by working together.

In an exclusive interview with China Radio International, the minister said that President Xi Jinping's vision of development was based on uni-

versal development.

"The fruits and benefits of development come only when development is not limited. No country can progress in isolation", Murtaza Solangi maintained.

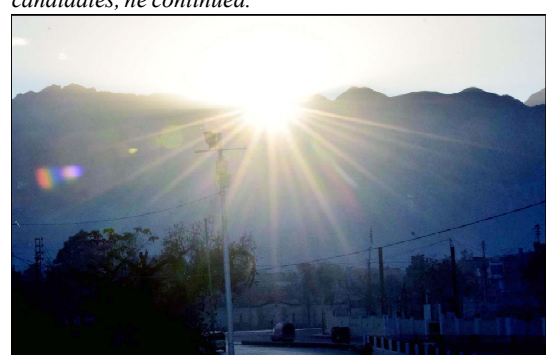
Welcoming the message of the President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping at the beginning of the new year, Murtaza Solangi said his vision of global development was

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## PTI to knock SC's door against rejection of nomination papers

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) announced on Monday that it would approach the Supreme Court against rejection of nomination papers of its leaders.

PTI leader Babar Awan told media here on the premises of the Islamabad High Court that none is permitted to stop anyone from contesting election under the 1973 Constitution. But the PTI candidates were prevented from filing nomination papers all over the country, he added. Unidentified people snatched nomination papers while returning officers rejected papers of more than 300 PTI candidates, he continued.



Beautiful view of sunrise of year 2024 with the new hopes, captured over the horizon of Quetta

## Pakistan, India swap lists of prisoners and nuclear installations

By Czechangez Khan Jadoon

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and India have exchanged their lists of prisoners and nuclear installations and facilities.

The move follows up on years-long agreements between the two arch-rivals who have fought numerous battles since their independence in 1947.

Both nations, who parted ways after ousting the Britishers, exchange the lists of prisoners on the first of January and July each year, while they share details of nuclear installations and facilities on the first date of each calendar year.

In a statement on Monday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the Agreement on Prohibition of Attacks against Nuclear In-

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QUETTA: Balochistan National Party Chief, Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal addresses to media persons during press conference at Quetta press club

## Rejection of nominations to be challenged: Conspiracies being made to weaken BNP even today, alleges Akhtar Mengal

Independent Report QUETTA: The president of Balochistan National Party (BNP) Sardar Akhtar Mengal has stated that we have always waged struggle for securing rights of the people, but adding he charged that conspiracies are being made to weaken the party (BNP).

He claimed that pressure is being exerted on our companions to leave the party.

The BNP chief said that nomination papers of 12 candidates of the party contesting elections for Balochistan Assembly have been rejected without any reason.

His nomination papers have also been rejected

from four constituencies.

However, we would be challenging the rejection of papers of the candidates in the court of law.

Sardar Akhtar Mengal was addressing a hurriedly called press conference here on Monday.

The BNP President said that the province was made laboratory for experiments in every era while attempts were made to run it through artificial leadership.

Addressing the press conference, Sardar Akhtar Mengal said that the undemocratic forces always derailed democracy in the country, even our certain political parties also became tool in their hands

playing part to derail the democracy.

He said that BNP has always talked about democracy and the people for it is being punished.

The BNP chief said that the incidents of torturing and forced disappearance of the people were occurred to pressurize us through different tactics.

He said that we didn't bow to the pressure despite lot of attempts made.

Regarding the upcoming general elections, Sardar Akhtar Mengal said that there would be worst selection in the elections for the preparations have already been made, adding he alleged.

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## Maulana Fazal demands postponement of elections citing security concerns

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (INP): Jamiat-i-Ulema Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Monday demanded the postponement of elections by citing security concerns.

He said, "The deteriorating situation of the country is regrettable and the JUI-F is currently the target of terrorists so we don't think fair elections can be held hence, ECP should consider our request."

The JUI chief further said the candidates of the PPP also mentioned that they could not contest the elections because of the weather and law and order. This, he said, might lead to rigging on a massive scale.

On political alliance front, JUI-F chief said there would be seat adjustment wherever necessary.



QUETTA: Caretaker Provincial Minister Jan Achakzai meeting with Caretaker Home Minister Captain (Retd) Mir Muhammad Zubair Khan Jamali

## Mir Zubair Jamali inaugurates Rahdari Management System at Pak-Iran border districts

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Home, Captain (Retd) Mir Muhammad Zubair Jamali inaugurated the Rahdari Management System (RMS) introduced in five districts at Pak-Iran border on Monday.

While the Minister Home participated in the inauguration ceremony as chief guest, the event was also attended by the Additional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem, Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafaqat, Secretary Information Technology, Ayaz

Mandokhail, Special Secretary Home, Abdul Nasir Dotani, Commissioner Makran, Saeed Jamali, Commissioner Rakhshan, Shah Irfan Gharshoon. The Deputy Commissioners of concerned districts participated in the event through video link.

The Additional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem and Secretary IT Ayaz Mandokhail briefed about the Rahdari Application. During the course of briefing, it was informed that the Rahdari system has been computerized in five districts located at Pak-Iran border.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting of Quetta Development Package Steering Committee





QUETTA: A delegation Shaheed Hafeezur Rehman Mengal Foundation Balochistan led by its President Nusrat Mengal meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

## AJK President urges for vibrant role of overseas Kashmiris to highlight HR abuses by India

MIRPUR (AJK): (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry on Monday said that the Kashmiris expatriate community should play its much-needed role in highlighting the human rights violations committed by India in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) at the international level.

Talking to a delegation of the Kashmiri expatriate community, led by Lord Mayor of Manchester Yasmin Dar, at Jammu Kashmir House in the federal metropolis, the president said that the diaspora community should become

voice of the oppressed Kashmiri people who have been reeling under the Indian barbarism and brutality in the occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Barrister Chaudhry, on the occasion, praised the Kashmiri expatriate community's role and its valuable contribution to the Kashmir cause.

Barrister Chaudhry said that the mission and focus of his whole life has been to mobilize the diaspora community and highlight the freedom movement on the diplomatic front. Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry said that the diaspora community settled in the

UK and other parts of the world could play a vital role in sensitizing the world about early solution of the Kashmir dispute.

He said that elected representatives, councilors, and community leaders could play an important role in mobilizing the British parliamentarians and human rights organizations regarding the Kashmir issue.

The delegation was comprised of Councilor Majid Khan, Chairman Jammu and Kashmir Self-determination Movement Raja Najabat Hussain and Kanwal Hayat and others.

## Nawaz Sharif constitutes high powered committee on matter of distribution of tickets

LAHORE (Online): PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif has constituted a high powered committee comprising senior leaders of party on the matter of distribution of tickets.

Nawaz Sharif will head the committee.

According to PML-N sources committee will include Shehbaz Sharif, chief organizer Maryam Nawaz, vice president, secretary general, provincial presidents and secretary generals.

High powered committee will issue tickets to

PML-N candidates for National Assembly and provincial assemblies.

PML-N Quaid has shortlisted the candidates in parliamentary board meetings after their interview.

Sources said committee will hold meeting continuously this week and the task of distribution of tickets will be completed till January 12.

The differences among the party candidates for the constituencies of Lahore will also be got reconciled.

## EC issues details of nomination papers rejected, accepted

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has issued details of nomination papers accepted and rejected by it in respect of the candidates for general election 2024.

The ECP has issued data in respect of the nominated candidates for National Assembly (NA) and Provincial assemblies for the general election 2024.

As many as 7473 candidates have filed nomination papers for NA. They include 7028 male and 445 female.

The nomination papers of 1024 candidates for NA

seats have been rejected. They include 934 male and 90 female.

The candidates whose nomination papers have been accepted for NA stand at 6449. Among them 6094 are male candidates and 355 are female candidates.

As many as 18478 candidates had filed nomination papers for provincial assemblies. Nomination papers of 2216 candidates for provincial assemblies have been rejected from all the four provinces. The nomination papers of 16262 candidates have been accepted.

## Pakistan, India swap...

Continued from page 1

nal Affairs also handed over the list of India's nuclear installations and facilities to a representative of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi," the statement read. In another handout, the Foreign Office said today, Pakistan and India exchanged the lists of prisoners in each other's custody through diplomatic channels.

The simultaneous exchange of lists took place in pursuance of the Consular Access Agreement of 2008. Under the agreement, both countries are required to exchange the lists of prisoners in each other's custody on January 1 and July 1, every year.

The Government of Pakistan handed over a list of 231 Indian prisoners in Pakistan (47 civilian prisoners

and 184 fishermen) to a representative of the High Commission of India in Islamabad, the statement read. He Indian government shared the list of Pakistani prisoners in Indian jails with an officer of Pakistan High Commission, New Delhi. According to the list, there are a total of 418 Pakistanis in Indian jails (337 civilian prisoners and 81 fishermen). The Indian side, it mentioned, has been urged to release and repatriate all those Pakistani civilian prisoners and fishermen, who have completed their respective sentences and whose national status stands confirmed. "A request for a grant of consular access to missing defence personnel of 1965 and 1971 wars, and special consular access to 77 civil prisoners has also been made," the Foreign Office added.

## PM Kakar directs enhancement of Afghan Transit Trade tracking system

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday directed to take additional steps for enhancement of foolproof tracking system concerning Afghan Transit Trade.

Chairing a review meeting over Afghan Transit Trade and anti-smuggling measures, he also asked for the formulation of an immediate mechanism for the establishment of an integrated transit trade management system.

The meeting was attended by Caretaker Finance Minister Dr Shamsad Akhtar, Caretaker Minister for Trade Ejaz Gohar, senior officials of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, representatives of the sensitive departments and other relevant officials, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Addressing the partici-

pants, the prime minister said that one of the major reasons affecting the country's economy was smuggling and the illegal movement of goods.

Taking notice of negligence over the smuggling issue, he directed the chief secretary Balochistan to completely change the administrative machinery of District Chaghi.

He directed for initiation of criminal proceedings against any personnel, found involved in smuggling, leading to exemplary punishment besides, advising intelligence clearance of any officer before his or her deployment on sensitive posts of customs.

The caretaker prime minister further directed that the checking system should be further strengthened at the Chaman, Torkham, Ghulam Khan check-posts besides, at the border areas of Balochistan.

Cargo checking should be improved and the number of Customs staff at Chaman border be increased, he added.

He urged the Baloch people to work for the enhancement of businesses and employment in the province.

A briefing over a progress report, compiled by an inquiry committee on Afghan Transit Trade was also given to the prime minister.

Appreciating the performance of the committee so far, he directed it to earnestly compile its recommendations.

The meeting was informed that due to the steps of the government, the smuggling of petroleum products from Iran had been reduced to a huge extent whereas cargo tracking system had started functioning from Taftan to Quetta.



QUETTA: All Pakistan Mazda Truck Goods Transport Association Chairman, Mir Nawab Mengal along with others addresses to media persons during press conference held at Quetta press club

## Bilawal convenes CEC meeting on Jan 3 to discuss election strategy

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday referred a total of 22 private members' bills to the relevant committees for further deliberation and consultation.

The bills referred to committees included, "The Prevention of Electronic Crimes (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The General Clauses (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Pakistan Commissions of Inquiry (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Islamabad Capital Territory Watersides Safety Bill, 2023", "The Higher Education Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The National Excellence Institute Bill, 2024", "The Pre-

## Chairman Senate refers 22 bills to relevant committees

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjran on Monday referred a total of 22 private members' bills to the relevant committees for further deliberation and consultation.

The bills referred to committees included, "The Prevention of Electronic Crimes (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The General Clauses (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Pakistan Commissions of Inquiry (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Islamabad Capital Territory Watersides Safety Bill, 2023", "The Higher Education Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The National Excellence Institute (Amendment) Bill, 2023".

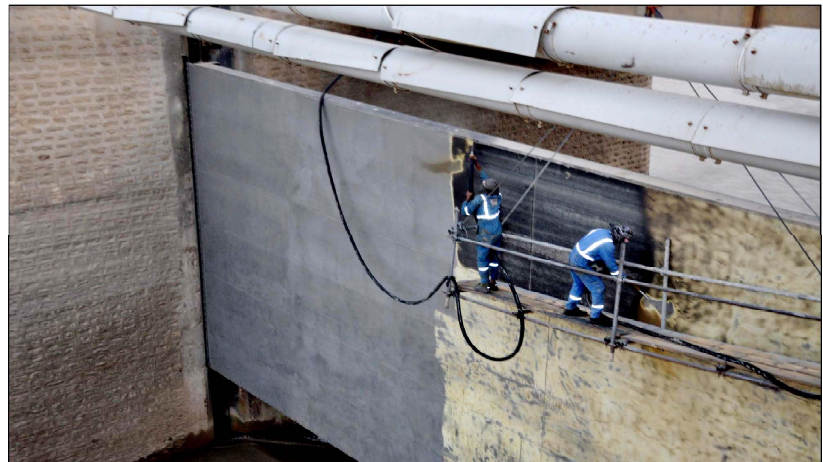
vention and Control of Human Trafficking (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Civil Servants (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Guardians and Wards (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Service Tribunals (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The General Clauses (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Pakistan Commissions of Inquiry (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The Islamabad Capital Territory Watersides Safety Bill, 2023", "The Higher Education Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2023", "The National Excellence Institute (Amendment) Bill, 2023".

## BAA taking practical steps to promote archery game in province: Badini

QUETTA: Promotion of sports at grass root level was the mission statement of national and provincial sports policies, hence, keeping in view the mission statements of national and provincial sports policies, Balochistan Archery Association (BAA) was taking practical steps to promote archery game in the province, particularly in Quetta city.

These views were expressed by Muhammad Amin Badini, President, Balochistan Archery Association while addressing the participants of one day archery training camp held under the auspices of "Star Shaheen Archery Academy, Quetta in the base of Koh-e-Muherdar, Bund Mitha chowk, Pushtoonabad area of Quetta. Badini said that the ongoing archery training camp being held under the aegis of "Moulana Niaz Muhammad Durrani Archery Academy Quetta" in the lawn of Quetta Metropolitan Corporation aimed at diverting the attention of people, particularly youngsters, towards archery game, adding that dozens of youths had acquired training of archery in the training camp arranged by Moulana Niaz Muhammad Durrani Archery Academy Quetta in the lawn of Quetta Metropolitan Corporation.

