

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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www.dailyindependent.com.pk

Quetta

Ph: 2841470/2841473 REG: No. BC-116 B/ID-445 Vd XXV No. 145, Rajab 02, 1445 AH Sunday January 14, 2024 Pages 08, Price Rs.15

Elections 2024:

PTI loses its iconic 'bat' symbol again as SC annuls PHC verdict

CJP Isa-led three-member Supreme Court bench issues order on election commission's plea

Monitoring Desk
ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Saturday declared the Peshawar High Court (PHC) order null and void that reinstated "bat" as PTI's electoral symbol for the general elections.

The verdict was announced two hours beyond its scheduled time.

After hearing arguments from the counsels of both the PTI and the ECP the entire day today as well as yesterday, Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa remarked that he



will consult his co-judges before coming up with his observations.

"Both sides argued the case well. We will have a

discussion. Let's see what we come up with; can't say anything yet," the CJP added before the bench took a break.

A three-member bench — comprising the CJP, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Musarat Hilali — heard the ECP's petition challenging the PHC decision to restore the PTI's election symbol.

On December 22, the ECP had decided against letting PTI retain its electoral symbol for the general elections, saying that it had failed to hold intra-party polls as per its prevailing constitution and election laws.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan sent fourth consignment of humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza.



BAHAWALPURE: Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing during the public gathering at Hockey Stadium in City

PPP focuses on masses' issues instead of politics of hatred, division: Bilawal

MULTAN (APP): Chairman Pakistan People Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Saturday said that Pakistan People Party was committed to eradicate politics of hatred, division and partisanship as there were gigantic problems in the country and it wanted to address the issues to facilitate the masses.

He said this while talking to media persons at residence of Ex MNA Rana Mahmood ul Hassan.

Earlier, Ex MNA Rana Mahmood ul Hassan, former PML-N ticket holders Rana Iqbal Siraj and Rana Tahir Shabbir also announced to join PPP. They reposed complete confidence in the leadership of

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. Bilawal remarked that PPP would focus on issues like unemployment and inflation after coming to power. Highlighting PPP's manifesto, Bilawal observed that PPP would provide 300 free electricity units. Salaries would be doubled, Bilawal added. Similarly, PPP will introduce Benazir Kisan Card, Benazir Youth Card and Benazir Labourer Card to facilitate the masses, he said.

He recalled that Ex-Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani ensured matchless development work not only in Multan but across the south Punjab.

The PPP Chairman

stated that PPP was contesting election to solely serve the masses. However, the other parties are struggling to keep their leaders either away from prison or release from prison.

Responding to a query, he maintained that he was the only "Ladla" of masses. Bilawal also observed that PPP had started campaign however the other political parties did not initiate the campaign but watching toward some other quarters.

He criticized the PML-N and PTI leadership and stated that these parties were adamant on politics of revenge only. However, PPP was focusing on issues of the masses.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindi addressing on ceremony organized by minister for education and professional training in collaboration with National Heritage and Culture Division and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting a special event to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Sheikh Ayaz.

Sindhi lauds Shaikh Ayaz's contribution for democracy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister of Federal Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindi Saturday said that the contribution of great poet and writer Shaikh Ayaz in the democratic journey of Pakistan could not be ignored.

He was addressing a special event to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Shaikh Ayaz.

The event organized by the Education Ministry in collaboration with the National Heritage and Culture Division and the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, was also attended by federal ministers Murtaza Solangi and Jamal

Madad Ali Sindi said that Shaikh Ayaz's role in the intellectual awakening of the youth of country in general and those of Sindhi in particular could not be overlooked.

He said that intellectuals like Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Habib Jalib and Shaikh Ayaz had done great service for the country.

Shaikh Ayaz continued his service to the people of Sindhi and Pakistan even in the most oppressive times of dictators, he added.

He said that his devotion and hardwork laid the foundation of democracy which "we have in the country today.

Grieved over martyrdom of security jawans in Kech district Sacrifices of martyrs for restoration of peace won't go waste: CM

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has strongly condemned the terrorism act in Kech district and expressed grief over the martyrdom of security personnel in it.

According to an official handout issued here on Saturday, the Chief Minister said that the sacrifices of martyrs for restoration of peace would not go waste at all. He said that the security forces have rendered sacrifices of the lives for

elimination of terrorism and protection of life and property of the masses.

The Chief Minister said that the sacrifices of the martyrs can't be forgotten and the entire nation is standing by their brave forces.

He particularly paid homage to the security personnel embraced martyrdom while discharging professional duties in Kech district.

The Chief Minister also prayed for early recovery of the jawans who were injured in the terrorism act.

Minister Home slams killing; seeks report: Another police constable shot dead by unknown assailants in Quetta

Independent Report

QUETTA: Another police constable was shot dead by unknown armed men in Sattellite Town area of Quetta on Saturday. This was the second cold blooded murder of police cop as another was gunned down in eastern bypass area on Friday.

The reports suggested that the unknown armed assailants opened an indiscriminate fire targeting the police cop on duty in Sattellite Town on Saturday morning.

A similar incident of firing was occurred on Friday morning when the assailants had targeted a constable of Balochistan Constabulary who was on security duty with the anti-polio team at the Eastern

bypass. The assailants fled from the scene after committing cold blooded murder on the police personnel.

However, the hunt has been started for the culprits involved in the killing.

Meanwhile, the Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Zubair Jamali has strongly condemned the incident of firing that claimed life of a police cop.

According to an official handout issued here, the Minister Home took notice of the incident and sought report from the concerned authorities.

He also expressed sympathy and condolence with the bereaved family of the martyr police cop.

Pakistan dispatches 4th batch of relief goods for Gaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan on Sunday sent fourth consignment of humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza.

As part of the Government of Pakistan's directions, the Pakistan Air Force provided its service aircraft for the NDMA co-ordinated fourth aid tranche, which also had the contribution of Pakistan Army and Al-Khidmat Foundation, an NDMA press release said.

Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani, Palestinian Ambassador to Pakistan Ahmad Rabaie, representatives of the Al-Khidmat Foundation, and senior officers of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Armed Forces attended the send-off ceremony at Nur Khan Air Base.

The relief items were sent through special Pakistan Airforce IL-78 flight to Jordan, for further distribution to the affected people of Gaza.

Expressing deep concern over the escalating situation in Gaza, Foreign Minister Jilani reiterated Pakistan's unwavering support for the Palestinian people and urged an immediate cessation of hostilities to allow for the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance to those in need.

The Palestinian ambassador, on the occasion, expressed his deep gratitude to the people of Pakistan for the ongoing support, expressing their solidarity with their Palestinian brothers and sisters.

This fourth relief consignment comprises approx 20 tons of aid, including 13 tons of essential medical supplies and seven tons of dry food items as per ground needs at Gaza.

Earlier, the NDMA had sent three relief consignments which included special winterized tents, blankets, surgical supplies, medicines, and food packs for the distressed people of Gaza, and more aid is also planned to be sent.

IHC gives deadline of Feb 13 to govt for recovery of missing Baloch students

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) while giving deadline of February 13 to federal government in connection with recovery of Baloch missing students has issued written order.

Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani of IHC issued written order of hearing of missing Baloch students case Saturday.

In the written order final report on reaching missing persons to their homes has been summoned from federation on next hearing.

The court observed the time given by the court for recovery of Baloch missing students is extended till February 13. We are not seeking affidavits from

prime minister, interior secretary, defence and heads of law enforcement agencies still. If missing persons are not recovered then they will give affidavits and action will be initiated as per law as well. Attorney General (AG) presented list of enforced disappearances of Baloch students. The court was told that cases of 12 Baloch missing students need to be resolved.

Federal government assured that neither any one will be kidnapped nor any enforced disappearance will occur in future.

AG assured that all missing persons will be recovered at every cost. He also said that action will be taken as per law against

those who are found involved in illegal activities.

These statements and action are positive indications for better future of Pakistan. The grievances of Baloch families will be redressed this way whose near and dear ones are missing since last several years.

As per court's order Sami Din Baloch told that more than one decade has passed since his father went missing. This matter is referred to AG as test case. AG should obtain information from state institutions about the father of Sami Baloch.

Sami Din Baloch said the group which is renowned as death squad has set up camp in Balochistan.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Health Minister met with Dr. Qalandar Ebad, Minister IEA of Afghanistan on the Sideline of the first Global Health Security Summit

Jan Achakzai condemns Kech terrorism; pays homage to martyrs

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has condemned the terrorism incident occurred in Kech district on Saturday.

In an official statement issued here, the Minister Information expressed grief over martyrdom of security jawans and injuries caused to some others.

Jan Achakzai said that the sacrifices of lives rendered for protection of life and property of the people would not go waste.

He said that the security forces have rendered great sacrifices for ensuring restoration of peace in the province.