He said that BAA was earnestly striving to promote archery game despite meagre resources and in that regard steps were being taken to ensure the arrangements training camps of archery game in different areas of Quetta. Faiz Kakar, national archery coach imparted training of archery on the aspirant youths. On the occasion, President, Balochistan Star Shaheen Mountaineering Association, Dr. Naseem Khan, General Secretary, Bismillah Khan Achakzai, President, Honour Debating Society and Youth Activist, Muhammad Asif Shahyan, political and tribal leader, Malik Suhail Khan Kasi, Shahzaib Muhammad Hasni, Associate Secretary, Balochistan Archery Association, Ajmal Khan Kakar, senior Journalist Zareef Pushtoon, sports journalist, Inayat Khan Achakzai and others were also present.



HYDERABAD: Labourers busy in their work without any safety measures and put their lives in danger to earn their livelihood to supports their families, located on Indus River Bridge near Hyderabad

## Afghanistan exporting...

Continued from page 1

on the occasion informed that some 18,000 intelligence based operations were conducted in the country during the year 2023. He on the occasion claimed that more than 5,000 terrorists have been apprehended in the country while 109 terrorists have been killed in different operations conducted in the province.

Undoubtedly the armed forces of the country have taken numerous measures for making the country hub of peace, Jan Achakzai commended adding that the armed forces would continue the war against terrorism till elimination of last terrorist, with support of the masses.

He informed that the process of repatriation of illegal immigrants remained continued during the last year, and would continue in the future as well.

Over 500,000 illegal Afghan immigrants have so far been repatriated to their homeland till December 31, 2023.

Jan Achakzai asserted that no one could cross the border without passport after enforcement of the condition of passport.

## Senators demand national dialogue, highlight...

Continued from page 1

dressing the missing persons issue without further delay.

"There should be a debate on missing persons issue to start the dialogue. The stakeholders should be convened on a single platform under a separate committee that should be established to resolve the issue", he added.

Senator, Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri of Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam Pakistan (JUI-P) also highlighted the plight of women protesters and demanded the proper redressal of their grievances.

The JUI-P Senator proposed that a committee to resolve the issue of missing persons of Balochistan and the rest should be set up to resolve the issue amicably.

Senator Muhammad Tahir Bizinjo of National Party also expressed concern over the plight of Baloch protesters.

Senator Haji Hidayatullah Khan of Awami National Party regretted that the increase in terrorist activities and targeting of political parties, were harmful for democracy and the electoral process. He said that the threats to political leaders like his leader Aimal Wali Khan or Moulana Fazlur Rehman, would have adverse impacts on democratic norms.

Senator Humayun Mohmand of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) demanded that the interim government under its constitutional mandate, should hold free and fair elections in the country.

Senator Kamran Murtaza of JUI-P condemned the terrorist attacks on his party leaders and termed it harmful for democracy.

Senator Moulvi Faiz Muhammad of JUI-P said it was the responsibility of the government to ensure protection of life, property and honour of the citizens.

The terrorist activities in Balochistan were regrettable and commendable, whereas the government must make serious efforts to address the terrorism issue.

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed of Pakistan Muslim League (PML) apprised the House that during his recent participation at an international conference on Palestine in Tehran, he on behalf of the House expressed full solidarity with Palestinians and paid tribute to their fight against Israeli occupation.

He said that the so-called Israeli might was shattered by the Palestinians and its brutalities and violations of human rights were blatantly exposed before the world.

He said the plight of Baloch women protesters

was regrettable and should not be repeated in any manner.

Senator Bahramand Khan Tangi of Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarian condemned Pashtun Tahafuz Movement, leader Manzoor Pashteen for using foul language against national institutions of the country.

Tangi demanded Pashteen to stop propaganda against the state and join politics to become part of the mainstream political discourse.

Meanwhile the Senate on Monday adopted two resolutions recommending the government to award strict punishment to those involved in negative propaganda against reform and ensure reform in the higher education curriculum to apprise students of the consequences and risks of drug usage.

PPPP Senator Bahramand Khan Tangi sponsored a resolution which recommended the government to take necessary steps to award severe punishment as per law to those involved in malicious propaganda against the armed forces and other security agencies on various social media platforms.

According to the text of the amended resolution, "Cognizant of the huge sacrifices of Armed forces and other security agencies in the war against terror and

for the Defence and protection of the country's borders; Acknowledging the fact that strong army and other security agencies is indispensable for the Defence of the country, especially in view of the hostile neighborhood; Expressing deep concern on the negative and malicious propaganda against the armed forces and other security agencies on various social media platforms; The Senate of Pakistan, therefore, recommends to the Government to take necessary steps to award severe punishment as per law".

BAP Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri moved another resolution recommending the government to take immediate steps to cater needs of all students with diverse cultural backgrounds and to reform the higher education curriculum to apprise students of the consequences and risks of drug usage. It also demanded to devise a monitoring mechanism in all the universities for enforcement of the 'Policy on Drug and Tobacco Abuse in Higher Education Institutions 2021' in letter and spirit. Another resolution of PTI Senator Soomayee Zehri was not taken up due to the absence of lawmaker which recommended the government to prioritize climate change projects in its development Budget and allocate sufficient funds for climate change adaptation.

**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS**

**PROCUREMENT OF LIVERIES FOR TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING (TVET) INSTITUTES (NITA-5/2023/BTEVTA/QTA) TSE No. TSE-232412369551**

Balochistan Technical Education & Vocational Training Authority (B-TEVTA) invites sealed bids from experienced, reputed and financially sound firms / suppliers / contractors registered with taxation departments and on BPPRA EPPS for supply of liveries for TVET institutes under Balochistan Public Procurement Rules, 2014 and as per detail mentioned in the bidding document during FY 2023-24.

S.No	Item	Unit	Quantity
1	B-TEVTA Insignia T-Shirt (Small)	Nos	1200
2	B-TEVTA Insignia T-Shirt (Medium)	Nos	1200
3	B-TEVTA Insignia T-Shirt (Large)	Nos	1200

**1. Basic Eligibility:** (i) The bidder must have valid NTN, GST & BSTS certificate and is an active tax payer. (ii) Must have registered on BPPRA EPPS. (iii) Must have completed 3 similar / comparable nature assignments of at least Rs. 2.00 million collectively in last 3 years. (iv) Minimum annual turnover of Rs 3.00 million for any single year during last 3 financial years. (v) Must agree to serve the contract within 1 month. (vi) Is not blacklisted by any of the federal, provincial, local government department / agency / autonomous / semi-autonomous / corporate body or private organization anywhere in Pakistan. (vii) Must unconditionally agree with all the instructions, terms & conditions specified in the bidding document. **2. Procedure of Procurement:** Single - Stage - One Envelope procedure as per Balochistan Public Procurement Rules, 2014 will be followed for this open National Competitive Bidding. **3. Bid Security:** The bid must accompany bid security equivalent to 3% of the total bid price of the complete package in the form of deposit at call favoring Director BTEVTA Quetta. **4. Bidding/Tender Document:** Tender/Bidding document can be obtained from the Office of B-TEVTA, Jinnah Town Quetta on submission of tender fee amounting to PKR 500/- via green challan (nonrefundable) deposited in NBP under head of account CO2818, Labour & Manpower, QA7474, during office hours or can be downloaded from BPPRA website [www.bppra.gov.pk](http://www.bppra.gov.pk) under TSE No. TSE-232412369551. If downloaded from website original challan of tender fee shall be submitted to BTEVTA one day before the deadline of bids submission else bid will not be entertained. **5. Submission & Opening of Bids:** Sealed bids (single envelope containing the technical, financial proposal and required information / documents mentioned in this bidding document) duly signed, stamped and prepared in accordance with the instructions of the bidding document accompanied by a bid security equivalent to 3% of the total bid price of the complete package in the form of deposit at call favoring Director BTEVTA must reach to the office of BTEVTA latest by 18th January, 2024 @ 12:30 pm while bids will be opened on the same day @ 1:00 pm in the presence of procurement committee and representatives of the bidders who may choose to be present. **6. Complete Package Bid:** Bidder is required to bid for entire (100%) quantity of the complete package. By Parts/Partial bids will not be considered. Evaluation & comparison of the complete package will be carried jointly. **7. Other details are mentioned in the Bidding/Tender Document. MANAGING DIRECTOR BTEVTA** Balochistan Technical Education & Vocational Training Authority 355-125-B, Jinnah Town Quetta. Tel: 081-2870874, Fax: 081-2870875, Email: [director@btevta.gov.pk](mailto:director@btevta.gov.pk)

**AB No.257/29-12-2023**

**MANAGING DIRECTOR BTEVTA**

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## Pakistan saw over 115% increase in tourism in 2023: Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister of State for Tourism Wasi Shah Monday said that in the year 2023 Pakistan saw a 115% increase in foreign tourism which has helped the country earn \$1.3 billion in foreign exchange revenue.

In an exclusive talk with a private news channel, minister mentioned that according to the 'World Tourism Barometer' published by the World Tourism Organisation of the United Nations, Pakistan made a remarkable 92 per cent recovery to pre-pandemic levels in 2023, as the country experienced a 115 per cent surge in tourist arrivals compared to the previous year.

Minister hoped that the year 2024 will bring more tourist travel land-

scape in changing the country as a powerhouse in the tourism sector.

He said that Pakistan is promoting tourism and would identify more unexplored tourism destinations of Sindh and Balochistan comprising adventure, religious, nature, weekend, rural and tribal tourism.

Wasi added that our country enriched by beaches, cliffs, forests, hills, valleys, and rivers, and the beauty of the natural landscapes that you find all around the world, but it has them in one gorgeous, beautiful place.

"These places are mostly unspoiled, and they are mostly undiscovered where new elected government need to focus, adding, we are showcasing Pakistan's tourism opportunities at the global mar-

ket shows like WTM which would help attract more tourists to Pakistan.

He also mentioned through world tourism Mart participation Pakistan pavilion attracted a large number of travel enthusiasts, representatives of international travel companies and social media influencers. The World Travel Mart in London was one of the world's largest travel shows, connected global travel buyers with over 5,000 of the most renowned destinations and brands worldwide.

Replying to a question, he said it is a gift for the nation that Pakistan declared a best tourism destination in the world, adding, the government is simplifying the procedures and encouraging and involving of private sector.



ISLAMABAD: Jamal Shah, Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture inaugurating Shah Alla Ditta Caves development, conservation & preservation project.

## Mushaal concerned over deteriorating political, HR situation in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Human Rights & Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick Monday has expressed serious concern over the deteriorating political and human rights situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

While talking to Pakistan Television, Mushaal Hussein Mullick warned that brazen demographic

change by India in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir is creating tensions that could push the region to a disastrous war, adding, "India is expected to register up to 2.5 million new voters from Indians in the contested Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK)".

In replying to a question, she regretted that the prisons inside the IIOJK jails were still waiting for basic facilities of medicines

and lawyers, adding, that they were deprived of basic needs.

She also called upon international organizations and human rights platforms to speed up their efforts and raise voices for the rights of innocent Kashmiri people. Additionally, she also shared her own experience of being targeted during a journey to Norway where she had faced significant harassment by an Indian national.

## CDA introduces state-of-the-art fast-track services

ISLAMABAD (APP): Building Control Directorate of Capital Development Authority (CDA) has introduced state-of-the-art fast-track service by modernizing the system of providing amenities to the citizens.

In this context, CDA started to ensure the approval of the building plan in the facilitation centre on the fast track.

Under this modern and fastest system, residential buildings of 356 yards will be approved with an additional fee of Rs 20,000 thousand with required documents within two

days, while residential buildings larger than 356 yards will be approved with a fee of Rs 30,000 thousand. Additionally, commercial buildings up to 10000 square yards will also be approved within three days. A separate desk has also been established for all these matters. It should be noted that the citizens coming to this place will not have to wait in the line of one window separately.

Similarly, arrangements have been made to set a good environment for the citizens who will visit here.

## Safety of the citizens top priority of NH&MP:IG

ISLAMABAD (APP): Inspector General of the National Highways and Motorways Police (NHMP), Sultan Ali Khawaja, said on Monday that the safety of citizens' lives and property while driving on national highways and motorways is our main concern. According to a private news channel, Inspector General of National Highways and Motorways Sultan Ali Khawaja said that the increase in fines was imposed by the updated twelfth schedule of the National Highways Safety Ordinance 2000 to ensure the rules and regulations while driving vehicles on the highways.



ISLAMABAD: People are crossing the busy Kernal Sher Khan Road instead of using over head pedestrian bridge, which may cause any incident any time.

## 248 people killed in IIOJK during last year: LFK report

ISLAMABAD (APP): A total of 248 people had been killed in multiple incidents of violence across Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) by the Indian forces, according to an annual review report titled 'Human Rights Situation in IIOJK' released by Legal Forum for Kashmir (LFK).

The armed action of India's occupying forces against the native population as a result of heightened military presence has resulted in the killing of 82 indigenous freedom fighters from January to December 2023, said a press release.

According to the LFK annual report, January-December 2023 saw a new trend of state repression and counterinsurgency operations in the war-torn region of IIOJK. On the ground, the violations of International Human Rights law (IHRL) and International Humanitarian law (IHL) led to appalling human tragedies. Indian occupying authorities and the

occupying forces stationed in IIOJK have perpetrated a series of 'Atrocity crimes': Indian occupying forces persisted in their repressive policies and disregard for international law and the principle of the Right of Self-determination. A total of 260 Cordon and Search Operations (CASOs) were reported by the local media which are just a fraction of the total Search Operations launched by the occupying forces. The report said that at least 70 encounters took place during which 138 civilian properties were reported. Also, 171 instances of Internet shutdown in IIOJK were reported.

India's infamous anti-terror investigation agencies National Investigation Agency (NIA) & State Investigation Agency (SIA) have attached 200 properties across IIOJK in the year 2023. It further said that Indian occupying authorities annihilate the critical voices of Kashmiris by pervasive surveillance to monitor

their daily lives, violating the rights to freedom of expression, opinion, and privacy rights of Kashmiris.

To intensify restrictions on social media users in IIOJK, police have been given free access to track accounts of all Kashmiris in the name of monitoring anti-India activities. Police claimed to have secured direct cooperation from social media giants, including WhatsApp, X, Snapchat, Instagram, Telegram, and TikTok, it added.