The caretaker Minister Information maintained that the whole nation is with the brave forces and the martyrs are pride of the country. He paid homage to the jawans who were martyred during duty in Kech. He expressed sympathy with the bereaved families of those martyred in the terrorism incident.

He prayed for early recovery of those injured in the incident.

Chief Secretary Balochistan maintains: All necessary measures to be taken for ensuring free and fair elections in province

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan has stated that all necessary measures would be taken for ensuring free and fair elections in the province.

In this regard, all government machinery has been mobilized all over the province.

The Chief Secretary directed to the concerned authorities to ensure fool-proof security in all the polling stations besides availability of the water, electricity and washrooms there.

The Chief Secretary was presiding over a meeting held to review the preparations for general elections in Zhob on Saturday.

The Chief Secretary reviewed the arrangements made for conducting general elections in the Zhob Division. He was also briefed about the arrangements besides other related matters about elections in the Zhob Division.

Also present in the meeting were Additional

Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem, Inspector General of police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh, Secretary S&GAD, Syed Faisal Ahmed and Secretary Local Government, Noor Ahmed Pirkan, Commissioner Zhob, Tariqur Rehman and Deputy Commissioners of the districts besides other concerned high ups.

Addressing the meeting, Chief Secretary said that the preparations have been finalized for the general elections in light of the Election Commission of Pakistan.

Meanwhile, the meeting was informed that the availability of all basic amenities as well as the polling staff, IT staff with equipment is being ensured at the polling stations.

The necessary security arrangements are also being made at the sensitive and most sensitive polling stations in the Division.

It was also informed that the election would be conducted for one National Assembly and three provincial assembly seats in Zhob Division.



ZHOB: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting regarding preparation of general elections

ISSI holds event marking Global Day of Action for Gaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Centre for Afghanistan Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) on Saturday organized an event to express solidarity with the people of Palestine on the 'Global Day of Action for Gaza.'

Besides Nader al Turk, Deputy Head of the Palestine Mission in Pakistan, ISSI Director General Ambassador Sohail Mahmood and BoG Chairman Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Director CAMEA Ms. Amina Khan; and members of team CAMEA attended the event, a press release said.

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, in his remarks, emphasised Pakistan's abiding support for the legitimate cause of the Palestinian people and a just solution through the establish-

ment of an independent, viable, sovereign and contiguous Palestinian State along the pre-June 1967 borders with Al-Quds-Al-Sharif as its capital.

He reiterated the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' stance regarding Pakistan's support for South Africa's application before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) concerning Israel's violation of its obligations under the 1951 Genocide Convention in relation to the Palestinian people in Gaza.

He asserted that the relentless military operations by Israel against the Palestinians could not be deemed justifiable under the pretext of self-defence.

Expressing solidarity with the Palestinian people over the enormous human losses incurred due to Israeli onslaught, he also underscored Pakistan's stance

for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire. Ms Amina Khan, while expressing her views, stated that Pakistan would continue to stand firmly with the people of Palestine until the legitimate rights of the people are achieved. She strongly condemned Israel's systematic and brutal occupation, tantamount to genocide, and called for the lifting of the inhumane siege and urgent need for a ceasefire.

Nader al Turk highlighted the dire conditions faced by Palestinian civilians, especially children and women, in the Gaza Strip.

He referred to the ongoing situation as genocide and also said that Palestinians were resilient and determined to uphold their rights until justice is served. Speaking about the solidarity and support from Paki-

stan, he expressed gratitude for the continuous historic support extended by the government and people of Pakistan.

Turk commended the visionary stance of Pakistan's founder, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, regarding Palestine. He also termed the relationship between Pakistan and Palestine as deep and expressed his belief that it would continue to grow stronger. Ambassador Khalid Mahmood reiterated Pakistan's support for Palestine, and stressed the urgent need for a ceasefire, which he said was the responsibility of the international community.



KARACHI: Activists of Civil Society holds protest in the support of oppressed Muslims of Ghaza, outside Press club in Provincial Capital.

Disheartened Sheikh Rashid vows to stand by Imran Khan

RAWALPINDI (INP): Veteran politician, former interior minister and Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid against whom the PTI unexpectedly fielded a candidate from a Rawalpindi constituency on Saturday said he was a man of principles and would remain loyal to PTI founding chairman Imran Khan.

In a video statement, Sheikh Rashid categorically said that he would prefer death to dumping Imran.

He further said that never ever in his life had he endured the hardships he was made to go through during the last seven months. "I remained in hiding so that I don't have to record my statement

against one person and his family under section 164," he said, adding, "My residence was vandalized, each and every member of my family was victimized. But I did not budge from my principled position even by an inch, and I still have the same stance." "Let me make it clear to the nation that I stand vindicated," Rasheed said, adding, "I have not surrendered." He went on to say he was hopeful that he would win the election from NA-56, Rawalpindi on February 8.

AML chief grumbled that the PTI gave tickets to those who came from overseas in the dead of night. "But I appeal to my electorate to support me in the election," he concluded.

PML-N finalizes candidates for General Election in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has completed the process of issuing tickets in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and issued tickets to all the candidates, the Party's officials said here on Saturday.

Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has been issued ticket from Manshera NA-15 and PML-N provincial president Ameer Muqam has been given the ticket from NA-2, NA-11 and PK-5, said the official. He said, tickets have been issued for 13 provincial and 5 National Assembly seats in Peshawar including tickets issued to PK 72 Azmat

Khan, 73 to Fazlullah, 74 to Arbab Afzal, Arbab Ghulam Fariq from 75, Subia Shahid from 76, Zahir Khan from 78, Jalal Khan from 79, Hyder Shah from 80, the Party's leaders said.

They disclosed that ticket were issued to Waqas Buland from PK 81, Mohammad Nadeem from PK 82 and Sher Rehman from PK 84. According to the official, the PML-N has also issued tickets for the five National Assembly seats in Peshawar including NA 28 Arbab Khizer Hayat, NA 29 Subia Shahid, NA 30 Rais Khan, NA 31 Subia Shahid and NA 32 Sher Rehman.

Babar Azam becomes 3rd highest run scorer in T20 Internationals

AUCKLAND (Online): Former national team captain Babar Azam became the third highest run-scorer in the T20 international format.

Babar Azam, who scored 57 runs off 35 balls with the help of 6 fours and 2 sixes in the T20 match of the series against New Zealand, has become the third highest run scorer in the T20 international format.

Babar Azam has scored 3 thousand 538 runs at an average of 42.12 while representing Pakistan in 105 T20 international matches. Virat Kohli is first in the list by scoring 4 thousand 8 runs at an average of 52.74 in 115 matches, while his compatriot Rohit Sharma is in 148 matches. He is second with 3,538 runs at an average of 31.33.

In this list, vice-captain Muhammad Rizwan is ninth. He has scored 2 thousand 822 runs at an average of 48.66 in 86 matches.

Speakers term Ahmed Faraz a poet of all ages

HYDERABAD (APP): Speakers paid rich tributes to revolutionary poet Ahmed Faraz on his 92nd birth anniversary.

A ceremony in this connection was held here at Besant Hall cultural centre here the other day. Director Besant Hall cultural centre Sobia Ali Shaikh presided over the event while famous intellectual Rizwan Siddiqui, poetesses Dr. Ambreen Haseeb Amber and Dr. Fatima Hussain shed light on the personality, life and poetic contribution of Ahmed Faraz.

On this occasion an unseen interview of Ahmed Faraz recorded by Endowment Fund trust

was also screened in which Ahmed Faraz had answered various questions about his life's experiences, poetry and professional career.

Born on January 12, 1931 in Kohat, Syed Ahmad Shah, better known by his pen name Ahmed Faraz, was a Pakistani Urdu poet, scriptwriter and became the founding Director General of Pakistan Academy of Letters. He wrote his poetry under the pseudonym Faraz.

Dr. Ambreen Haseeb Amber highlighted the popularity of his poetry and said that Ahmed Faraz was the poet of love and his poetry was based purely on love, not just as figurative

one, but also his love for this country and for the people of Pakistan.

Dr. Rizwan said in Karachi, different literary organization usually hold various literary events to pay tribute to poets but in Hyderabad Besant Hall cultural centre has arranged two consecutive events on Himayat Ali Shaah and Ahmed Faraz which is a good omen.

He described Ahmed Faraz as a revolutionary poet who was highly acclaimed as one of the most influential modern Urdu poets of all the centuries. He said that Ahmed Faraz displayed his resistance through the criticism in his poetry.



QUETTA: Members of Artists Welfare Forum Balochistan are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, held at Quetta press club

Financial support for journalist facing emergency situations on cards: Minister

HYDERABAD (APP): Caretaker Sindh Information Minister Muhammad Ahmed Shah on Saturday said his ministry had always taken measures for the welfare and support of journalists.

Talking to the media persons at Hyderabad Press Club here, he said the ministry was also taking measures to provide financial support to journalists coping with emergency situa-

tions. The minister apprised that the Information officials had been directed to convene the meeting of the accreditation committee without delay to issue accreditation cards to the journalists. Responding to a question regarding Jan Muhammad Mahar murder case, the minister said the law enforcement agencies were trying to apprehend the accused persons.