LFK reports the torture and custodial death case at Dhera Ki Gali and Buffiaz in the Poonch-Rajouri belt of IIOJK. According to the families, the three men - Mohammad Showkat, 22, Safer Hussain, 45, and Shabir Ahmad, 32, were detained by IOF at the hilly Topa Pir village in Poonch district on December 22, 2023. The torture victims and the families of the deceased testified that before the custodial death of three civilian Indian army stripped them

naked and used chilli powder over the sensitive body parts to inflict more bodily harm.

The report said that India has accelerated its efforts to dominate every means of dissent and seize properties of native inhabitants, paving the way for outsiders to settle in the region. In the name of "retrieving state land", the occupying authorities and their auxiliaries seized over 178005.213 acres in Kashmir region and 25159.56 acres in Jammu as alleged "encroached" by the residents. In its annual report, LFK called the international community to take cognizance of the evidence presented in this report. All the cases of extrajudicial killing, arbitrary detention, and torture of civilians, the curbs on freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the demographic changes, and all other measures aimed at the ethnic cleansing of Kashmir Muslims must not go unheeded.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Mushtaq Ahmed, Chairman Senate Functional Committee on Devolution presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

## Minister lays foundation stone of Shah Alla Ditta Caves preservation project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Syed Jamal Shah on Monday laid the foundation stone of Shah Alla Ditta Caves development, conservation, preservation and restoration.

Federal Secretary of National Heritage and Culture Division Humaira Ahmed, Director General Department of Archaeology & Museums (DOAM) Dr Abdul Azeem and other senior officials were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that the Department of Archaeology & Museums (DOAM) Islamabad has declared the site a "Protected Antiquity" under the Antiquities Act 1975 on 13-08-2016.

He said that DOAM, National Heritage & Culture Division, has started conservation, preservation, restoration & development of the caves during the current financial year.

He said that the work includes Archaeological excavation, complete documentation of the site, geotechnical study of binding materials, construction

of drainage works as well as Soft and hard landscaping.

Shah Allah Ditta caves are situated on the southern side of the Margalla hills in a small picturesque valley, 14 kilometers north-west of the capital city of Islamabad. Caves consist of two natural rock shelters of Kanjur stone situated on either side of a natural spring of hot water.

The front side of the eastern cave is covered with a wall of undressed kanjur stone laid in mud mortar. The facade of the cave is covered with mud plaster having many coatings of red color.

On the smooth surface of the wall, some paintings are executed in black color but in the later period, the paintings are covered with a layer of whitewash.

The paintings are of Hindu origin, probably of god Vishnu (the savior).

Interior of the cave is divided into upper and lower halves. Walls are treated with mud plaster having many coatings of white wash but now the color of the walls become blackish due to the smoke of the fire used by the dwellers.



ISLAMABAD: Students are leaving to home in school bus as today was the first after winter vacation in Federal Capital.

## Islamabad police commended for good performance in 2023

**Independent Report**

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan extended heartfelt thanks to the dedicated officers, women, and staff of the Islamabad Capital Police for their unwavering commitment and relentless efforts throughout 2023.

In a special New Year message, Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan acknowledged the sacrifices and hard work put in by the police force, ensuring the safety and security of Islamabad's residents despite numerous challenges. He expressed pride in their accomplishments, crediting their daily hard work, compassion, and dedication for the department's success in various endeavors.

In his message, ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan urged everyone to continue their service in 2024 with the same zeal, dedication, and professionalism. He emphasized the goal of creating a safe and secure environment in Islamabad, where both resi-

dents and visitors feel protected.

Dr. Khan extended gratitude to the residents of Islamabad for their unwavering support throughout 2023, especially during challenging times such as protests and political activities that could have disrupted the city's peace. He praised the cooperation extended by the residents and thanked those who continued their businesses, contributing to maintaining a peaceful environment.

Acknowledging the essential role played by various government entities, ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan thanked the governments of Pakistan, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and other provinces for their direct involvement and support. He expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Interior, Secretary Interior, Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, and their entire staff for their cooperation and provision of resources.



ISLAMABAD: A view of the yellow leaves on road side after dropping from trees as indicating autumn season in Federal Capital.

## Diverse undergraduate programs Admissions start at Dar-ul-Madina Intl University

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dar-ul-Madina International University, has officially announced the commencement of admissions for Bachelor's programs in Arabic, Education, Islamic Studies, and Islamic Banking and Finance.

The university, located on Sector G-11, Shabbir Sharif Road, Islamabad, chartered by the government of Pakistan and recognized by the Higher Education Commission, has gained prominence for its commitment to providing quality education in the realm of Islamic studies.

Dar-ul-Madina International University offers a comprehensive BS Arabic program, aiming to equip students with a deep under-

standing of the Arabic language, literature, and culture.

The BS Education program at the university is designed to prepare future educators with the skills and knowledge necessary for a dynamic and evolving educational landscape.

Renowned for its expertise in Islamic studies, the university offers a BS program that delves into various facets of Islamic theology, history, and jurisprudence.

Reflecting the university's commitment to contemporary relevance, the BS Islamic Banking and Finance program integrates traditional Islamic financial principles with modern banking practices.



ISLAMABAD: A Delegation of Kashmiris meeting with president Azak Kashmiri Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhary

## Not seeing Nawaz to become PM for 4th time: Astrologer Samiah

ISLAMABAD (Online): Renowned astrologer and tarot card expert Samiah Khan has predicted she is not seeing Nawaz Sharif to become Prime Minister (PM) for the 4th time.

"Nawaz Sharif star is going to become more bright after January 10. But he does not seem to become PM for the 4th time, she said this while talking in a private TV program here Monday.

She predicted Nawaz Sharif is going to get relief in more cases in coming days. His every thing is going to become clear.

She forecast Nawaz Sharif will either become king maker or he will put his hand on someone else. Something like this can happen.

Samiah Khan stated she had predicted with reference to 2018 election this government will not complete its tenure.

Citing to coming election she said if no tfs and butts come then election will take place on February 08.

I am not seeing that any party will get majority in coming election, she said adding new government will be coalition government, she added.

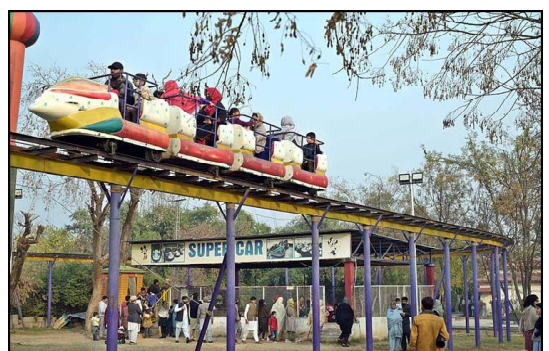
## SC adjourns hearing of petition against delimitation of NA-165 after election

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has adjourned hearing of petition against delimitation of NA-165 after election.

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah has remarked our last order is this the election will take place on the delimitations which were framed before issuance of election schedule. He gave these remarks during hearing of the case on Monday.

The counsel for petitioner took the plea Elec-

tion Commission (EC) gave decision against us after December 15. Upon it DG Law EC told the court the delimitation was notified before election schedule. The court remarked December 13 notification has been maintained. Justice Mansoor remarked we can do nothing in this case at present. The matter was postponed after election PML-N candidate Saud Majeed had challenged delimitation of NA-165.



ISLAMABAD: People enjoying mini train ride at Lake View Park.

## VC AIOU says: 'We aim to make education accessible and affordable'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, congratulated the students on the beginning of the new year and said that our 2024 resolution is to make education accessible and affordable for everyone.

He emphasized the importance of hard work and education as the key to success.

Dr. Nasir highlighted education as the ladder of development and urged the younger generation to prioritize education and play an active role in the progress of the country and the nation. Our New Year resolution is to make education accessible and affordable for

everyone. Dr. Nasir Mahmood stated that Allama Iqbal Open University is committed to keeping its doors open for those who seek education and is ready to provide them with all possible support to include them in the educational network. Admissions for the spring semester of 2024 will commence on January 15. The university will be awarding scholarships to talented and deserving children nationwide, who cannot afford the fees.

In his message, the Vice Chancellor has directed the regional heads of the university to take special care of the students' facilities and provide them with full support.



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**Independent**

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## Unequal world

A world increasingly divided between the rich and the poor – with the gap widening almost annually – has once again witnessed an astonishing \$1.5 trillion increase in the wealth of the top five richest empires. This is no small sum. In fact, for some countries, this sum is bigger than their GDP; for example, Pakistan whose GDP is a paltry \$348 billion is among these countries. In a world that wants to switch to renewable energy and phase out of fossil fuels to save the planet from further chaos, the petro-money of the Middle East has put two families from the region among the world's five richest. The Al Nahyans of Abu Dhabi have topped the 2023 list put out by Bloomberg of family fortunes, with a total worth of \$305 billion. The Al Thanis of Qatar also added significantly to this wealth. For the first time in five years, the Waltons of Walmart are no longer the richest group in the world. Meanwhile, the family that owns Hermes continues to grow, with the focus, according to experts, being on creating generational wealth. Unfortunately, the growing influence of the Middle East is not being put to use politically, for example by using its clout as a reminder that the Palestinians have powerful friends. The same is true of Yemen, where children starve as a result of poverty which has built up over the decades and worsened by almost a decade-long war in the country.

The report is a stark reminder of wealth concentration in the hands of a few. If this money earned from oil, fashion design, retail sales, and other areas was spread out more equitably, many would benefit hugely. Inequality in the world is widening, leading to some important questions. Are the world's riches reserved only for a small number of people? Shouldn't there be some mechanism to offer more opportunities and a greater division of wealth to the world's 99 per cent who had a difficult financial year? It is almost impossible to imagine the scale of fortune a few families have amassed. The arrival of the oil-rich Gulf countries on the scene adds in some way to the complications but also depicts a changing world where the West is not necessarily the largest power holder at least in financial terms.

But the list exposes an ugly reality: we live in a space where some can stud their coats with the most precious diamonds while others cannot place a piece of bread on their tables. There is something wrong with a system that allows and even encourages this. Of course, individual families have strategized well to earn their money. But others are not at fault here because they are deliberately kept away from resources that can help them generate income. Such a world is doomed to remain unequal.

By Amanat Ali Chaudhry

Since October 7 when Israel launched a full-scale attack on Gaza in response to Hamas' rather surprise breach of the Israeli 'fortified' security, the UN headquarters in New York has been a busy venue, witnessing a flurry of heightened diplomatic activity.

As the war escalated with more Palestinian lives being lost by the hour, the principal concern for the UN has been an attempt at building a consensus within the UN Security Council to call for a humanitarian ceasefire.

This has led to the convening of several UNSC meetings where member countries have engaged in hectic closed-door consultations, wrangling over the text of the resolutions and proposing amendments in an effort to agree on a draft resolution that accommodates all viewpoints and is able to avoid a veto by a permanent member.

The protracted process at the UNSC, and its subsequent failure to adopt a resolution clearly calling out for a ceasefire, moved the Palestinian Question to the UN General Assembly where two landmark resolutions adopted with an overwhelming interna-

tional support have highlighted the deepening divisions between Israel and its powerful backers and the majority of the international community that refuses to buy the Israeli version of the events.

The rising death toll in Gaza topped by the killing of Palestinian women and children and accompanied by the destruction of civilian infrastructure including hospitals and educational institutions has caused an international uproar that saw a clear divide between the street and the governing elites in the West.

This uproar, angry and helpless as it is, is boosted by the voices coming from within the UN system that continually alert the world to the existing hellish reality of Gaza and warn of even graver consequences of inaction. In a show of moral leadership, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has demonstrated remarkable courage in speaking truth to power.

As an important member country of the OIC and Arab Group, Pakistan has powerfully represented the voice of the Muslim world at the UN General Assembly and UN Security Council forums. Ambassador Mumir Akram, the permanent representative of the Pakistan Mission to the

UN and the veteran diplomat, made international headlines for his speech at the UNGA ahead of the vote on the Canadian-sponsored amendment to the draft resolution.

Employing language rooted in international law and backed by the UN Charter and drawing on his vast experience of multilateral diplomacy, Ambassador Akram tore the Israeli position into pieces and exposed the hollowness of its stand along with that of its powerful backers in another hard-hitting speech ahead of the vote on the second UNGA resolution on December 12, which was passed with more votes than garnered during the adoption of the first one on October 27.

I have carefully reviewed the Pakistani position vis-a-vis the situation in the Middle East with a special reference to the Palestinian Question as articulated at the UN forums and concluded the following points.

First, Pakistan has consistently pushed for a three-pronged set of demands in line with the overwhelming international opinion: enforcement of an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, the opening up of aid corridors for the fast-paced delivery of scaled-up humanitarian assis-

tance, and a strong rejection of any Israeli plans for the displacement of the Palestinian people.

Second, the Pakistani stance has been rooted in international law including the UN Charter, international humanitarian law as well as invocation of the UNSC resolutions. In his several statements, Ambassador Mumir Akram has appealed as much to world conscience and reminded it of its unfulfilled responsibility towards Palestinians as he expertly referred to the violations of the Geneva Conventions and human rights law.

This includes, but is not limited to, the mention of indiscriminate use of force by Israel, attacks on civilians and civilian objects and infrastructure including the blocking of water, medicine and fuel supplies. This line of argument by the Pakistan permanent representative establishes how Israel was committing war crimes and crimes against humanity that clearly amounted to a genocidal campaign.

Third, Pakistan has explained the longstanding issue of Palestine in the light of the UN-sanctioned right to self-determination. This stance underscores the centrality and legitimacy of the Palestinian struggle to liberate all their occupied

territories. Ambassador Mumir Akram also tore into pieces the Israeli claim to designate its war crimes as self-defence and argued that the right to self-defence could be invoked only when sovereign countries are attacked, not when they are in occupation of territories that legitimately belonged to others.

This was a powerful argument that on the one hand drew unmistakable parallels between the Palestinian and Kashmiri struggle against the foreign occupation, and warned against establishing false equivalence between the occupiers and the occupied on the other.

At the core of the argument is the reasoning that per international law, the quest for self-determination and national liberation by communities residing under foreign occupation is considered legitimate and should not be conflated with terrorism. The illegality lies in the suppression of such struggles. Over the course of history, colonial powers have often characterized national liberation movements as acts of terrorism.

Fortifying this position was the consensual adoption of the Pakistan-sponsored draft resolution by the UN General Assem-

bly on the realization of the right to self-determination, which implicitly offered a beacon of light to the peoples under foreign occupation like those in IIOJK and Palestine, struggling for their inalienable right to determine their future.

During the UN meeting, Ambassador Mumir Akram was also at his best when he imparted a lesson in history to those who mischievously tried to frame the recent hostilities as having been provoked by Hamas. His assertion that "the Israeli occupation is the original sin" put facts into correct perspective.

Fourth, Pakistan has also called for the establishment of a special tribunal and an accountability mechanism to investigate Israeli war crimes, identify and prosecute the people involved in perpetrating these crimes and provide reparation for the damages caused. It has also demanded the deployment of an international protective force to safeguard Palestinian civilians, particularly women and children residing in Gaza and the West Bank, shielding them from ongoing attacks and oppression perpetrated by occupation forces and extremist colonialist settlers.—Courtesy The News

## Geo Strategic Concerns

By Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai  
International Court of Justice in its unofficial press release, issued on December 29, 2023, states, "South Africa today filed an application instituting proceedings against Israel before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, concerning alleged violations by Israel of its obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the 'Genocide Convention') in relation to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip."

Earlier in December 2019, The Republic of the Gambia, with the support of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) also filed a case before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) alleging human rights violations committed by Myanmar against the Rohingya violate various provisions of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide ("the Genocide Convention").

Both these develop-

ments are significant steps towards greater international recognition of the serious alleged abuses committed against civilian population. Filing of an application at the ICJ may take the veil of secrecy off of alleged human rights violations. Perhaps now the global community can share the outrage felt by the people of the region.

Yet in another part of the globe – Kashmir – atrocities of a similar pattern have been and are being perpetrated by the 900,000 Indian military and paramilitary forces (Figure quoted from an interview with Indian novelist, Arundhati Roy) with no fear of a corrective international response. The scale of the human rights atrocities in Kashmir dwarf those in Kosovo, Bosnia, Sierra Leone, and East Timor which have triggered international interventions. But the world powers and the United Nations have remained silent, not even employing moral suasion against India's shocking indiscriminate violence in

Kashmir as was done regarding South Africa during its ugly years of apartheid. It is painful but necessary to mention here how Indian law grants virtual legal immunity to any type of war crime against humanity perpetrated in Kashmir. Rape is a recognised war crime, and countless Kashmiri women have been raped by Indian army. Torture is an international crime, as the Legal proceedings against General Augustine Pinochet in Great Britain proved. Yet Indian leaders who permit torture in Kashmir are not prosecuted for the crime in jurisdictions they may be visiting. Narendra Modi was banned to enter to the United States and Great Britain because of his involvement in massacre of Muslims in Gujarat. Now he is being given red carpet reception in many Capitols of the world. Is an international crime less criminal if the aggressor is India and victim is a Kashmiri, people ask?

The common Kashmiris also asks: Are Kashmiris less human than

peoples of other nations? To borrow from Shakespeare in The Merchant of Venice: Hath not a Kashmiri eye? hath not a Kashmiri hand, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions; fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as other peoples are? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? It is true that violence characteristically stems from dehumanising an adversary or enemy. The more another seems distant, odd, inferior, or different from yourself, the easier to kill, maim, and oppress. That psychological insight is corroborated by thousands of years of experience. Take genocide. The Nazis and Germans generally perpetrated the Holocaust by demonizing Jews and inculcating the idea of their racial or religious inferiority. Jews looked different from Aryans. Jews were

stigmatised as killers of Christ, making them all decides. In this way, Holocaust participants were able psychologically to block out their villainies by perceiving Jews as subhuman, and thus their extermination as no different than killing animals for food. The Holocaust would never have reached its horrifying scale if Aryan Germans had perceived and treated Jews as human peers and subscribed to John Donne's timeless poetic recognition of the unity of mankind. It is quite possible that if international law were applied evenhandedly in Kashmir, an international war crimes tribunal would have been established years ago to try the scores of Indian civilian and military leaders guilty of crimes against humanity and aggression. What Slobodan Milosevich did in Kosovo and Bosnia pales in comparison to what Indian civilian and military grandees have done in Kashmir for 76 successive years, something resembling genocide on the installment plan.

Let us have a pragmatic view of the world. The world powers seldom place democracy and human rights above geo-strategic or economic concerns. Let me conclude with these sobering observations. Foreign policy in the United States does not emerge from a simple algorithm. It is driven in part by popular emotions, in part by domestic considerations, and in part by long-term global concerns that transcend the momentary and transient. And what relative influence these varied elements play in a particular foreign policy decision varies depending on the country, the timing, and the circumstances. If anyone thinks there are simple markers for predicting American foreign policy, then they are seriously mistaken. It is much more ad hoc and improvised than systematic and thematic. That means the opportunities to try to reason out with the policymakers are great, but so are the hazards and imponderables of such an enterprise.—Courtesy The Nation

## Election unknowns

By Maleeha Lodhi

Election activity has swung into high gear in the country with the filing of nomination papers by candidates and mobilisation of supporters by party leaders. The election date of Feb 8 is now cast in stone. But there are more unknowns than knowns about how the election will play out.

The first unknown is the PTI factor. Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf is engaged in legal actions aimed at securing a level playing field in the poll. It has contested the decision of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to deprive it of its election symbol — which is how most voters identify which party a candidate belongs to on the ballot paper.

Court dramas are likely to continue on this and other counts, including petitions challenging Khan's disqualification. Whatever the legal outcome, the key political question is whether the perception that PTI is being persecuted will translate into a 'sympathy wave' to boost its electoral support or deter its supporters from showing up at the ballot box.

With most of its leaders and many activists incarcerated, it will be hard for the party to mobilise its base. But the party has also shown a knack of using social media and communication technology to overcome such obstacles. Whether this will work in the complex environment of individual parliamentary constituencies remains to be tested.

This brings up the second unknown. Constituency politics embedded in networks of traditional allegiances often override the personal popularity of leaders at the national level. If there was a presidential system, a leader's popularity would

be enough to determine the outcome. But parliamentary elections are a different matter where dynamics are more complicated.

The phenomenon of 'all politics is local' also works to the advantage of older parties that have long dominated Pakistan's constituency-based politics. Electoral politics still pivots around transactional patterns of behaviour and traditional allegiances to determine the result at the constituency level — hence the importance of so-called electables, who are local power brokers. This makes the overall outcome harder to predict.

The third unknown is the impact of the urban-rural balance, which in the past has long tilted in favour of the countryside and reinforced traditional allegiances. But greater urbanisation is altering this picture. Although urban Pakistan is still underrepresented, many rural constituencies now have urban features.

In the battleground province of Punjab, this shift is most evident. In Punjab's 144 national constituencies more than half are now either urban or 'mixed', displaying a significant urban complexion. This is weakening older alignments and reshaping voting patterns, again making outcomes harder to forecast.

New voters are a fourth unknown factor. Since the last election in 2018, over 23.5 million voters have been added to the electoral list — 18 per cent of the electorate. This could impart a significant swing factor to the election. A substantial number of new voters can be assumed to be unaffiliated to any party with no firm party preference. They are therefore up for grabs for any party able to appeal to them and get them out to vote.

The youth bulge in the electorate has, of course, at-

tracted much attention. ECP figures show voters from the ages of 18 to 35 constitute 45pc of the electorate. This makes young voters a significant factor, even a game changer, in determining the poll outcome. But what is unknown is whether young voters will actually show up at the ballot box — which would give PTI an edge.

So far, turnout among younger voters has been exceedingly low. Official statistics are lacking on this but a Gallup-Pakistan report, relying on exit polls conducted since 1988, finds youth turnout to be much lower than overall voter participation. It shows that usually only a quarter of young voters turned out to vote. In the past two elections, their participation was only a third compared to the average overall turnout of 52pc.

Overall voter turnout is itself a big unknown. It could be a significant indicator of how free, fair and credible voters will judge the election to be. Turnout in previous elections has ranged between 51pc (2018), 53pc (2013), 44pc (2008) and 41pc (2002). The lowest turnout in 2002 was clearly a measure of the scepticism with which people saw an election held under military rule. A very low turnout, say below 44pc, could undermine the legitimacy of the February election result.

Another unknown is how voters in Punjab will respond to the new Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party organised to upend PTI and comprised mostly of PTI deserters in a process orchestrated by the establishment. Pakistan's electoral history shows voters usually punish turncoats, just as they reject expedient alliances. Individual IPP leaders with a strong constituency base may, however, buck this trend.—Courtesy Dawn

## Cultivating tax awareness

By Anwar Kashif Mumtaz

It is common knowledge that efficient collection of taxes is fundamental to the economic stability and growth of any country. However, in Pakistan, the tax collection system has been marred by several challenges, leading to disruptions that have far-reaching consequences on the overall economy.

One of the primary concerns in Pakistan's tax system is inadequate revenue generation. Even though the country has a sizable economy, a huge portion of businesses and individuals remain outside the tax net. This informal sector not only evades taxation but also contributes to unfair competition, hindering the growth of compliant businesses.

Low tax compliance among the existing taxpayers further aggravates the problem. The lack of a robust tax enforcement mechanism allows individuals and businesses to understate their income and evade taxes, leading to substantial revenue losses for the government. This undermines public trust and weakens the government's ability to finance essential public services and infrastructure projects.

Pakistan's complex tax structure is another hurdle in effective tax collection. The system comprises various taxes, including income tax, sales tax, and excise duty, each with its set of rules and regulations. This complexity not only confuses the taxpayers but also provides loopholes for tax evasion. Simplifying the tax code and procedures can enhance compliance and boost revenue collection.

Issues in the tax administration make the already tough challenges in Pakistan's tax system even more complicated. These quirks give tax evaders a way out, keeping the non-compliance vibe alive. It is essential to shine a light on

transparency within tax agencies to create a fair and efficient tax system.

The negative consequences of these tax collection issues are manifold. Insufficient revenue hampers the government's ability to invest in education, healthcare and infrastructure — essential components for economic development. The lack of funds limits the government's capacity to reduce poverty and create employment opportunities, exacerbating social inequalities. Addressing the concerns related to tax collection in the country requires a multifaceted approach. Primarily, there is a need for comprehensive tax reforms aimed at simplifying the tax structure, broadening the tax base, and enhancing enforcement mechanisms. Investing in technology and data analytics can help the tax authorities identify potential tax evaders. Promoting financial literacy and creating awareness about the importance of paying taxes can foster a culture of tax compliance, while collaboration among the government, private sector and civil society can facilitate dialogue to improve the tax system.

Disruption in Pakistan's tax system poses a significant threat to economic stability and growth prospects. Addressing the concerns related to tax collection is imperative to foster a fair and sustainable economic environment. By implementing comprehensive reforms, promoting transparency, and encouraging compliance, Pakistan can overcome these challenges and pave the way for a brighter economic future.

Pakistan stands at a crossroads in its economic development, with the potential for transformative change embedded in the digital realm. In recent years, discussions about overhauling the tax system have gained momentum, with a consensus emerging on the need for disruptive reforms. Digital documentation, a

buzzword in today's technological landscape, holds the key to revolutionizing Pakistan's tax system.

Embracing digital documentation can streamline tax processes, making them more transparent, efficient and accountable. By digitalizing financial records and transactions, Pakistan can curb tax evasion, ultimately increasing government revenue. This move not only promotes financial integrity but also establishes trust between citizens and the government. While donor agencies often advocate legal amendments to facilitate debt collection, it is crucial to consider the broader societal implications. Reforms must strike a balance between collecting revenue and safeguarding citizens' wellbeing, ensuring that vulnerable populations are not disproportionately affected by taxation policies.

Elimination of filers and non-filers classification is also an important step. Such categorization creates disparities and hampers the efforts to broaden the taxpayers' base. A unified approach, meaning a fair and progressive tax system, ensures that every citizen, regardless of their income level, fulfils their tax obligations and equitably contributes to the country's progress and fosters social justice and economic stability. This approach encourages compliance and discourages tax evasion, creating a level-playing field for all the taxpayers. Pakistan's economy has the potential to thrive, with an ideal scenario envisioning 200 million tax filers. However, the current reality, with only four million tax filers, underscores the need for significant disruption. By implementing digital documentation, fostering tax awareness, ensuring transparency, and embracing fair taxation practices, Pakistan can unleash its economic potential, paving the way for financial prosperity and a brighter future for all its citizens.—Courtesy The News



## CM virtually inaugurates 36 upgraded police stations

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi virtually inaugurated 36 upgraded police stations across the province here on Monday. He also inaugurated the newly constructed Gulshan-e-Iqbal police station, said a handout issued here. In a generous New Year gesture, he announced a waiver on fee increases for driving licences until Jan 9, extending an opportunity for citizens to obtain licences at the existing rates. The CM inspected the Gulshan-e-Iqbal Police Station and its different sections, including the front desk, waiting room, SHO's room, IT room, and meeting room. Expressing appreciation for the initiative to provide top-

notch facilities, CM Naqvi conveyed his congratulations to the IG police, CCPO Lahore, DIG (Ops) and their respective teams. Provincial ministers Mansoor Qadir, Amir Mir, Azfar Ali Nasir, Home Secretary, CCPO Lahore, Secretary Communication and Works, Commissioner, DIG (Ops) and others were also present. Meanwhile, Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi commenced the dawn of 2024 by inspecting public welfare projects. He inspected the 7.3 KM long controlled access corridor Band Road for two hours to review the progress. Currently, 50 per cent completion is reported for package one and 38 per cent for package two. In his commitment to

timely delivery, CM Naqvi set a deadline of Jan 31 for the project's completion, emphasizing a steadfast adherence to the schedule, and even advocating for round-the-clock efforts. Expressing concern over reported extortion from the soil supplier contractor, the CM directed the police to take legal action against the extortionists. He scrutinized construction activities, urging both the contractors to accelerate their pace. He tasked the deputy commissioner to remove encroachments surrounding the project areas. Commissioner / DG LDA briefed about the project's progress. Provincial ministers Mansoor Qadir, Amir Mir, Azfar Ali Nasir, CCPO, secretary C&W and others were also present.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi offering Dua after virtual inaugurating of Police Station Gulshan Iqbal and other 36 Police Stations under 737 Police Stations building upgradation.