He assured that the family of Mahar would get justice. "All the perpetrators would be behind the bars soon," he added. Irshad Ali Chandio, Regional Director Information, was also present on the occasion. The minister earlier visited Public School Hyderabad, the city's largest semi-government school, accompanied by Commissioner Syed Khalid Haider Shah.

Pakistani Delegation visits PV Project in Chongqing for green energy cooperation

BEIJING Jan. 13 (APP): A delegation from the Capital Development Authority (CDA) of Pakistan visited the Wansheng 20 MW rooftop distributed photovoltaic power generation project in Chongqing, China.

The project is being constructed by PowerChina Chongqing Engineering Cooperation. The General Manager of the Overseas Business Division of the company, Tu Yongguo, led the delegation, touring the key facilities, including the rooftop photovoltaic array, inverter operations, and the prelab

equipment cabin. This provided them with valuable insights into the practical application, benefits, and process of sustainable power supply in the rooftop distributed photovoltaic system, CEN reported.

Imran Muhammad, head of the delegation, lauded the project and emphasized green energy's significance in reducing carbon emissions and addressing energy scarcity issues. With an annual electricity generation capacity of 14 million kilowatt-hours, the project is equivalent to saving 40 million tons of

standard coal and reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 90 million tons.

Pakistan, with its abundant solar resources, has immense potential for the development of the photovoltaic industry, aligning with the country's goals of sustainable green development.

"China and Pakistan have a close strategic partnership, and we look forward to deepening the exchange and cooperation in energy construction with PowerChina Chongqing Engineering Cooperation," Imran Muhammad stated.



QUETTA: DIG Quetta Abdul Hayee Amir and pother offering funeral prayer of police man who killed by unknown person in Satellite Town

Thinkfest invites everyone to 'Come, think and question'

LAHORE (APP): The seventh edition of Afkar-e-Taza ThinkFest began in Lahore at Alhamrah Arts Council, inviting people from all walks of life to "Come, think and question" on all topics ranging from sociopolitical to economic and from cultural to climate change. This year's theme is 'Winter of discontent' with a focus on conflict and the climate crisis.

The inaugural sessions of the two-day event were attended by prominent speakers from around the world and Pakistan.

The event started with a panel discussion titled "Re-imagining Pakistan: Exploring the Need for a New Social Contract", where former premier Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and former finance minister Dr. Miftah Ismail highlighted the importance of intellectual discourse in Pakistan. Shahid Khaqan emphasised the need to revisit the Constitution and amend it in a constructive manner. He highlighted the existing gap between the state and its people, suggesting that a new social contract might be necessary for effective governance. Both panelists agreed that empowering local governments was crucial for combating corruption. They praised implementation of local bodies systems by General Musharraf and stressed the need for education to address corruption effectively.

Another panel titled "Development Pathways: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, 1947-2022", where former finance minister Dr. Ishrat Hussain, renowned economist Savail

Hussain, and Dr. Turab Hussain, gave an overview of economic development in Pakistan since 1947. Dr. Ishrat expressed some concerns and presented some recommendations, referring to significance of consistency, continuity, and predictability in policy-making. Moreover, he emphasised ensuring that policy content was not driven by ideology.

WWF-International President Dr. Adil Najam, during his talk, emphasised the need for climate action in Pakistan in the wake of the ongoing climatic crisis.

Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Afkar-e-Taza Thinkfest Dr. Yaqoob Bangash stressed the need for organising events where the audience had a complete access to the panelists for a healthy discussion.

"Our idea is to start a discussion within our society where people can share ideas and knowledge without any hindrance. Thinkfest is a platform that has been providing that space both to the audience and the participants for the past seven years," he said.

Timely and successful action Shikarpur police saved 21 residents of Larkana from abduction

Independent Report SHIKARPUR: Shikarpur police received a tip-off that a suspicious van carrying several people was heading towards the Kacha area. On such information, on the instructions of SSP Shikarpur Dr. Muhammad Imran Khan, DSP Khanpur and SH Rustam immediately reached the relevant place near Chaman Bridge, the limits of Rustam police station. After taking possession of the van, all the persons were taken under police protection.

During the initial investigation, it was revealed that 21 people from Larkana in the van were taken to interview princes who had come from Arabia to get jobs in Dubai according to the plan of two people from Larkana. The guide given by the person who prepared the plan got into the van with the people and took the van to the Kutch, where on the way three people on a motorcycle took control of the van and kidnapped all the people and drove them to Kutch, were leading to By receiving such information, the cooperation of the local people and the timely action of the police, all the people were saved from being kidnapped.

Two suspects involved in this plan have been detained and investigation has

been started.

Among the rescued persons are Larkana resident Rasool Bakhsh Sandilo, Zeeshan Korai, Asif Brohi, Muhammad Hashim Brohi, Jawad Brohi, Mujahid, Abdul Haq, Rashid Mehr, Farooq Bhutto, Mehrah Bhatti, Abdul Waheed Abro, Waheed Ali Kalhoro, Zaryab Kalhoro, Wajid Ali Kalhoro, Ehsan Ali Kalhoro, Azhar Ali Lashari, Nisar Ali Solangi, Kamran Ali Dathu, Sohail Ahmed, Mudassar Kalhoro, Mir Hassan are included.

Those who survived the abduction have been safely returned to their relatives.

The relatives of the hostages who survived the kidnapping thanked the Shikarpur police for their timely action.

On behalf of SSP Shikarpur Dr. Muhammad Imran Khan issued instructions to give commendation, cash reward and certificates of appreciation to the police party for good performance.

The Shikarpur Police is giving a message to all the citizens that they should be careful of the kidnapping suspects and avoid falling victim to any such suspicious plan. For any information or guidance in this regard, contact Shikarpur Police. Contact the following numbers.

Water level in Mangla dam at continual decline

MIRPUR (AJK): (APP): Outflows of water reduced to only 100 cusecs from the country's 2nd largest reservoir - Mangla Dam following continual decline of water level in the reservoir because of ongoing reported heavy snowfall on upper reaches of the Himalayan state of Jammu and Kashmir by late Friday.

Mangla dam found constantly dries following continual reduction of inflows due to intermittent snowfall on the upper reaches of the Himalayan belt and consequent unprecedented decrease in flow of water in the rivers, falling in the reservoir - where the water level has reduced to greater extent so far.

The water level in Mangla dam, located in Mirpur district of AJK, was reported as 1156.80 feet on Wednesday against maximum conservation level of 1242 feet with the live storage capacity of 2.061 MAF in the reservoir, official sources told APP here late Friday.

The water level in the dam is gradually reducing further more, the sources said.

As a result of continual due inflow of water during ongoing season, the water level in Mangla Dam reservoir was recorded as 1156.80 feet after discharge of 85.20 feet of water from

the reservoir by Friday Jan 12, 2024, the sources underlined.

Mangla Dam stands largest reservoir in terms of water storage in the country, was filled to its maximum conservation capacity of 1242 feet, on August 17, this year as seasonal impounding of the reservoir. official sources told the news agency.

At present, 2.061 million acre feet (MAF) of water is available in Mangla Dam reservoir, the media wing of WAPDA said on Friday. The inflows and outflows of Jhelum river at Mangla reservoir was equally recorded as 5400 cusecs with outflows of only 100 cusecs of water from the dam on Friday.

Meanwhile, the overall position of the river inflows and outflows at Tarbela, Mangla, and Chashma, along with the reservoir levels and the barrages on Friday, remained as follows:

Rivers: Indus at Tarbela: Inflows 15000 cusecs and Outflows 15000 cusecs; Kabul at Nowshera: Inflows 7900 cusecs and Outflows 7900 cusecs; Khairabad Bridge: Inflows 14400 cusecs and Outflow 14400; Jhelum at Mangla: Inflows 5400 cusecs and Outflows 100 cusecs, Chenab at Marala: Inflows 4000 cusecs and Outflows 4000 cusecs.

Sartaj Aziz paid tribute for his meritorious diplomatic services, statesmanship

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) paid a glowing tribute to the late Sartaj Aziz for his remarkable diplomatic services and statesmanship at a solemn memorial reference held here.

The event, organized to honour Aziz's significant contributions to Pakistan, brought together distinguished individuals, colleagues, friends, and family to commemorate his life and legacy, a news release said on Saturday.

In his opening remarks, PIDE Vice-Chancellor Dr Nadeem ul Haque said Sartaj Aziz was a towering figure in Pakistani politics and a dedicated public servant, who recently passed away, leaving behind a legacy of unwavering commitment to the betterment of his country.

The memorial event served as a platform for speakers to reflect on the

late Aziz's profound impact on Pakistan and to celebrate his enduring contributions.

Dr Nadeem ul Haque noted that Sartaj Aziz, a distinguished Pakistani statesman, served as the foreign minister of Pakistan with notable dedication and expertise.

Born in 1928, Aziz played a crucial role in shaping Pakistan's foreign policy during his tenure. His extensive experience and diplomatic acumen positioned him as a key figure in international relations. Aziz, an economist by training, brought a unique blend of skills to his role, fostering diplomatic ties and representing Pakistan on the global stage.

Throughout his career, he remained engaged in dialogue with various nations, addressing regional and global issues. Sartaj Aziz's contributions to diplomacy have left a lasting impact, which

continues to be recognized in the realm of international affairs.

Muhammad Sami Saeed, caretaker Federal Minister for Planning and Development; Haroon Sharif, Former Minister of State and Chairman Board of Investment; Farhatullah Babar, Former Senator; Ahmed Qadir, DG Competition Commission of Pakistan; Shahid Kardar, Former Governor SBP; Iqbal Ahmed Khan; Professor Ayesha Isani; Shafiq Kakakhel; and members of Sartaj Aziz's family, including his brother, son, daughter, and grandson, also spoke at the event and underscored Sartaj Aziz's tireless efforts toward the economic development of Pakistan.

They emphasized that Sartaj Aziz was not just a statesman but a visionary leader who dedicated his life to uplifting the socio-economic landscape of our nation.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr Nadeem Jan presents a souvenir to Dr Qalandar Ebad Minister of IEA of Afghanistan on the sidelines of the first Global Health Security Summit.

Three more cases of Covid JN.1 variant detected in Karachi

ISLAMABAD (INP): The authorities in Karachi have detected the JN.1 Covid-19 variant in three more air passengers coming from abroad.

The rapid antigen tests of three out of several air travelers conducted at Karachi's Jinnah International Airport have come back positive.

The three passengers found positive of JN.1 variant, currently a cause of concern in several countries, belonged to Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

One of the three patients was a 21-year-old from Naseerabad, the other is a 22-year-old man from North Waziristan and the third is 22-year-old resident of Mohmand

Agency who came to Karachi from Jeddah.

The number of JN.1 variant cases in Karachi has now risen to five after the detection of fresh patients, the tests of whom were conducted at Aga Khan Laboratory.

Classified as a variant of interest by the World Health Organisation (WHO), JN.1 is a sub-lineage of the Omicron variant and has been identified as the most prevalent strain in the United States.

Experts warn that while the JN.1 variant is highly transmissible, it primarily causes mild symptoms similar to a common cold, affecting the upper respiratory tract. On Monday last, two

passengers had tested positive for Covid-19 at the Jinnah International Airport. To prevent the spread of JN.1, the health authorities have advised the public to observe social distancing, wearing masks, proper sanitation and hygiene. The NIH has also issued an advisory to provinces about the mutating strain of the virus. As per the advisory, the new variant has been classified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a Variant of Interest (VOI) with genetic changes predicted or known to affect virus characteristics such as transmissibility, disease severity, immune escape, and diagnostic or therapeutic escape.

APHC deplores world's silence on Indian state terrorism in IIOJK

SRINAGAR (Online): All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has deplored the silence of the international community on the worst Indian state terrorism in illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

According to media report, the APHC spokesman in a statement issued in Srinagar said the latest report of Human Rights Watch is an eye-opener for the world community which must hold India accountable for its brutal actions in the occupied territory.

The HRW in its World Report 2024 said that India continued to restrict free expression, peaceful assembly, and other rights in occupied Kashmir in 2023. It said that critics and human rights defenders faced arrests and raids based on spurious allegations and cited the illegal arrests of Kashmiri

rights activists, Khurram Parvez and Irfan Mehraj.

The APHC spokesman in a statement in Srinagar said the Modi regime is trampling all basic rights of the Kashmiri people on a daily basis and employing draconian laws to stifle political dissent in occupied Kashmir. He maintained that the continued denial of the Kashmiris' basic rights including right to self-determination by New Delhi is a violation of the UN charter and international laws.

The spokesman asked that how can India claim to be a democratic republic when it is denying the Kashmiris their basic rights. "India must be pressurized to stop persecution of rights activists and voices of dissent in IIOJK. Modi and his henchmen must be held to account for trampling every right of the

Farewell ceremony held in honor of Head Constable Wajid Mehmood

ISLAMABAD: A farewell ceremony was held in honor of Head Constable

police officials to do their best to earn respect for the department. He was of the view that public servants



Wajid Mehmood at SSP Operations Office Islamabad, a public relations officer said.

He said that, SP Plan Patrolling Hakim Khan graced the occasion as chief guest, while senior police officers and officials were also present on the occasion.

The SP Plan Patrolling conveyed good wishes from Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan to the retiring constable and said that retirement is part of the service as the one who joins the service has to retire one day. He asked the serving

can earn a good name by serving the citizens with devotion and dedication.

He further said that, the contribution of Head Constable Wajid Mehmood in Islamabad Capital Police would be remembered. At the end, he presented a police shield to Head Constable Wajid Mehmood and also expressed best wishes for his future endeavors.

ICCP Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan has issued directions to the CPOs of all divisions to organize a farewell ceremony for the officers and officials retiring from any division and to send them off with full encouragement.



ISLAMABAD: Following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police Security division conducted a three-day psychological workshop for officials deputed in superior courts to improve the performance and mental capabilities of officials.

HEC to organize NFDP for newly inducted faculty from December 26

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) organized the third cohort of National Faculty Development Programme (NFDP) for newly inducted faculty members from December 26, 2023 to January 11, 2024 at HEC Regional Centre, Karachi. Twenty-three faculty members from public sector higher education institutions across the Sindh attended the training. Managing Director NAHE, Ms. Noor Anma Malik, said a press release issued here Saturday.

During the training, sessions were held on

Effective Teaching and Learning, Course Design, Lesson Planning and Delivery, Assessment and Evaluation, Technology in Classroom, Learning Management System, Grant Writing, Publishing Research, and Personal and Professional Development. The HEC's faculty development programmes aim to equip them with the strategies and tools to overcome challenges of learners and develop in students critical thinking and practical skills.

During her address, Ms. Noor Anma Malik emphasized the development of impactful learning interventions aimed at creating a long-lasting and effective influence.

ANF seizes over 100 kg drugs in eight operations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) seized over 100 kg drugs in eight operations and arrested six accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Saturday.

He said that 350 grams hashish was recovered from the possession of a Dubai-bound passenger scheduled to leave by Flight No. PA-100 at Jinnah Airport. In the second operation, 320 grams heroin was recovered from a parcel being sent to the United Kingdom at General Post Office (GPO) Lahore, and 200 grams weed from a California-bound parcel at a courier office in Rawalpindi.

About 72 kg hashish was recovered near Chenab Toll Plaza G.T Road Gujarat while an accused was also arrested.

Nine outlaws arrested; drugs and weapons recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police apprehended nine outlaws including two professional beggars from different areas of the city during the last 24 hours and recovered drugs and weapons from their possession, a public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city.

Following these directions, the Industrial Area police team arrested an accused namely Yahya Khan and recovered one 30 bore pistol with ammunition from his possession. The Sabzi Mandi police team arrested two accused namely

Yaseen and Khalid Khan and recovered 213 gram heroin and one 30 bore pistol from their possession. Likewise, the Lohi Bher police team arrested two accused namely Yaseen and Khalid Khan and recovered two 30 bore pistols from their possession. The Phulgran police arrested an accused namely Waseem and recovered 690 gram heroin from his possession.

Similarly, the Nilore police team arrested an accused namely Nasir Mehmood and recovered one 30 bore pistol with ammunition from his possession. Cases have been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway.

ICCP Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan directed the police officials.

Another PTI leader joins IPP ahead of general election 2024

ISLAMABAD (INP): Another leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) from Lodhran, Maher Ashraf Sial, on Saturday announced joining the Isteqam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP).

According to the details, Maher Ashraf Sial withdrew his nomination papers as a PTI candidate and will be contesting the general election 2024 as an IPP candidate from PP 227, Lodhran.

It is pertinent to mention here that Maher Ashraf held a meeting with IPP chief Jahangir Tareen last night.

Earlier to this, former aviation minister and PTI leader Ghulam Sarwar Khan announced joining IPP.

The former minister made the decision after meeting with senior leadership of the Isteqam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP).

Islamabad Police organized psychological workshops for officials

ISLAMABAD: Following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police Security division conducted a three-day psychological workshop for officials deputed in superior courts to improve the performance and mental capabilities of officials.

This initiative seeks to enhance the aptitude of

officials within the security division.

The workshop included a special psychological examination committee, chaired by the SSP Security division while SP CTD, SP Headquarters, and psychological experts were the members of the committee.

Officers and personnel from the superior courts actively participated in the three-day workshop.