## SRB collects Rs 21.3bn in December 2023: CM Sindh

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (ret'd) Maqbool Baqar has said that the Sindh Revenue Board (SRB) during December 2023 made a record revenue collection of Rs 21.3 billion as compared to Rs 17.5 billion collected during the corresponding period of 2022 (Dec 2022) which shows a growth of 22 per cent. In a statement issued from the CM House, the CM said that during December 2023, the Sindh Revenue Board made a

record revenue collection of Rs 21.3 billion as compared to Rs 17.5 billion collected during December 2022, thus registering a growth of 22 per cent. During the first six months of the financial year 2023-24, SRB collected Rs 108.6 billion as compared to the collection of Rs 80.2 billion during the first six months of the last financial year 2022-23, posting revenue growth of 35 per cent, and thus showcasing its commitment to fiscal excellence even in challenging economic

times. The success in achieving the phenomenal revenue growth during and up to December 2023, is attributed to the continued trust and cooperation of SRB taxpayers, and the relentless efforts of the SRB officers and staff, the CM said. Sindh Revenue Board is focused on achieving the assigned revenue target of Rs 235 billion for 2023-24, despite all the adverse factors such as low economic growth, reduced economic activity and a stagnant tax base.



KARACHI: Inspector General Police (IGP) Sindh, Dr. Riffat Mukhtar Raja presiding over a high-level meeting regarding the control of law and order situation on the occasion of General Election 2024, held at CPO Headquarters in Karachi.

## Caretaker Minister chairs a meeting on newly merged Districts

**Independent Report**  
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Newly Merged Districts Affairs, Industries, Commerce and Technical Education Dr. Aamer Abdullah, on Monday, chaired a meeting of the Special Steering Committee, formed for Newly Merged Districts, here at Cabinet Room, Civil Secretariat in Peshawar. Besides Additional Chief Secretary Planning and Development Syed Imtiaz Hussain Shah, Secretary Health Mahmood Aslam Wazir, Secretary Communications and Works Muhammad Idrees Khan, Secretary Relief Inayatullah Wasim, Secretary Industry Syed Zulfikar Ali Shah, Special Secretaries Home and P&D Departments Muhammad Zabair and Kamran Afridi, Officers of Police, Pakistan Army and other departments participated. In the meeting, the progress and

implementation of the tasks given to various departments in the decisions of the previous meetings of the steering committee and provincial task force formed under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister were reviewed. On this occasion, the forum was informed that the process of capacity building of police in NMDs is on progress. 19 DSPs and 85 inspectors of police have been promoted to the next grades while recruitment of 1571 police personals through ETEA, will also be completed soon. Similarly, 513 ghost employees have also been removed from the police in these districts. The forum instructed that the identified sites for construction of various police infrastructures in some districts may be handed over to C&W department so that to start the construction work at the earliest on it. On this occasion.

## Farewell ceremony held in honor of PEC

PESHAWAR (APP): A farewell ceremony was held in honor of Provincial Election Commissioner Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Javed, senior officer of grade 20 who retired from the office of Provincial Election Commissioner Khyber Pakhtunkhwa here on Monday. Provincial Election Commissioner Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shamshad Khan, Joint Provincial Election Commissioner Admin Aziz Bahadur along with officers and staff participated. Provincial Election Commissioner Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shamshad Khan in his address highlighted Javed Khan for his excellent services and expressed his best wishes while paying great tribute to him. On this occasion, Provincial Election Commissioner, officers and staff presented various gifts including shields to Javed Khan. In his speech, former Joint Provincial Election Commissioner Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Javed said.

## ACS says: South Punjab Secretariat making progress towards achieving development goals

MULTAN (APP): Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab Capt Retd Saqib Zafar said on Monday that the South Punjab Secretariat was making significant strides towards its established goals. During a review meeting on Monday, Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab, Capt. (ret'd) Saqib Zafar, directed the completion of all schemes according to their timelines. A substantial allocation of Rs 97 billion had been earmarked for ongoing 2022 projects in South Punjab, with 45% of the released Rs 37 billion already utilized for development initiatives. Similarly, work on hospital

upgradation in South Punjab is also progressing rapidly, and projects aimed at advancing the agriculture and livestock sector are in motion. Captain (ret'd) Saqib Zafar mentioned the completion of the Nishtar Hospital II project and ongoing interviews for medical staff. Under the guidance of Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, the upgrading of all Territorial hospitals in South Punjab is also underway, with the Bahawalpur Hospital set for completion by February 27. Development work on the OPD and Emergency facilities of Children's Hospital Multan had finished.

## Bus overturns, killed one

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): One passenger was killed and 13 were injured when a bus overturned due to heavy fog in Muzaffargarh on Monday. According to Rescue Control Room, the bus was travelling to Sargodha when the incident occurred near Chowk Permit area of Alipur Tehsil resulting in one passenger killed and 13 injured. After being informed, three ambulances and two rescue fire vehicles were dispatched to the accident site. The rescue team managed to evacuate two of the injured while the third was found dead under the bus. The remaining 11 passengers were taken to Tehsil Headquarters Hospital in Ali Port for medical treatment.

## 2024 to be a year of development, prosperity for Pakistan: Firdous

SIALKOT (APP): Former Federal Minister and Pakistan Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) Central Information Secretary Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan has congratulated the nation on the beginning of the New Year. In a statement, she prayed 2024 to be a year of development and prosperity for Pakistan, for which all have to struggle together. "It is my prayer that the sun of the New Year should be a symbol of progress and prosperity and that the name of Pakistan shine globally." Firdous Ashiq Awan prayed for the

## Police recruitment reviewed

SARGODHA (APP): A meeting was held at the RPO office on the recruitment of intelligence operators in the special branch under the chairmanship of Regional Police Officer Shariq Kamal Siddiqui, in which preparations for the process were reviewed here on Monday. DPO Muhammad Faisal Kamran, SP Legal, SP Special Branch and ADIG Aamir Mushtaq participated in the meeting, while DPOs of Khushab, Mianwali and Bhakkar participated through video link. More than 7000 candidates from across the region submitted applications for the intelligence operator.

## Providing modern education IG FC North commends Cadet College Warsak for its commitment

PESHAWAR (Online): Cadet College Warsak proudly hosted its 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Parents' Day, marked by a blend of simplicity and grandeur. Major General Noor Wali Khan, Inspector General Frontier Corps North, graced the occasion as the chief guest. The event witnessed a meticulous parade inspection by the distinguished chief guest, who bestowed medals, shields and the coveted sword of honour upon outstanding cadets excelling in academics and sports. The ceremony showcased a splendid march past by the cadets who saluted the chief guest. Adding a dynamic touch to the celebration, the cadets exhibited remarkable gymnastics and athletic prowess, earning enthusiastic applause from the captivated audience.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Guest Major General Noor Wali Khan commended Cadet College Warsak for its commitment to providing modern education. He acknowledged the institution's role in maintaining high academic standards, placing it on par with other esteemed educational entities in Pakistan. Major General Noor Wali Khan credited the success to the dedicated management and faculty of Cadet College Warsak. The event drew attendees from various sectors, including parents of cadets, civil and military officials, and a diverse cross-section of the community. Established in 2009, Cadet College Warsak has become a beacon of quality education, currently hosting 650 students from across Pakistan, including tribal districts of KPK.



SARGODHA: People are sitting around fire during cold weather in the city.

## PML-N office arson case: Court extends physical remand of Sanam Javed

LAHORE (Online): Sessions Court has extended physical remand of PTI worker Sanam Javed. The PML-N office arson case came up for hearing in sessions court against Sanam Javed here Monday. The police presented her in the court on completion of her two days physical remand. The Model town police requested the court to extend physical remand

of accused as more investigation has to be made from her. The counsel for Sanam Javed opposed the police plea for further physical remand. The court reserved judgment on Police plea. Announcing the decision later, the court extended physical remand of Sanam Javed for one day. The case of torching PML-N office against Sanam Javed is registered in Modal town police station.

## Titanic of PTI politics has sunk: Mian Javed Latif

MANAWALA (Online): PML-N central leader Mian Javed Latif has said titanic of PTI politics has sunk. "We will put the final nail in the political coffin of 'Intehsar Khan and his coterie on February 8 and send him packing for ever, he said this while talking to media men here Monday after holding corner meetings in different villages of constituency PP-142. "My Quaid Nawaz Sharif is last ray of hope for people who will steer the country from 'Masailistan' and put it on

the path to progress and prosperity, he added. PML-N will win the election with overwhelming majority from across the country, he claimed. Sheikhupura is citadel of tigers of Mian Nawaz Sharif. Our political rivals have become confused over our politics of 'service to people. We have accomplished record development projects in our respective constituencies. He announced Mian Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz will soon address public meeting.



KARACHI: Participants are holding awareness walk in connection of Polio Eradication Campaign organized by World Health Organization, held at M.A Jinnah road in Karachi.

## Police crackdown against aerial firing on new year's eve, arrest 91 in raids

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Police, acting upon directives from Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh Riffat Mukhtar Raja conducted a crackdown in the various districts against the accused involved in aerial firing during New Year celebrations. This initiative resulted in the registration of 85 cases and the arrest of 91 individuals, according to a spokesman for Sindh Police on Monday. Among the seized items were 57 pistols, 7 rifles, 4 repeaters, 2 MP5s,

1 shotgun, 1 SMG, 489 rounds, 12 empty rounds, and firecrackers. Breakdown by districts: Karachi South reported 13 cases and 13 arrests, East with 26 cases and 32 arrests, West with 34 cases and 32 arrests, Hyderabad with 4 cases and 4 arrests, Shaheed Benazirabad with 3 cases and 3 arrests, Mirpurkhas with 2 cases and 2 arrests, and Larkana with 3 cases and 5 arrests. Additional 16 individuals were detained on New Year's Eve, as per the report.

## KU to facilitate students thru SAF

KARACHI (APP): The University of Karachi is facilitating students who have secured their admissions but cannot pay the admission fee due to financial difficulties with the Students' Admission Fund. The KU initiated the SAF project during the COVID-19 pandemic and since then the University of Karachi has been facilitating such students. The in-charge KU Directorate of Admissions Dr Saima Akhtar said that such students can get/submit the form from the SAF Counter till January 04, 2024. She mentioned that the SAF Counter is established in the campus gymnasium hall and would remain open from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. According to her, students who want to avail of the Students Admission Fund should submit the income certificate of the father/guardian, other relevant documents including a photocopy of the computer national identity card of the student as well as the father/guardian CNIC, form B along with the online admission form and directed them to attach photocopy and last month's utility bills including electricity, gas, water, telephone, and tenancy agreements if any. She said that the SAF was created on the special directives of the KU Vice Chancellor.

## Clean & Green Peshawar campaign launched

PESHAWAR (APP): The district administration with the collaboration of all stakeholders has initiated the Clean and Green Peshawar campaign as part of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Khushhal Program. Deputy Commissioner Peshawar, Afaq Wazir, chaired a meeting attended by officials from key departments, including the Regional Transport Authority, Traffic Police, Capital Metropolitan Government, TMA, WSSP, PDA, and others. The meeting addressed the issue of

environmental pollution in Peshawar, specifically focusing on smoke emissions from vehicles, including two-stroke rickshaws, buses, and other sources. It was highlighted that brick kilns and factories also contribute significantly to environmental degradation. The deputy commissioner declared the official commencement of the month-long Clean and Green campaign. The district administration, in collaboration with relevant departments, will carry out daily actions against smoke-emitting vehicles.



PESHAWAR: Members of Christian Community are attending annual commemoration ceremony on the occasion of New Year Celebration, held at the Saint John Cathedral Church in Peshawar.

## ANF recovers over 2 tons drugs in 10 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), while conducting 10 operations across the country, managed to recover over 2 tons of drugs and arrest three accused, including a woman, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday. He said that 1.5 kg of ice was recovered from a Bahrain-bound passenger on Flight No. GF-0791 at Faisalabad Airport. 100 grams of hashish were recovered from a parcel booked for Dubai at a courier office near Jinnah Airport. 1460 kg of hashish and 215 kg of heroin were recovered from

the Mazai Adda area of Qila Abdullah. 510 kg of hashish was recovered from Pishin, while 335.6 kg of hashish was recovered from the Toba Achakzai area of Chaman. The spokesman informed us that 68.4 kg of hashish was recovered from the Morgah Border, Khyber area, in four separate operations. 180 kg of hashish was recovered from the Gali Alam Khan area of Pishin, and 17 kg of crystal heroin was recovered from a hilly area of Chagai. In an operation, 6 kg of heroin was recovered from a drug manufacturing factory in the 'Kabari.



PESHAWAR: Members of Khyber Medical Employees Association are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, held at Peshawar press club.



## Govt-private sector liaison crucial for economic development: PM

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday said that the development model, featuring a close liaison between the government and private sector, could yield positive results for national economic growth. The prime minister, interacting with the business community at the Business Facilitation Center (BFC), said the enhanced interaction between the business community and the government, would help increase employment opportunities, taxation as well as GDP growth. He said that owing to the mutual cooperation between the government and the business community, the country was heading towards achieving economic stability and revival.

### PM for legal proceedings against urea fertilizer hoarders

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday said that enough urea fertilizer was available in the country to meet requirements and directed for initiation of legal proceedings against those involved in its hoarding and illegal profiteering. He said that those exploiting farmers by urea fertilizer hoarding would not be spared. The prime minister chaired a meeting over the availability of urea fertilizer in the country. The meeting was attended by Caretaker Finance Minister Dr Shamsah Akhtar, Caretaker Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali, Caretaker Minister for National Food Security Dr Kausar Abdullah Malik, Caretaker Minister for Trade Dr Gohar Ejaz, caretaker chief ministers and relevant officials, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting on the availability of urea fertilizer in the country.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Privatisation, Fawad Hasan Fawad in a meeting with Chinese Business Delegation on at Privatisation Division.

### Mobilink Bank closes 2023 with 41% increase in MSME Disbursements

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: Mobilink Bank stood out for its commitment to empowering Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), constituting a significant 36% of its total loan portfolio and a noteworthy MSME Growth (YoY) of 41% in 2023. The Bank strongly advocates for social mobility, especially in empowering MSMEs and women across remote rural regions, offering tailored financial products and services. Mobilink Bank's pivotal loan offerings are pivotal in bringing about positive transformations within communities nationwide. In a dedicated effort to address the gender-specific impacts of natural disasters driven by climate change, the Bank has allocated PKR 1.7 billion to climate financing. Additionally, the Bank's strong commitment to environmentally sustainable practices is evident, with 10% of its branches successfully transitioning to solar power, underscoring its dedication to green initiatives. Also contributing to the Bank's growth is its flagship program, Women Inspirational Network (WIN), which propelled Mobilink Bank to the top of State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) 'Banking on Equality' Index.