SECP notifies amendments to NBFC Rules 2003

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has issued draft of proposed amendments to the Non-Banking Finance Companies (Establishment & Regulations) Rules, 2003, to solicit public comments. Through these amendments SECP aims to provide a more conducive regulatory framework for the non-banking finance sector. The proposed changes are based on a comprehensive review of

the regulation, considering the advancements in the NBFC ecosystem and the effectiveness of mandatory approval requirements.

The modifications include removal of approval processes for the rate of profit on subordinated loans and the repayment of subordinated loans. Additionally, the provision mandating the application for a license within six months of the Rules' notification has been omitted being obsolete.



ISLAMABAD: People are buying dry fruits from vendor at Karachi Company area in Federal Capital.

Cyber crime investigation workshop held at Police Lines Headquarters

ISLAMABAD (INP): According to the details, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police organized a 05 days cybercrime workshop for the newly formed Cyber Crime Investigation Unit officers to fortify the capabilities in combating cybercrime.

The workshop aims to highlight the significance of upgrading the skills of investigative officers to effectively tackle the evolving challenges of cybercrime and to equip officers with the necessary skills to investigate

cybercrimes diligently. The workshop, spanning five days, provided officers with insights into different facets of cybercrime investigation.

Topics covered included mobile data analysis, IMEI tracing, cloning, cyber hacking, ransomware, spyware, financial fraud, and other internet-related crimes.

Islamabad Capital Police 60 officers have completed the first phase of training in collaboration with the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) in the field of digital forensics.

ICT police rebut Omer Ayub's claim of raid on his house

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Secretary General Omer Ayub claimed on Saturday that the Islamabad police raided his house without a warrant. Taking to X (formerly Twitter), he said the act of the police was condemnable.

He added it was done at the behest of the 'fascist government' because he was standing with the founder of PTI. Meanwhile, capital police spokesperson denied the allegations of PTI secretary general by calling the accusations.



ISLAMABAD: Tourists are enjoying tour at Shah Allah Ditta caves, which are an ancient archaeological site located in the Margalla Hills of the Federal Capital.

Hajj, Umrah conference in Jeddah attracts 100,000 visitors

ISLAMABAD (APP): The third edition of the Hajj and Umrah Services Conference and Exhibition attracted nearly 100,000 visitors from around 100 countries. Organized by Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Hajj and Umrah in partnership with the Pilgrim Experience Programme, one of the initiatives of Vision 2030, the event was held at the Jeddah Superdome, Arab News reported.

During the closing ceremony, Saudi Arabia's Deputy Minister of Hajj and Umrah Dr. Abdul Fattah bin Suleiman Mashat highlighted the launch of a platform for training and licensing workers and creating a competitive environment.

Separately, Dr. Awwad bin Sabti Al-Anzi, undersecretary of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Call, and Guidance, met with a 15th batch of guests hosted by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Guests Program for Umrah.

WWF President for holistic approach to cope with environmental challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): WWF President Dr Adil Najam said that after many decades, faith and its interlinkages with climate and environmental crisis had become a central discussion as "humanity seeks answers to the contemporary challenges".

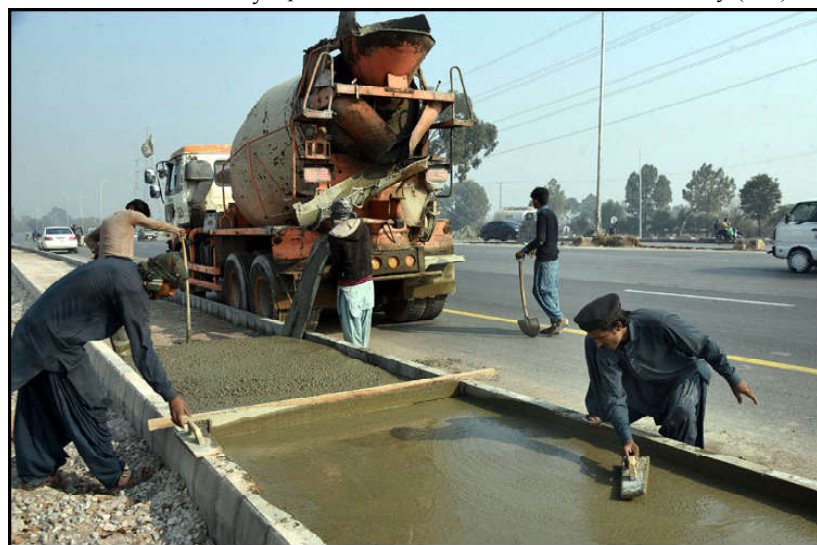
Dr Adil Najam said this in a special conversation with SDPI Executive Director, organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI).

During the conversation, the resurging interest in religions and faith, and their potential linkages with solutions to environmental challenges were discussed.

Emphasizing the need for holistic approaches, Dr Adil Najam said that modern society for the sake of economic growth and development started to view religion as a barrier in realizing human potential and liberties. He said that when population growth became a major point of discussion in the 1960s and 1970s, religion and faith were pushed back.

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) president said as climate crisis had challenged survival of the planet, the emphasis on circular economy, responsible consumption and production, efficiency of work, and the intricate relationship between individual behaviors and nature had taken center stage. "At the same time, all religions underscore the role of individuals and their free will and their impact on the environment, so not every stimulus we face can be attributed to God's will," he added. He said, "While some may argue that any unprecedented climate disaster may be God's will, there can be no denial that human actions like deforestation have contributed to it, despite religion urging us to protect nature and biodiversity.

"In times of crisis, humans tend to gravitate towards their beliefs and values for comfort," he added. Dr Adil Najam said that to resolve the current challenges the global community needed large scale behavioural change.



ISLAMABAD: Laborers are busy in their work during the final touches of Margalla Underpass in Federal Capital.

Governor Punjab says Trade relations with Netherlands need to be further promoted

Independent Report
LAHORE: Ambassador of Pakistan to the Netherlands Saljuq Mustansar Tarar called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman here on Saturday at the Governor's House Lahore.

During the meeting, Saljuq Mustansar Tarar informed Governor Punjab that Pakistan is fully supporting the case of South Africa against Israel in favor of the Palestinian people in the International Court of Justice.

Governor Punjab congratulated Saljuq Mustansar Tarar on being elected as the Chairman of the Conference of States of the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. He said that the

first ever Pakistani to be elected as the chairman of this conference is a matter of pride for the country.

He said that trade relations with the Netherlands need to be further promoted. Governor Punjab appreciated the ambassador's interest in art and asked him to be a part of as many forums as possible to highlight the soft image of Pakistan through art and literature.

P a k i s t a n i Ambassador Saljuq Mustansar Tarar said that Governor House Lahore is a heritage building. The way it has been preserved for the public and further improvements are being made is admirable. He also appreciated the initiative of giving full access to the

public through organized tours in the Governor House.

Saljuq Mustansar Tarar also showed keen interest in the artwork of Ustad Allah Bakhsh, Abdul Rahman Chaghatai, and Ustad Muhammad Sharif and appreciated the restoration of historic piano in the Governor House. On this occasion, Saljuq Mustansar Tarar presented his book "All That Art" and his father Mustansar Hussain Tarar's book "Pyar Ka Pehla Punjab" to the Governor of Punjab. Governor Punjab gifted a book on Governor's House by famous architect Yasmin Lari to Pakistani Ambassador to Netherlands Saljuq Mustansar Tarar.



LAHORE: Pakistan's Ambassador to Netherlands Saljuq Mustansar Tarar meeting with Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman

Baqar launches NICVD's Stroke Intervention Programme

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (Rtd) Maqbool Baqar on Saturday stressed that great efforts were needed to improve stroke care and acute stroke centers in Pakistan's second-largest province.

While virtually inaugurating the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases' (NICVD) 'Stroke Intervention Programme' launched in Tando Muhammad Khan, the chief minister said that the estimated population of Pakistan was 225 million with a median age of 22.5 years and to cater to such a large population, the increasing incidence of stroke and lack of infrastructure in both urban

and rural areas require immediate attention in Pakistan.

While addressing the guests at the ceremony, Baqar said through a video link that there was a high proportion of young stroke with poor stroke outcomes. Acute stroke care is scarce in Pakistan due to few stroke units, and limited availability of alteplase (clot buster treatment) and thrombectomy services in the country, he said.

He further emphasized that the stroke burden remained high in Pakistan with limited available facilities for stroke care in the country. He commented that after the availability of alteplase (t-PA) in Pakistan, efforts

to improve facilities and centers were need of the hour.

Lauding the NICVD's work, the CM recalled that in 2021, the hospital took up the initiative to provide comprehensive stroke services including clot buster treatment and advanced treatment of clot removal (thrombectomy).

"During the last 2 years, it has treated more than 4000 stroke patients providing acute stroke care services," Baqar maintained.

The CM disclosed that the NICVD had trained 8 cardiologists to carry out clot removal procedures and were now moving forward to start stroke services in SICVD Tando Muhammad Khan.