### President FPCCI entrusted the charge of Chairman FPCCI Capital Office

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: Mr. Atif Ikram President FPCCI has entrusted the charge of Chairman FPCCI Capital Office, Islamabad to Mr. Karim Aziz Malik, former Vice President FPCCI & CEO Barkat Rice Mills (PVT) Islamabad, who has taken over the charge of his office today. Mr. Karim Aziz Malik expressed that the election of FPCCI has now over and the entire business community of Pakistan will be united under one roof of FPCCI without any grouping for the revival of Pakistan's economy. On the occasion, Special Prayers were held for the solidarity, Safety and Security of Pakistan and economic revival and progress of the country. He stressed on need of aggressive and untiring sincere efforts to bring out the country from the existing economic crises. The new Chairman of FPCCI Capital Office, Islamabad expressed his gratitude and congratulated the newly elected President FPCCI Mr. Atif Ikram and the Senior Vice President Mr. Saqib Fayaz Maggon and other Vice Presidents. He appreciated the efforts of the business leaders of United Business Group (UBG) SM Tanvir, Zafar Bakhtawari, Mian Akram Farid, Zubair Tufail, Khalid Javeed, Mian Shokat Masood, Amir Waheed, Sohail Malik.

### PSX witnesses bullish trend, gains 2,210 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Monday, gaining 2,210.74 points, a positive change of 3.54 percent, closing at 64,661.78 points against 62,451.04 points the previous trading day. A total of 625,147,050 shares valuing Rs.18.525 billion were traded during the day as compared to 590,592,624 shares valuing Rs.16.844 billion the last day. Some 380 companies transacted their shares in



SIALKOT: People busy in selecting and purchasing old warm clothes from roadside vendor.

### LCCI starts membership renewal for 2024-25

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) has started renewal of memberships for the year 2024-25 and bills have been issued to more than 37,000 members. For the renewal of membership, proof of income tax return filing for the financial year 2022-23 will be mandatory. Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Kashif Anwar here Monday appealed to the LCCI members to get their memberships renewed for the year 2024-25 as soon as possible to avoid rush and other problems. He said that it is very important for the members to get their renewals done as the LCCI certificate is a very important document along with other commercial documents to carry on business activities. The LCCI President emphasized that the members should get their memberships renewed well before the last date which is March 31, 2024, to save their precious time and efforts.

### Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity reported at the Port where seven ships namely, MSC Diego, MSC United-VIII, Ocean Gracioso, Leila Confidence, Sunary, Al-Bidda and Ullswater scheduled to load/offload Container, Rice, Palm oil, Gas oil, LNG and LPG berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Oil Terminal, Elengy Terminal and Sui Southern Terminal respectively on Sunday. Meanwhile two more ships, Turan-C and Luna Rossa also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim during last 24 hours to load/unload Rice and Wheat respectively. A total of thirteen ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a containership "MSC United-VIII" left the port on today morning and four more ships, MSC Diego, African Hornbill, Velos Libra and Sunary are expected to sail on same day. Cargo volume of 203,776 tonnes, comprising 150,991 tonnes imports cargo and 52,785 tonnes export cargo.

## Pakistan signs agreements with int'l companies to boost employment opportunities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan signed over a dozen agreements with Saudi and international companies that were executed during the recent expo in Saudi Arabia to boost employment opportunities abroad for the Pakistani workforce. Pakistan, through its Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HRD), participated for the first time in the International Human Resources Expo in Riyadh last year from December 24 to 27, 2023. An official source told APP here on Monday, he said that the agreements would open doors for the Pakistani workforce in various sectors such as construction, hospitality, information technology, services industry and various other fields globally. To a question, he said that the Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC), which is part of the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, was also present at the expo through its Managing Director Naseer Khan Kashani. Other dignitaries at the expo included Pakistan's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Ahmad Farooq and representatives of multinational organizations. Underlining the importance of the expo, he stated that the expo served as a pivotal forum, bringing together human resources and recruitment companies alongside reliable and accredited labour services entities. It provided an opportunity for Pakistan to engage with the global community, understand international market needs, and "tailor our skills to meet the evolving demands of the job market", he added. It also presented a unique opportunity for Pakistan to exhibit the capabilities and potential of its labour force.



QUETTA: Chairman All Pakistan Mazdoor Goods Transport Mir Nawab Mengal addressing a press conference.

### Pak earns \$372.930m by exporting transport services in 4 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan earned US \$372.930 million by providing different transport services in various countries during the first four months of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. This shows an increase of 26.01 percent as compared to \$295.959 million earned through the provision of services during the corresponding months of the fiscal year (2022-23), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. During the months under review, the exports of sea transport services witnessed an increase of 120.49 percent, going up from \$65.700 million last year to \$144.860 million during the months under review. Among the sea transport services, the exports of freight services dipped by 62.56 percent from \$53.370 million last year to \$19.980 million whereas the exports of other sea transport services however increased by 912.81 percent from \$12.330 million to \$124.880 million current year, the PBS data revealed. The exports of air transport witnessed a nominal decline of 1.95 percent going down from \$222.779 million last year to \$218.440 million during July-October 2023. Among the air transport services, the exports of passenger services increased by 3.57 percent, from \$144.650 million, whereas the exports of freight services dipped by 32.51 percent, from \$11.350 million to \$7.660 million, in addition, the export of other air transport services also dipped by 8.70 percent from \$66.779 million to \$60.790 million. Meanwhile, the exports of road transport services during the months under review witnessed a growth of 70.15 percent going up from \$4.590 million to \$7.810 million.

### CPI inflation recorded at 29.7% in December

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation increased to 29.7 per cent during December 2023 as compared to the same month of last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Monday. The inflation had increased to 29.2 per cent during last month (November) whereas it was recorded at 24.5 per cent during December 2022, according to the PBS data. On a month-on-month basis, the inflation increased to 0.8 per cent in December 2023 as compared to an increase of 2.7 per cent in the previous month and an increase of 0.5 per cent in December 2022. The urban CPI inflation increased to 30.9 per cent on a year-on-year (YoY) basis in December 2023 as compared to an increase of 30.4 per cent in the previous month and 21.6 per cent in December 2022. On a month-on-month (MoM) basis, it increased to 0.7 per cent in

## Crackdown against illegal stockists, traders and distributors

**Independent Report**  
KARACHI: Under the steadfast directives of Ms. Ismat Gul Khattak, Director General, Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA), the team of PSQCA cracked down against illegal stock of Non-License Products of Forvil Cosmetic Products. The operation was prompted by complaints received by the Economic Journalist Forum, highlighting concerns about the quality of Forvil Cosmetics Products in the market. The Team was headed by Mr. Sajid Mian Bhutto Dy. Director (CAK), PSQCA. The crackdown launched on directions of Director, Conformity Assessment (South Zone), PSQCA Karachi against illegal stockists/distributors/traders. The Inspectors of the Authority targeted and investigated several stockists, distributors, and traders, seizing substantial quantities of Forvil products in which 1: M/s. M.K. Enterprises, North Nazimabad, Karachi, and found substantial stock of un-license different brands Bio Amla Shampoo, Bio Amla Schet, Prama Hair Color (Black & Brown), Bio 7 Day Cream, Bio Nikhar Cream Jar and Bio Nikhar Tube stocks and seized at the spot. During the crackdown M/s. 3B Traders, Chanti Line, Karachi, found to keep the substantial stock of Bio Amla Shampoo and Bio SD Shampoo stocks and seized at the spot. M/s. Qadri Traders, Main Joria Bazar, Karachi found to keep the substantial stock of Seven Day Cream, Bio Amla Shampoo and Bio Amla Shampoo Sachet stocks and seized at the spot. M/s. A.A. Traders, Medicine Market, Karachi also found to keep the substantial stock of Bio Amla Shampoo and Bio Amla Shampoo Sachet stocks and seized at the spot.

### SRB tax collection registers 35% growth in first half of FY 2023-24

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Revenue Board (SRB) collected taxes amounting to Rs 108.6 billion from July 23 to December 2023 depicting 35% growth over the corresponding period of the previous year. According to a statement issued here on Monday, tax collection by the Sindh Revenue Board in the first six months of the financial year 2022-23 remained at Rs 80.2 billion. During December 2023, SRB made a record revenue collection of Rs 21.3 billion as compared to Rs 17.5 billion collected during December 2022, depicting a growth of 22%. The success in achieving the phenomenal revenue growth during the period under review was attributed to the continued trust and cooperation of SRB taxpayers, the continuous support by the government of Sindh and the relentless efforts of SRB officers and staff, said a SRB spokesperson. Sindh Revenue Board is focused on achieving the assigned revenue target of Rs 235 billion for the current financial year 2023-24 despite all the adverse factors affecting the national economy, he added.



HYDERABAD: Women workers busy packing fresh tomatoes in wooden crates at New Sabzi Mandi.

### DC for sale of fertilizers at fixed prices

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bahawalpur Zaheer Anwar Jappa has said that fertilizer sale should be ensured at a fixed rate and the supply of fertilizer in the markets should also be improved. He was presiding over a meeting at his office here on Monday. He said that legal action would be taken against those dealers who sell fertilizer at more than the fixed rate and agencies of such dealers would be sealed. Deputy Director of Agriculture (Extension) Hafiz Muhammad Shafiq, Assistant Director of Agriculture Extension of the district, and representatives of the dealers association were present in the meeting. Deputy Director of Agriculture (Extension) Hafiz Muhammad Shafiq briefed about wheat cultivation and fertilizer demand. The Deputy Commissioner said that the dealership of those dealers who sell fertilizer.

### FCCI must present viable suggestions for new industrial policy: NPO Chief

FAISALABAD (APP): The Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) must present viable suggestions for new industrial policy in addition to submitting proper applications to get the facility of APO / NPO experts or conducting study missions to follow best practices in their relevant sectors, said Mr. Muhammad Alamgir Chaudhry, Chief Executive Officer, National Productivity Organization (NPO). In a meeting with Dr Sajjad Arshad, Acting President FCCI, he said that the NPO would provide printed material in soft form regarding industrial facilities offered by the organization for dissemination among the industrial community. He stressed the need for value addition in agriculture products and quoted his recent visit to Thailand which had excelled in dehydration of fruits and vegetables. He said that Thailand was importing frozen strawberries to prepare its chips along with potato chips for export purposes. He said that NPO was organizing workshops regarding this facility at the provincial level for the information and awareness of local farmers. In this connection, a workshop could also be arranged at Faisalabad, he added. He said that post-harvest losses had been estimated around 35-40% which could be controlled through value addition and developing the processing industry. He said that the value of Rs.10 per kg of tomatoes could be enhanced to Rs.250 through value addition. He also quoted the example of apricot of Hunza which was sold at Rs.200/- per kg.



## Fighting rages in Gaza as Israel looks at new phase of war

Monitoring Desk

CAIRO/ JERUSALEM/ GAZA: Israel pulled tanks out of some Gaza City districts on Monday, residents said, as it announced plans to shift tactics and cut back on troop numbers, but fighting raged elsewhere in the Palestinian enclave along with intense bombardment.

Israel says the war in Gaza, which has reduced much of the territory to rubble, killing thousands and plunging its 2.3 million people into a humanitarian disaster, has many months to go.

But Israel has signalled a coming news phase in its offensive, with an official saying on Monday that the military would draw down forces inside Gaza this month and shift to a months-long phase of more localised "mopping up" operations.

The official said the troop reduction would allow some reservists to return to civilian life, shoring up Israel's war-battered economy, and free up units in case of a wider conflict in the north with Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah.

Artillery fire between Hezbollah and Israel has rattled the border since the start of the Gaza conflict, with Israel's military saying it carried out an air strike on Monday, and

any new escalation carries risks for a wider regional war.

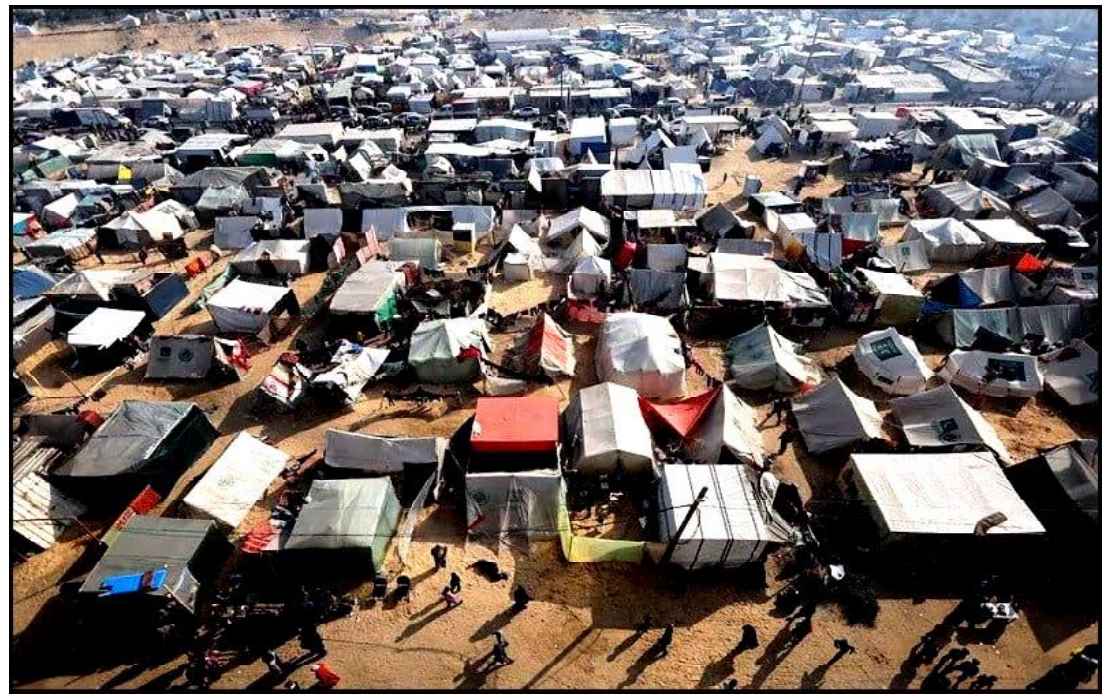
Tehran-backed fighters in Yemen have attacked Red Sea shipping, drawing a US military response, and an Iranian warship has sailed into the waterway, Iranian media reported on Monday.