HYDERABAD: Caretaker Sindh Minister for Information Ahmad Shah cutting the ribbon to inaugurate 9th Hyderabad literature Festival at Sindh Museum.

Housing minister living in container to monitor Bund Road project

LAHORE (APP): On the specific directive of Punjab's Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Provincial Housing Minister Azfar Ali Nasir has adopted a temporary residence in a container placed at the Bund Road Controlled Access Corridor project site.

Azfar Ali Nasir has been assigned the task to undertake 24 hours monitoring for the completion of Bund Road Controlled Access Corridor project. Under the mission to accomplish public welfare projects before the stipulated deadline in Punjab, he is busy in overseeing the project from morning till night. He will continue living in the container till the completion of the project.

Azfar Ali Nasir

visited the project late at night and inspected the ongoing construction activities. He issued necessary directions to the contractor for timely completion of the project.

The minister also chaired a container meeting and directed to utilise all necessary resources to expedite pace of work on the project. He stated that on the direction of the CM, he would remain in the container till the completion of the project. CM Mohsin Naqvi is working day and night to provide maximum relief to the people, he said and added that he was a volunteer of the CM and would tread on his footsteps.

The Commissioner Lahore, Chief Engineer LDA, and contractors were also present.

Dera Police seize 11075 liters diesel, gasoline

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (INP): Dera Police seized 11075 liters of diesel and gasoline on Saturday as it intensified crackdown against illegal fuel agencies across the district.

A spokesman of district police said that in line with directions of DPO Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani, crackdown was launched against illegal fuel agencies across the district.

Cases were registered against 10 persons involved in the business of illegal fuel in different areas of the Dera Ismail Khan.

The police also recovered two fuel units, six plastic tanks, and 98 plastic canes and bottles during the crackdown.

DPO Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani said indiscriminate legal action would be continued against the business of illegal fuel.

Adequate arrangements for pneumonia patients in LGH

Independent Report
LAHORE: Due to severe cold and pollution in the provincial capital, special arrangements have been ensured for treatment of Children at Lahore General Hospital. In this regard on the directions of Chief Minister Punjab Syed Mohsin Naqvi, treatment of children at LGH will be managed under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Muhammad Shahid and Prof. Dr. Faheem Afzal of Pediatric Unit. They ensured all necessary steps and extend medical facilities to the children especially for pneumonia.

Principal Ameer Uddin Medical College, Prof. Muhammad Al-Fareed Zafar, while reviewing the arrangements, expressed his satisfaction and told that the vaccine of pneumonia is available to

children in sufficient quantity which is being provided free of charge as per the Government policy. He said that Prof. Muhammad Shahid and Prof. Faheem Afzal should use social media and other platforms to raise awareness about pneumonia among children and parents and guide them accordingly.

Principal PGMI highlighted that LGH will continue to play its role as an all-round force to ensure public service for all diseases. He added that for the health of infants' doctors, nurses and other medical staff of the hospital have the passion to serve humanity. Prof. Al-Fareed asked the parents to keep a strict eye on the small children and wear warm clothes to protect them from cold.

Two killed, five injured in Chiniot road mishaps

CHINIOT (INP): Two including a woman were killed and five others injured in separate road accidents in different localities of Chiniot, police and rescue sources said on Saturday.

According to details, due to poor visibility caused by fog, a passenger hiace collided with a dumper near Shamas Mills at Faisalabad Road.

As a result of collision, a 65-year-old woman was killed on the spot while five others including Waseem, Shahid, Awas, Sana Bibi and Rimsha were injured.

An over speeding dumper knocked down a motorcycle near Kot Ismail recently bike rider Usman, hailing from 55-Southern was killed on the spot. The bodies and injured were shifted to different hospitals and police after registering.

CM inspects development work on new Ravi Bridge project

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi inspected the new Ravi Bridge project in a severe cold weather late night.

Mohsin Naqvi inspected the construction work of the new Ravi Bridge project. He shook hands with the labourers busy doing piling, drilling work and commended them on working diligently on the public welfare project in a severe cold weather even late night, said a handout issued here on Saturday.

The CM directed to utilise all the necessary resources for early construction of the bridge, saying that piling work should be moved forward swiftly along with accelerating pace of work on the new bridge. He issued directions to further expedite construction.

The Commissioner/DG LDA and the contractor gave a detailed briefing about progress on the bridge. The piling and boring process continues for 24 hours and two new machines have been installed for the piling work. The bridge will consist of 4 lanes and it would be 540 meters long.

Provincial ministers Amir Mir, Azfar Ali Nasir, Secretary Communication & Works, Deputy Commissioner, Chief Engineer LDA, NESPAK, Officials of C&W, Irrigation, district administration and other departments were also present.

He emphasized that the project should be completed at the earliest for the facilitation of people. The bridge would greatly ease traffic, he added.



FAISALABAD: A view of the hustle and bustle of Lawyers during the elections of district bar in City.

Ahmed Shah says Govt initiated "Strengthening Social Protection Delivery System program in Sindh"

Independent Report
HYDERABAD: The Sindh caretaker Minister for Information, Social Protection and minorities Mohammad Ahmed Shah said that Government of Sindh has initiated a program "Strengthening social protection Delivery System in Sindh" in 15 districts of Sindh with collaboration of World Bank to improve the mother child health.

This he said while talking to media me at Shehbaz Hall, Shehbaz Building Hyderabad today.

The minister informed that initially this program started in three districts of Sindh Tando Muhammad Khan, Tando Alahyar and Matiari and will be extended in other districts soon.

He further said that this program will benefit 1.3 million women and

children in Sindh. This program of social protection will give 30000 cash to mother for the safe life of child because there is problem of malnutrition identified in different districts.

On replying a question regarding elections the minister said that Government of Sindh is ready for the general elections on 8th February and next cabinet meeting will be held soon to finalize the elections arrangements. The Government of Sindh has released for the training of ROs and DROs and the repairing of polling stations.

He further said that a strong communication awareness campaign will be launched to spread awareness regarding this program to benefit more women and children in this program.

CS, IGP conduct review of arrangements & security for general elections 2024

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: A meeting was convened under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary and IG Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Khan to discuss preparations for the general elections 2024. During the meeting, special measures for the preparations, security issues, and overall arrangements for the elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were thoroughly reviewed. Additional Chief Secretary Home Department, Secretaries, Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, Regional and District Police Officers attended the meeting. The security and

overall arrangements for the general elections were reviewed in detail. Upon the Chief Secretary's direction, officials from other relevant departments and civil defense volunteers will support the police under the supervision of district police officers. CCTV cameras will be installed at all highly sensitive polling stations. The meeting was informed that funds for different facilities at polling stations are provided by the provincial government. The Chief Secretary emphasized the need to ensure uninterrupted elections in snowbound districts and complete adherence to the code of conduct issued by the Election Commission.

ADCR warns against illegal construction in Murree

RAWALPINDI (APP): Nobody would be allowed to indulge in illegal construction activities in Murree, said Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue (ADCR) Capt. (retd) Qasim Ijaz on Saturday. On the special directives of the Punjab Government and Deputy Commissioner, Murree, Agha Zaheer Abbas Shirazi, ADCR Murree on Friday night visited different areas of Murree including Jhika Gali, Masiyari, Express Highway, Shawala and Fourth View Road and reviewed in detail the operation against illegal constructions. The Murree administration had launched a grand operation against illegal constructions and strict action in accordance with the law.



KARACHI: Mayor Karachi, Barrister Murtaza Wahab along with Deputy Mayor Salman Abdullah Murad offer Dua during foundation stone laying ceremony for the extended restoration of Khayyam Clifton Canal.

KMC, PLSP to train people for providing emergency aid to citizens: Murtaza Wahab

KARACHI (INP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that the KMC in collaboration with Pakistan Life Savers Program (PLSP) will train the citizens of Karachi to provide immediate emergency aid in case of heart attacks and injuries so that precious lives can be saved.

It will be started by the department of City Warden and we will train thousands of citizens of Karachi especially the youth so that we can proudly call Karachi the city of life savers.

According to the statement, Murtaza Wahab said every year thousands of people in Karachi lose their lives due to heart attacks and after suffering serious injuries, precious lives are lost in these incidents, so considering the importance of this issue, KMC has decided to pay immediate attention so that by providing

awareness to the citizens in this regard, the family members and the nearest people can give immediate medical assistance to the patient in the most crucial and critical moments.

He said that the efforts of Pakistan Life Saver Program in this regard are commendable and that is the reason why we have settled the preliminary matters with them.

The scope of this program will be gradually extended to the entire city to save the lives of citizens by providing immediate medical assistance after fatal accidents and heart attacks.

Mayor Karachi said that Karachi is among the seven largest cities in the world and training of citizens is organized in all international cities of this level around the world. With this training in the event of a fire, accident, heart attack, stroke,

YPP's 18th batch holds second session

LAHORE (INP): The Youth Parliament Pakistan's (YPP) 18th batch in partnership with Tik Tok on Saturday convened its second session marking a pivotal moment in the digital engagement of Pakistan's youth.

Around 300 Primary members representing all National Assembly Constituencies of Pakistan featured the session, in addition to Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, and overseas Pakistanis, along with approximately 300 alternate members. Supported by Tik Tok, the 18th YPP is the most extensive and diverse youth representation in Pakistan to date. President of PILDAT and founder of Youth Parliament Pakistan Ahmed Bilal Mehboob commenced the event with a warm welcome. Acknowledging the partnership with Tik Tok, Mehboob highlighted how this collaboration not only enriches the YPP experience but also serves as a vital link.

CM lays foundation of Punjab Bar Council building

LAHORE (APP): Punjab caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Saturday laid the foundation stone of the new building of Punjab Bar Council.

On Mohsin Naqvi's arrival at the Punjab Bar Council, lawyers warmly welcomed him and presented him with flowers.

Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi laid the foundation stone of the new building of the Punjab Bar Council and handed over a grant check for Rs50 million to the bar council.

Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi was briefed about the new building. He

said that lawyers are an important part of society and close to his heart. "Solving the problems of the lawyers community is one of our priorities," he added.

Former Supreme Court Bar Association President Ahsan Bhoon, Federal Minister Nazir Tarar, Punjab Bar Council President, Asif Shahzad, Advocate General Punjab, Vice Chairman Punjab Bar Council Basharatullah Khan, Secretary Law, Secretary Public Prosecution and other officials of the Punjab Bar Council were also present on this occasion.

DC Abbottabad oversees key water supply project in Jandar Bari area

ABBOTTABAD (APP): To monitor the progress of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cities Improvement Project (KPCIP), Deputy Commissioner Khalid Iqbal on Saturday visited the Jandar Bari area, the primary source of the water supply project.

During the inspection, a comprehensive assessment of the designated land for the water supply initiative was carried out, accompanied by directives for the acquisition process.

The DC, along with his team, engaged in discussions with residents affected by the ongoing construction of the Sherwan Family Adventure Park. He addressed the concerns of the affected

residents and provided practical instructions for prompt issue resolution.

Stressing the significance of development for both local inhabitants and the city of Abbottabad, he highlighted the potential for new recreational opportunities for residents and tourists alike. DC reassured the affected community that every effort would be made to provide necessary facilities.

Director Compliance Amir Alam, Additional Assistant Commissioner Revenue Arshad Mahmood, Social Safeguard Specialist Ali Akbar, Tehsil Municipal Officer TMA Abbottabad Shakeel Hayat, Revenue staff and residents of the affected area were also present on the occasion.



LAHORE: Visitors are taking interest in books on stall during Book Fair at Al-Hamra Arts Council in Provincial Capital.

Dr. Umar Saif says Pakistan set to initiate laying of 200,000 km optical fiber cable

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Dr Umar Saif on Saturday said that in order to enhance connectivity Pakistan was set to initiate a project for laying 200,000 kilometers of optical fiber cable. "The Information Technology Ministry has exhibited outstanding performance during the tenure of the current government over the past four months," the minister said in a statement.

Dr. Umar Saif, while giving credit to the Special Investment Facilitation Council, said the forum had played a significant role in obtaining timely approvals for the IT Ministry's policies and projects.

He said the IT companies were set to benefit from a new facility allowing them to keep 50% of their earnings in dollars in their accounts.

He said a global standard training programme had been initiated for 200,000 IT graduates who had recently completed their studies from various universities.

The minister said the long-standing issue of digital payment gateways for freelancers had been successfully resolved. Starting from February 1, a pilot project would create 10,000 accounts, allowing freelancers to receive their payments directly through them. Dr Saif said some 10,000 employment centers were being established where the

freelancers would enjoy convenient facilities under one roof.

The centers would help increase annual IT exports to \$10 billion, besides employing some 100,000 freelancers, he hoped. The minister ensured that all obstacles regarding the 5G spectrum would be addressed as per the directives of the Action Advisory Committee for it auction in July-August.

He viewed that the implementation of the Right of Way Policy had resolved disputes between various institutions.

With establishment of the Telecommunication Tribunal, a long-standing demand of the telecom sector had been fulfilled, he added.



Ms. Samina Fazal Founder President IWCCI congratulates FPCCI president Atif Ikram Shaikh on his historic success in FPCCI Elections by giving a flower bouquet at FPCCI capital office Islamabad, founder president IWCCI Samina Fazil, president IWCCI Rizwana Asif, Senior Vice President Dr. Sonia Saleem, former president Naima Ansari, former SVPs Sadaf Asim Abassi & Rizina Lahooti, Dr. Afshan Malik were also present on this occasion.

President ICCI says Need to focus on entrepreneurship to transform economy

ISLAMABAD (INP): President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that Pakistan needs more entrepreneurs to create new jobs, introduce innovations and new technologies, increase productivity, enhance exports, and put the economy into fast gear to transform Pakistan into a rising country. Therefore, the students should focus on entrepreneurship that offers them a prosperous career.

This was stated by him on Saturday while addressing the Pakistan National Finals of the Global Student Entrepreneur Awards (GSEA) organized by Entrepreneurs Organization Islamabad in collaboration with ICCI at Chamber House.

Ahsan Bakhtawari called upon the government to make more conducive

policies for promoting entrepreneurship in youth that will enhance their self-employment and pave the way for sustainable economic growth of the country. He stressed that commercial banks should also come up with low-cost business loan schemes for youth to facilitate them in launching business start-ups.

He said that the population of Pakistan is increasing rapidly and the government can't provide jobs to all youngsters. However, fostering entrepreneurship in youth is the best option to enable them to achieve a prosperous career, create jobs for others, and play an effective role in the economic development of the country.

The ICCI President lauded the role of the Entrepreneurs Organization Islamabad for promoting student entrepreneurs.

RDA lodges FIRs against four illegal housing schemes

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA), on the directives of the Director General (DG), Muhammad Saif Anwar Jappa, has lodged FIRs against four illegal housing schemes, said RDA spokesman on Saturday.

He informed that the Metropolitan Planning and Traffic Engineering (MP&TE) Directorate of RDA had lodged FIRs against the owners of four illegal housing schemes namely Malik Tariq, Qazi Naveed, Sharif Khan, Sajid Chaudhry, Sajid Munir, Sardar Maqsood Khan, Sardar Awaiz, Chaudhry Seemab and Yaoub in Mandra police station, Tehsil Gujjar Khan.

He said that FIRs were lodged against illegal housing schemes, Kashmir View Residencia, Phase-I&II in Mouza Sanghori

Satto, GB Valley in Mouza Singhori Satto, Natha Dolal, Sain Singhori in Mouza Singhori and Pak Kashmir Housing Project in Mouza Pothi Bijnyal at Mandra-Chakwal Road in Tehsil Gujjar Khan.

He said that the MP&TE Directorate RDA was taking legal action against all the illegal advertisements and marketing of illegal housing schemes.

He informed that before lodging FIRs, the Authority had also issued notices to the illegal housing schemes.

The spokesman said that without NoC and approval from RDA, launching a housing scheme, apartment project, commercial building, etc. within the controlled area of RDA is illegal and all sorts of advertisements, marketing,



ISLAMABAD: Farmers are busy harvesting the animal feed at crop in Chak Shahzad area of the Federal Capital.



SIALKOT: Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi inaugurating Business Facilitation Center at Anwar Club.

Pakistan-origin UK national Mahnaz becomes member of WB IFC Sanctions Board

ISLAMABAD (APP): The World Bank (WB) has appointed Mahnaz Malik, a Pakistan-origin British national, as a Sanctions Board Member of the International Finance Corporation (IFC).

She is a Barrister and Arbitrator at Twenty Essex, specializing in representing governments and corporations in investment and commercial disputes.

Mahnaz is also a Fellow and Trustee of

Hughes Hall College at the University of Cambridge, according to details posted by the WB on its official website on Saturday.

The newly appointed IFC board member has over 23 years of experience advising governments, corporations, and international organizations on complex cross-border disputes.

She has acted as counsel on behalf of investors, organizations and states in several

investment and commercial disputes, including the Court of Sport Arbitration (CAS), UNCITRAL, ICC, ICSID, LCIA and PCA-administered arbitrations.

Sector specialisms include mining, energy, steel, construction, banking, and infrastructure projects.

She is particularly adept at dispute resolution relating to natural resources, sporting events, joint venture partners, shareholders.

Govt raises onion MEP to \$1,200 per tonne

KARACHI (INP): Amid thriving exports and rising domestic prices, the Ministry of Commerce has fixed the minimum export price (MEP) of onion at \$1,200 per tonne (FOB).

Dec 8, 2023, the national average price of the vegetable in Pakistan was Rs130-220 per kg during the week ending Dec 7, 2023. Mr Waheed said exporters had been getting huge orders after the Indian ban, which caused a steep rise in local prices.