The Gaza war was triggered by a surprise Hamas attack on Israeli towns on Oct. 7 that Israel says killed 1,200 people. Palestinian health authorities in Hamas-run Gaza say Israel's offensive there has killed more than 21,978 people.

The scale of suffering in Gaza, where the bombardment has driven almost all inhabitants from their homes, has led Israel's Western allies, including the US, to urge it to scale down its offensive.

"My wish for 2024 is not to die... Our childhood is gone. There is no bathroom, no food and no water. Only tents. There is nowhere safe. There is nothing. Our wish is to go back to our homes and end this," 11-year-old Layan Harara said in Gaza's Rafah.

Residents of Sheikh Radwan district in Gaza City, in the northern part of the enclave that Israel's offensive focused on first, said tanks had withdrawn after what they described as the most intense 10 days of warfare since the conflict began.



Displaced Palestinians, who fled their homes due to Israeli strikes, shelter in a tent camp, in Rafah, southern Gaza Strip



Road cracks caused by an earthquake is seen in Wajima, Ishikawa prefecture, Japan

## China's Xi terms Taiwan reunification 'inevitable'

Monitoring Desk

BEIJING: China's "reunification" with Taiwan is inevitable, President Xi Jinping said in his New Year's address striking a stronger tone than he did last year with less than two weeks to go before the Chinese-claimed island elects a new leader. The Jan. 13 presidential and parliamentary elections come at a time of fraught relations between Beijing and Taipei, as China has been ramping up military pressure to assert its sovereignty claims over Taiwan.

China considers Taiwan to be its "sacred territory" and has never renounced the use of force to bring it under Chinese control, though Xi made no mention of military threats in his speech carried on state television.

"The reunification of the motherland is a historical inevitability," Xi said, though the official English translation of his remarks published by the Xinhua news agency used a more simple phrase: "China will surely be reunified."

"Compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Strait should be bound by a common sense of purpose and share in the glory of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation," he added. The official English translation

## UN mission in Mali completes its withdrawal

Monitoring Desk

NEW YORK: The UN peacekeeping mission in Mali, MINUSMA, is poised to complete its withdrawal from the country on Sunday, the United Nations said in a statement.

Security experts warn the area could now become the focus of a struggle in the north as rebel groups and the army seek to take areas that the UN has left, further destabilising Mali, where fighters linked to Al Qaeda and the militant Islamic State group also roam. Violence in Mali has spiked since June when the military junta which took power in a 2021 coup ordered the UN's decade-old peacekeeping mission to leave. The UN said only a small team will stay behind to oversee the transportation of assets and disposal of UN-owned equipment.

"UN funds, agencies and programmes were in Mali well before the deployment of MINUSMA and will stay in Mali well after the withdrawal," MINUSMA chief El-Ghassum Wane said.

The peacekeeping mission in Mali was launched in 2013 following a violent insurrection by separatist rebels attempting to take control of the north of the country and a subsequent military-led coup.

## Massive earthquake slams Japan, residents flee some coastal areas

Monitoring Desk

TOKYO: A powerful earthquake struck central Japan on Monday, triggering warnings for residents to evacuate some areas on its west coast, destroying buildings, knocking out power to thousands of homes and disrupting travel to the region.

The quake with a preliminary magnitude of 7.6 triggered waves of around 1 metre along parts of the Sea of Japan coast, with authorities saying larger waves could follow.

The Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) issued tsunami warnings for the coastal prefectures of Ishikawa, Niigata and Toyama. A major tsunami warning - the first since the

March 2011 earthquake and tsunami that struck north-eastern Japan - was initially issued for Ishikawa but later downgraded. Russia also issued tsunami warnings in its far eastern cities of Vladivostok and Nakhodka.

Several houses have been destroyed and army units have been dispatched to help with rescue operations, top government spokesman Yoshimasa Hayashi told reporters, adding that authorities were still assessing the extent of the damage. More strong quakes in the area, where seismic activity has been simmering for more than three years, could occur over coming days, JMA official Toshihiro Shimoyama said.

## US senators criticise unilateral arms transfers to Israel

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: US lawmakers have expressed concern over the Biden administration's decision to transfer weapons to Israel without congressional oversight, urging Washington to review its policies towards the Middle East.

Senator Tim Kaine, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee, said in a statement on Saturday that Congress should not be prevented from playing its supervisory role in matters of war and peace, and demanded full visibility into weapons transfers to any nation. "Just as Congress has a crucial role to play in all matters of war and peace, Congress should have full visibility over the weapons we transfer to any other nation," he said. "Unnecessarily bypassing Congress means keeping the American people in the dark. We need a public explanation of the rationale

behind this decision — the second such decision this month." Senator Chris Van Hollen, a Maryland Democrat, echoed Kaine's sentiments, criticising the administration's repeated bypassing of congressional review in arms sales. Van Hollen argued that this decision undermines transparency and weakens accountability, especially given the already quick time frame for congressional review.

Kaine is a vocal advocate for a deliberate congressional process in decisions related to war and peace. Earlier this year, the Senate voted to pass Kaine's bipartisan legislation to repeal the 1991 and 2002 Authorisations of Military Force, formally ending the Gulf and Iraq wars.

The senators' critique reflects broader concerns within the Senate Democratic caucus regarding the Biden administration's approach to arms sales without adequate congressional scrutiny.

## Denmark's Queen Margrethe II announces surprise abdication on live TV

Monitoring Desk

COPENHAGEN: Denmark's Queen Margrethe II, Europe's longest-serving monarch, will abdicate on Jan. 14 after 52 years on the throne and will be succeeded by her eldest son Crown Prince Frederik, she announced on Sunday. The 83-year-old queen, who ascended the throne in 1972, made the surprise announcement on live TV during her traditional New Year's Eve speech, which is viewed by many in the country of 5.9 million people. Referring to a successful back operation she underwent in February, she said, "The surgery naturally gave rise to thinking about the future - whether the time had come to leave the responsibility to the next generation."

The queen became the longest-serving monarch in Europe following the death of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II in September 2022. In July, she became the longest-sitting monarch in Denmark's history.

In Denmark, formal power resides with the elected parliament and its government. The monarch is expected to stay above partisan politics, representing the nation with traditional duties ranging from state visits to national day celebrations.

## IAF crash history: 534 incidents, 152 pilots lost in 30 years: report

NEW DELHI (INP): The Indian Air Force (IAF) has grappled with a concerning trend of air accidents, totalling 534 incidents, resulting in the tragic loss of 152 Indian pilots in the last three decades, says a report.

Over the past five years alone, 45 accidents claimed the lives of 42 pilots, shedding light on the persistent challenges faced by India's aviation sector.

Preliminary investigations point towards a combination of factors contributing to these incidents,

with pilot negligence and concerns over the quality of machinery emerging as significant issues.

Back in 2012, the then Indian defence minister informed parliament about the alarming situation, revealing that more than half of India's MiG-21 fleet had been lost to accidents.

The gravity of the situation came to the forefront in December 2021, when an Indian helicopter crashed, resulting in killing of 13 military officers, including general Bipin Rawat.

## Ukraine's Zelensky vows to wreak 'wrath' against Russia in 2024

Monitoring Desk

KYIV, Ukraine (AFP/APP): President Volodymyr Zelensky vowed to wreak "wrath" against Russian forces in 2024, hours before Ukraine saw attacks on the first day of the year.

Russia and Ukraine have seen an escalation in strikes in recent days, including an unprecedented assault on the Russian city of Belgorod that killed 24 people on Saturday.

The attack came a day after Moscow launched a barrage of missiles and drones at Ukrainian cities, killing 39 people in one of the biggest aerial attacks since the war began.

January 1 is a day of mourning in Ukraine's capital Kyiv, where 19 people had been killed, city officials said.

Just hours after midnight on New Year's Day, the Russian-installed head of the occupied Donetsk region said four people had

been killed and 13 wounded in "massive shelling" from rockets on its main city.

In Ukraine's southern Odesa region, governor Oleg Kiper said one person died in a Russian drone attack, and three others were wounded.

And in western Ukraine's Lviv region, air defence systems shot down Russian drones in Monday's early hours, according to governor Maksym Kozlytskiy. Zelensky's televised New Year's address featured clips of Ukrainian artillery and fighter jets.

"Next year, the enemy will feel the wrath of domestic production," Zelensky said. Ukraine will have at least "a million" additional drones in its arsenal next year, Zelensky added, as well as F-16 fighter jets delivered by its Western partners. "Our pilots are already mastering F-16 jets, and we will definitely see them in our skies," he said.

Despite billions of dollars worth of Western weapons, Ukraine struggled to make a major breakthrough in its 2023 counteroffensive against invading Russian forces.

Moscow has meanwhile ramped up pressure along the frontlines, capturing the eastern town of Marinka earlier in December and pushing for control of Kupiansk in the northeast.

Ukraine is urging Western allies to maintain military support. Britain announced it would send hundreds more air-defence missiles to Kyiv, after Prime Minister Rishi Sunak declared: "We must continue to stand with Ukraine—for as long as it takes."

Zelensky's counterpart President Vladimir Putin did not mention Ukraine in his traditional New Year's Eve address on Sunday, but praised Russia's soldiers on the front line and called for unity in the face of "difficult tasks".

## Nobel winner Yunus convicted in Bangladesh labour law case

Monitoring Desk

DHAKA: Nobel peace laureate Muhammad Yunus was convicted on Monday of violating Bangladesh's labour laws in a case decried by his supporters as politically motivated.

Yunus, 83, is credited with lifting millions out of poverty with his pioneering



microfinance bank but has earned the enmity of longtime Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who has accused him of "sucking blood" from the poor.

Hasina has made several scathing verbal attacks against the internationally respected 2006 Nobel Peace Prize winner, who was once seen as a political rival.

Yunus and three colleagues from Grameen Telecom, one of the firms he founded, were accused of violating labour laws when they failed to create a workers' welfare fund in the company.

A labour court in the capital Dhaka convicted and sentenced them to "six months' simple imprisonment", lead prosecutor Khurshid Alam Khan told AFP, adding that all four were immediately granted bail pending appeals.

## Italy confines Ocean Viking migrant rescue ship for 20 days

PARIS (INP): Italian authorities have detained the Ocean Viking migrant rescue vessel for 20 days over its alleged failure to follow a prescribed route after rescuing dozens of people off the Libyan coast, the ship's operator said Sunday.

"Ocean Viking is detained under the 'Piantadosi Decree-Law' for the second time in two months, punishing humanitarian rescuers for carrying out the lifesaving work that European States fail to do in the central Mediterranean," SOS Mediterranean, based in the French city of Marseille, said on X.

It said the ship had been ordered to return directly to the Italian port of Bari after picking up 244 people in three rescue operations, including 18 unaccompanied minors and four children under the age of four.

But as it was heading for Bari the Ocean Viking received an alert of at least 70 migrants needing help around 15 nautical miles (28 kilometres) from its position, though in fact the skiff was around 60 nautical miles away, of international law," SOS Mediterranean told reporters.

## Kim tells army to 'annihilate' South Korea, US if they initiate conflict

PYONGYANG (INP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un told his top military officers to use maximum force against South Korea and the United States if they initiate a military confrontation, state media reported Monday.

Seoul and Washington have ramped up defence cooperation in the face of a record-breaking series of weapons tests by Pyongyang over the past year.

At a meeting with North Korea's major commanding officers in Pyongyang on New Year's Eve, Kim said his military should "annihilate" the enemy if provoked, the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported.

"If the enemy opt for military confrontation and provocation against the DPRK, our army should deal a deadly blow to thoroughly annihilate them by mobilizing all the toughest means and potentialities without moment's hesitation," Kim said.

Kim's comments echo his threats made during year-end party meetings of a nuclear attack on Seoul and orders for a military arsenal build-up to prepare for a war that he said could "break out any time" on the peninsula.

During the meetings to set the policy agenda for 2024, the North Korean leader accused the United States of posing "various forms of military threat".

He also called on armed forces to "suppress the whole territory of south Korea mobilizing all physical means... including nuclear forces" in case of a "great event", referring to an armed conflict.

Kim told the meeting he would no longer seek reconciliation and reunification with South Korea, noting the "uncontrollable crisis" that he said was triggered by Seoul and Washington.

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol vowed Monday to keep Pyongyang's military provocations at bay with a joint extended deterrence system with Washington, scheduled for the first half of 2024.

The deterrence system will "fundamentally deter any North Korean nuclear and missile threat", Yoon said in his New Year's Day address. In 2023, Pyongyang successfully launched a reconnaissance satellite, enshrined its status as a nuclear power in its constitution and tested the most advanced intercontinental ballistic missile in its arsenal.

## Iranian warship Alborz enters the Red Sea

Monitoring Desk

DUBAI: Iran's Alborz warship has entered the Red Sea, the semi-official Tasnim news agency reported on Monday, at a time of soaring tensions on the key shipping route amid the Israel-Hamas war and attacks on vessels by forces allied to Tehran.

Tasnim did not give details of the Alborz's mission but said Iranian warships had been operating in open waters to secure shipping routes, combat piracy and carry out other tasks since 2009.

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis have been targeting vessels in the Red Sea since November to show

major shipping companies have switched to the longer and more costly route around the Africa's Cape of Good Hope rather than pass through the Suez Canal, which handles about 12% of global trade.

The Alborz warship entered the Red Sea via the Bab al-Mandab Strait, Tasnim said, without saying when. There were unconfirmed reports on social media it arrived late on Saturday.

The Alvand class destroyer had been a part of the Iranian navy's 34th fleet, alongside the Bushehr support vessel, and patrolled the Gulf of Aden, the north of the Indian

said it could not speak for the Iranian Navy or comment on the unconfirmed reports of the Iranian vessel's movements.

Houthi militants attacked a Maersk (MAERSKb.CO) container vessel with missiles and small boats on Saturday and Sunday, prompting the company to pause all sailing through the Red Sea for 48 hours.

The head of Iran's Navy, Shahram Irani, was quoted in Iranian media on Dec. 2 saying that the Alborz was carrying out missions in the Red Sea.

Iran's Defence Minister, Mohammad Reza

Ashtiani, said on Dec. 14 in reference to the Red Sea that "nobody can make a move in a region where we have predominance".

The U.S. Fifth Fleet



their support for the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas in its war with Israel.

In response, many ma-





LAHORE: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar receives briefing about the overall working and current progress of the Business Facilitation Center.

## For participants to exchange best practices Exercise BARRACUDA-XII valuable platform: CNS

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Naveed Ashraf, on Monday said the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) through Exercise BARRACUDA-XII would afford a valuable platform for the participants to exchange best practices, share experiences and learn from each other.

In his message at the commencement of Exercise BARRACUDA-XII, the Naval Chief said oceans played a vital role in providing sustenance, livelihood, regulating climate patterns and nurturing unparalleled biodiversity.

As a responsible member of global maritime fraternity, Pakistan had fostered collaboration with re-

gional countries and engaged in global partnerships to safeguard marine conservation initiatives, he said.

The Naval Chief added that as part of its commitment to the international maritime regulatory framework, Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA), being sole maritime law enforcement agency in the country, ensured safety of life at sea and preserved nation's marine resources.

Pakistan Navy, being the premier stakeholder of national maritime defence, extended all out support to PMSA and augmented Maritime Domain Awareness for preservation of sea-based resources and enduring ecological balance, he

said. In the mix of contemporary maritime challenges, environmental complexities have added another layer to maritime security.

These challenges not only jeopardized marine biodiversity but also had cascading effects on global climate patterns and livelihood of coastal communities. Among these environmental challenges, the looming specter of oil spills posed a critical concern and necessitated the coordinated response by international and national stakeholders. In pursuit of these objectives, Pakistan Navy & PMSA had embarked on conducting the international series of exercises code named 'BARRACUDA' under the overall ambit.



QUETTA: Hazara Democratic Party Chairman and Constituency PB-42 candidate, Abdul Khaliq talking to the media persons during press conference outside the Hazara High Court.

## PML-N unveils an economic revitalization plan for 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Khawaja Muhammad Asif has outlined a comprehensive strategy to address the pressing economic challenges facing the nation in 2024.

Talking to a Private news channel, the PML-N leader expressed confidence in the party's ability to lead the charge in improving the country's economic landscape. Emphasizing that economic stability takes precedence over political consolidation; Asif highlighted the urgency of reviving Pakistan's economy as a top priority for the nation.

As part of their proposed solution, PML-N plans to enhance tax collection mechanisms, tackle energy-related issues, and eradicate corruption through systemic reforms. By undertaking these mea-

sures, the party aims to obviate the need for external financial assistance, asserting that the first step is to set their own house in order. Asif addressed the lingering impacts of the past four to five years, stating that the nation is still reeling from the aftermath.

He stressed the need to rebuild the state's foundations, emphasizing that PML-N is poised to take the helm in this reconstruction effort.

Asserting that there is no magic switch to remedy the country's woes, Asif stated that meticulous attention is required to rectify the situation comprehensively.

He contended that by rejuvenating the state apparatus and addressing the root causes of economic challenges, the nation can overcome its current predicaments and pave the way for success.

## Shehbaz summoned by commission probing Faizabad sit-in

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former prime minister and President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Shehbaz Sharif was summoned by commission probing Faizabad sit-in on Monday.

According to details, Shehbaz Sharif has been summoned by the Faizabad probe commission as the then-Punjab chief minister.

The PML-N President has been asked to appear before the probe commission on January 3 to record his statement. It should be men-

tioned here that the government formed a new commission to probe the Faizabad sit-in after report of the fact-finding committee was rejected. Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, former Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Lt. General (retired) Faiz Hameed and others have already been summoned by the commission for recording of their statements. On November 08, 2017, Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan (TLP) had organized a sit-in at Faizabad interchange against the amendments.



QUETTA: Provincial President PkMAP and nominated candidate of PB-41 Abdul Qahar Khan Wadan addressing a corner meeting

## 36 projects completed so far under CPEC: Senate informed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saeed on Monday said that 36 projects with a cumulative value of 24 billion dollars have been successfully completed under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Additionally, 22 projects with a total investment of five billion dollars are currently under construction, he said while concluding a debate on motion under rule 218 in Senate, focusing on the underdevelopment of Balochistan despite the claims of succes-

sive governments to promote the region's growth through CPEC and other Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) projects.

Providing further insights in CPEC at the national level, the minister informed the House that negotiations are underway for 26 projects, totalling 27 billion dollars under the CPEC framework. Furthermore, 27 other projects dedicated to the social and economic development of Balochistan are actively under implementation.

Sami Saeed highlighted the significant allocation for Balochistan in the Public Sector Development Pro-

gram (PSDP), emphasizing that the province has received a higher share compared to other regions in recent years. For the current year, the PSDP stands at Rs. 950 billion, out of which 400 billion is allocated to national projects. Specifically, 15 percent of the program is dedicated to Balochistan, with an additional 14 percent for province-specific projects. This totals to one-third of the PSDP, amounting to 285 billion rupees, earmarked for projects related to connectivity, roads, and water, including the implementation of various dam projects.

The development of Gwadar city and Gwadar port remains a central focus of CPEC, as the minister outlined the completion of 36 projects worth 24 billion dollars and the ongoing construction of 22 projects with a budget of five billion dollars. Additionally, 26 projects, valued at 27 billion dollars, are under negotiation within the CPEC framework, while 27 other projects aimed at Balochistan's social and economic development are actively underway. Providing specific updates on Gwadar, Sami Saeed stated that significant milestones, such as the completion of the master plan for Gwadar,

## Pakistan condemns ban on Tehreek-e-Hurriyat Party in IIOJK

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan condemns the Indian authorities' decision to declare the Tehreek-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir (TeH) as an "unlawful association", for a period of five years. The TeH is the second Kashmiri party banned under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) in less than a week's time.

With its banning, the total number of outlawed Kashmiri political parties increases to six. The party was founded by iconic Kashmiri leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, who passed away in 2021 during a protracted house arrest. His dead body was ruthlessly snatched by the occupation authorities, and his near and

dear ones were not allowed to attend his funeral. Banning of political parties is part of India's relentless campaign to subjugate the Kashmiri people, suppress dissent, and consolidate its occupation of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). These actions blatantly violate democratic norms and international human rights and humanitarian law.

India must remove the ban on all the political parties illegally outlawed in IIOJK; respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Kashmiri people; release all the political prisoners and dissenters; and faithfully implement the UN Security Council resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir.

## ECP plans to establish over 92,500 polling stations for General Elections

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has planned to establish over 92,500 polling stations nationwide, with the official polling scheme to be revealed 15 days before the scheduled February 8 general elections.

For the upcoming general elections, it has been determined that Punjab will have 51,821 polling stations across 438 national and

provincial constituencies, while Sindh will have 19,236 polling stations for its 191 seats.

For the election of 66 seats in Balochistan, 5,015 polling stations will be set up, and for the 160 seats in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 15,737 polling stations will be established. Additionally, 990 polling stations will be set up for three constituencies in Islamabad.

## RO issues written order on rejection of nomination papers of Sheikh, nephew

RAWALPINDI (Online): Syed Nazarat Ali Returning Officer (RO) of NA-56 (Rawalpindi-v) has issued written order on rejection of nomination papers of former interior minister Sheikh Rashid and his nephew. In the decision the two have been declared defaulter and guilty of concealing assets.



QUETTA: Caretaker Home Minister Captain (ret) Muhammad Zubair Khan Jamali inaugurating Pak-Afghan-Iran Corridor Management System.

## Jail trial of Fawad in contempt of EC case: EC, respondents put on notice

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued notice to respondents including Election Commission (EC) on the petition filed by Fawad Chaudhry against his jail trial in Contempt of EC case besides seeking replies from them.

The court also issued notice to jail administration on harassing female lawyer. A single bench of IHC led by Justice Saman Rafat Imtiaz heard the case.

Faisal Chaudhry appeared in the court on behalf of Fawad Chaudhry.

He took the plea that Jail trial by EC in contempt of EC case runs contrary to the law. EC is not authorized to hold jail trial in contempt of EC case.

He said jail trial of his client is also being conducted due to jail trial of PPTI founder.

The female lawyer was harassed by jail administration in previous hearing.

The court summoned reply from the respondents.

## JUI's election campaign office inaugurated in Chaman District

**Independent Report**  
CHAMAN: The election campaign office of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) was established in border town Chaman on Monday.

The Ameer of JUI Chaman district, Maulana Abdul Rahim Mazhari inaugurated the election office of the Jamiat located on College road.

The Ameer of JUI Maulana Abdul Mannan presided over the ceremony.

Also present on the occasion were the central finance secretary of Jamiat and candidate for National

Assembly, Maulana Salahuddin Ayubi, provincial finance secretary and candidate for Provincial Assembly, Ghousullah Achakzai, Maulana Hafiz Gul, Maulana Muhammad Ayub, Maulana Khair Muhammad, besides other leaders and large number of workers.

Addressing the inauguration of election campaign of JUI, the speakers urged the workers to spread the message of Jamiat at every door.

They said that the JUI always remain at the forefront to serve the masses.

## JUI (N) leaders say Strengthening of democratic system connected to transparency in election

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: Rejection of nomination papers filed for election-2024 without any solid justification was undemocratic and unconstitutional act which was a question mark on the transparency of election.

It was stated by central Naib Ameer, Markazi Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Nazriyati, Moulana Abdul Qadir Luni, central General Secretary, Moulana Ahmed Ali Sani, central Deputy General Secretary, Muffi Shafi-ud-Din, central patron-in-Chief, Moulana Ajmal Qadri, central Naib Ameer, Moulana Abdul Rauf, Najeem Khan Advocate, central Joint Secretary, Moulana Mehmood-ul-Hassan Qasimi, Naib Ameer, Moulana Aziz Ahmed Shah Amroti and central Secretary Informa-

tion, Syed Haji Abdul Sattar Shah Chisti in a joint statement issued here on Monday.

They said rather than the rule of law, there was the rule of might in the country, adding that instead of learning lessons from the mistakes of past, mistakes were being repeated.

They said equal opportunity be provided to all the political parties to take part in the election, adding that undue interference in the election and favouring dear ones had always made the election controversial in the country.

They said strengthening of democratic system was connected to transparency in election, but unbecomingly the ego and unserious behaviour of political parties had caused irreparable damage to the country.

## ANF foils major bid of smuggling of huge quantity of narcotics

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) foiled major attempt of smuggling of narcotics from different parts of the province.

According to the spokesman of ANF, the crackdown against smuggling of narcotics was carried out in different areas of the province.

In the operation conducted in Maizai addah area of Killa Abdullah, 1460 kilograms of charas and 215 kilograms of heroin were recovered. Similarly, 690 kilograms of charas was recovered from two different areas of Pishin while 300 kilograms of charas was recovered from Toba Achakzai of Chaman.

Ministry for crackdown against individuals implicated in passport, visa scam

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Interior Ministry has underscored the imperative to crackdown on individuals implicated in the counterfeit passport and visa scam, aiming to enhance transparency in visa and passport procedures. This commitment was reaffirmed during a meeting on Integrated Border Management System Version 2, chaired by the Interior Secretary on Monday, said a press release. The directives were issued to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and the passport office.

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Interior Ministry has underscored the imperative to crackdown on individuals implicated in the counterfeit passport and visa scam, aiming to enhance transparency in visa and passport procedures. This commitment was reaffirmed during a meeting on Integrated Border Management System Version 2, chaired by the Interior Secretary on Monday, said a press release. The directives were issued to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and the passport office.

## PEC savs: Training of 52,234 polling staff continues in different phases all over Balochistan

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The training of polling staff is continued for conducting general elections in Balochistan.

According to the Provincial Election Commissioner, Ejaz Anwar Chohan, the training of 52,234 polling staff is being conducted all over the province in different phases.

The polling staff includes Senior Presiding Officers, Presiding Officers, Assistant Presiding Officers and Polling Officers.

The PEC informed that there are 41,586 Assistant Presiding and Polling Officers being trained for the elections.

The training of polling staff would remain continued till January 11, 2024.

It may be mentioned here that the training of polling officers was started on December 25, 2023.

Moreover, the training of Presiding and Senior Presiding Officers would be conducted between January 13 to February 1, 2024.

## Senate informed NAVTTC empowers Balochistan youth with advanced skills

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Federal Education, Madad Ali Sindhi on Monday apprised the Senate that the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC) had successfully imparted advanced skills to numerous youth in Balochistan, with a commitment to sustaining such initiatives.

This announcement came during the conclusion of the debate on a motion under Rule 218, initiated by BAP Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri.

Minister Sindhi emphasized that NAVTTC was operating programs under the Prime Minister's package and it had implemented various programmes. Notably, 9,856 males and 9,210 females had already benefited

from these initiatives, receiving advanced skills to enhance their employability. The programmes, spanning six-month and three-month, had been launched, and their continuity was assured, fostering positive outcomes.

The motion was about the need to devise and launch technical training programmes for the youth of Balochistan to equip them with advanced skills to secure employment opportunities worldwide as well as in the proposed FDI projects in the province including CPEC projects, he added. Minister Sindhi acknowledged the recommendations put forth by Senators, assuring that these suggestions would be duly considered in the planning and execution of various programmes.



QUETTA: Quetta Metropolitan Corporation (QMC) Administrator, Jabbar Baloch in a meeting with Municipal Corporation Officers held at QMC.

## Indian troops martyred 120 Kashmiris in 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indian troops in their unabated acts of state terrorism martyred 120 innocent Kashmiris including four women and as many boys during the year 2023 in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). According to a report released by the Research Section of Kashmir Media Service (KMS), today, 41 of the martyrs were killed in fake encounters and custody. The Indian police also killed one Hindu in custody in Jourian police station in IIOJK and another Hindu was killed by Indian troops in Showara Khour Akhnour area of Jammu district.

The report said, the killings by the troops, paramilitary and police personnel rendered 18 women widowed and 58 children orphaned while 7 women

were molested, abused or disgraced by the Indian forces during the year. It said that Indian forces destroyed 13 residential houses and structures in the territory. The report pointed out that at least 107 persons were injured due to the use of brute force while 3,610 people, including Hurriyat leaders, activists, students, and women were arrested during house raids and cordon and search operations by Indian troops and police personnel in the territory. Many of those were arrested under black laws, Public Safety Act (PSA) and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). Among the detainees of the year include APhC leaders Bilal Siddiqui, Shabbir Ahmed Dar, Firdous Ahmed Shah, Jahangir Ghani Butt, Saleem Nanaji.