All Pakistan Fruit and Vegetable Exporters, Importers and Merchants Association (PFVA) Patron-in-Chief Abdul Waheed Ahmed said that the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan has issued a notification on Jan 12 quoting the commerce ministry, which also states that the export of onions will be allowed only under advance payment terms.

The national average price of onion has risen to Rs180-260 per kg during the week ending on Jan 11 from Rs160-250 in the preceding week, according to the PBS data.

When India imposed a ban on onion exports on

He said exporters in a meeting with the commerce ministry on Friday proposed an upward revision in MEP from the existing \$750 per tonne (FOB) with 100pc advance payments to avoid any losses to the growers, otherwise they would not grow onion next year besides bringing down local prices. He expressed surprise as to why market committees were not controlling the rate and why the government departments appeared helpless in exercising their duties of price.

Chinese yuan weakens in December 2023

BEIJING (Xinhua/APP): In December 2023, Chinese yuan weakened against a basket of currencies, according to the China Foreign Exchange Trade System (CFETS).

At the end of December, the CFETS yuan exchange rate composite index, which measures the yuan's strength relative to a basket of currencies, went down 0.89 percent from the end of November to 97.42, according to the system.

The index compares the yuan with the value of 24 currencies, including the U.S. dollar, euro and the Japanese yen.

By the end of December, the index measuring the yuan against the Bank for International Settlements currency basket fell 0.5 percent from the end of November to 102.42.



QUETTA: Central General Secretary Wali Afghan, Haji Aslam Tareen, Khan Kakar, Haji Abdul Baqi, Rasheed Agha and Haji Essa Khan Tareen addressing a meeting against gas bills and taxes jointly organized by All Balochistan Hostel & Restaurant Association and Anjuman Tajirun Balochistan.

PAJCCI Coordinator calls on Iranian Consul General

PESHAWAR (APP): Coordinator Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi here on Saturday called on Iranian Consul General in Peshawar, Ali Banafshehah to express his grief and condolence over deadly Kerman bombings claiming precious lives of scores of people.

During the visit, Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi, who is also President of Abaseen Columnist Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, was accompanied by Imtiaz Ahmad Ali, Director PAJCCI.

Zia expressed his deep grief and condemnation over terrorism incidents in

Kerman, a city of Islamic Republic of Iran, which claimed lives of more than 84 people and wounded many more.

He said the people of Pakistan are sharing the grief and shock received by their Iranian brethren over this tragic incident and are standing with them shoulder to shoulder at this difficult time. He also expressed sympathy with bereaved families and prayed to Allah Almighty to grant courage to them to bear this irreparable loss.

Later, the PAJCCI Coordinator also wrote his condolence remarks regarding the Kerman bombings in memorial book at the Iranian Consulate in Peshawar.

Establishment of Business Facilitation Centre to improve economic activities: Commissioner

MULTAN (APP): Commissioner Multan Division Aamir Khattak said that establishment of Business Facilitation Centre at Tehsil Office would surely help promote business activities by addressing concerns of business community.

During his visit at the Centre, the Commissioner remarked that economic stability was of vital importance for progress and prosperity of the region.

He added that Business Facilitation Centre will help remove undue regulations and provide much needed relief to the business men.

About 106 services under federal and provincial departments will be provided to citizens.

On this occasion, Director Development Robeena Kausar gave detailed briefing to the Commissioner Aamir Khattak. She remarked that the upgradation of Business Facilitation Centre was heading forward with fast pace. During his visit at the Centre, the Commissioner remarked that economic stability was of vital importance for progress and prosperity of the region.

President FPCCI says Financial, digital literacy very important to empower women

ISLAMABAD. A delegation of the Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IWCCI) led by Ms. Samina Fazil Founder President of IWCCI visited the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry FPCCI to meet President FPCCI Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh and all UBG

that financial and digital literacy is very important to empower women as we have one of the lowest rates of female entrepreneurship in the world, with only one per cent of women owning a business.

Mr. Karim Aziz Malik Chairman FPCCI Capital Office & Malik Sohail Hussain Chairman Coordination FPCCI said that women empowerment is a challenge in Pakistan but it's necessary to improve the economic landscape in the country. They urged the government to simplify policies and provide an enabling environment for small Medium businesses run by women.

While speaking on the occasion, President FPCCI Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh said that women empowerment is at the top of the our agenda without which the dream of national development cannot be achieved. He said that IWCCI is one of the most effective women's chambers in the country which is playing a laudable role in empowering women through entrepreneurship and that the FPCCI will extend all possible help towards this noble cause. Mr Atif Ikram Sheikh said

Founder President IWCCI Samina Fazil, President IWCCI Rizwana Asif, Senior Vice President Dr. Sonia Saleem, Former President Naima Ansari, Former SVPs Sadaf Asim Abbasi & Rozina Lahooti, Dr. Afshan Malik expressed that current women's economic.



MULTAN: Farmers are busy packing carrots after collecting from the field to deliver the market.

Drastic measures in power sector vital to control circular debt: SVC FRIA

LAHORE (INP): Senior Vice Chairman of the Ferozepur Road Industrial Association (FRIA) and PIAF senior leader Shahbaz Aslam has stressed the need for overhauling the power sector through some drastic measures as the abnormal hike in base electricity tariff and the anti-theft drive have failed to control the power sector circular debt or the losses of distribution companies which have been increasing.

In a statement issued on Saturday, he said that power sector circular debt has climbed to Rs2,611 billion, while the losses by the distribution companies have enhanced by 26.22 percent to Rs77 billion.

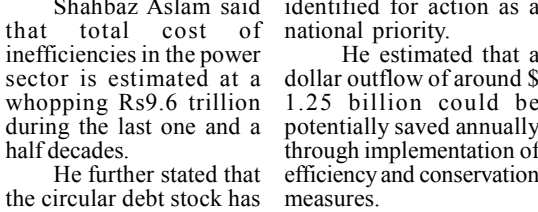
Shahbaz Aslam said that total cost of inefficiencies in the power sector is estimated at a whopping Rs9.6 trillion during the last one and a half decades.

He further stated that the circular debt stock has

crossed Rs4 trillion after Rs400 billion were added to it during the last fiscal year. He said that in present scenario the energy efficiency and conservation are key measures used by countries across the globe to mitigate associated risks. However, in the case of Pakistan, both energy efficiency and conservation were generally treated as alien concepts.

The SVC FRIA noted that there was an urgent need for upgradation of energy efficiency and conservation standards and strict enforcement, besides replacement of inefficient appliances and consumer awareness for responsible use of energy were other key areas which should be identified for action as a national priority.

He estimated that a dollar outflow of around \$ 1.25 billion could be potentially saved annually through implementation of efficiency and conservation measures.



LAHORE: People are buying quilts from a flea item shop at Hospital Road in Provincial Capital.

Morgan Stanley to pay \$249 mn to settle US trading fraud charges

NEW YORK (AFP/APP): Morgan Stanley will pay \$249 million to settle civil and criminal charges connected to stock trades where it disclosed key information that it promised to keep confidential, US authorities announced Friday.

The conduct concerns large equity trades in which Morgan Stanley trading staff between 2018 and 2021 leaked information to hedge funds, resulting in some \$72.5 million in improper profits, according to a US Department of Justice press release that announced a deferred prosecution agreement with the New York giant.

Morgan Stanley also reached a civil settlement with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Both agencies also charged Pawan Passi, the former head of its equity syndicate desk, with fraud. Passi faces a \$250,000 civil

penalty and reached a parallel deferred prosecution agreement with the Justice Department.

Morgan Stanley had marketed its processes as "less prone to leaks and therefore less risky" than those at other banks that offered similar services, according to a DOJ statement. "Contrary to these promises" of privacy, two Morgan Stanley trading staff members "shared highly specific information ... with certain hedge funds."

In one of the cases cited by the DOJ, the would-be seller of shares of Star Bulk Carriers canceled a plan for a sale in May 2021 after growing suspicious of leaks when the stock fell 6.8 percent, though peer companies did not experience losses.

"The head of the desk lied, falsely assuring the seller that no Morgan Stanley employees

Europe split over US, UK strikes on Houthis in Yemen

Monitoring Desk
ROME: Italy, Spain and France stood out by not taking part in U.S. and British strikes against the Houthi group in Yemen and not signing a statement put out by 10 countries justifying the attacks.

The divergence highlights divisions in the West over how to deal with the Iranian-backed Houthis, who have been targeting civilian ships in the Red Sea for weeks in what they say is a protest against Israel's military campaign in the Gaza Strip. U.S. and British warplanes, ships and submarines launched dozens of air strikes across Yemen overnight in retaliation for the repeated Houthi attacks on one of the busiest commercial shipping routes in the world.

The Netherlands, Australia, Canada and Bahrain provided logistical and intelligence support for the operation, U.S. officials said.

In addition, Germany, Denmark, New Zealand and South Korea signed a joint statement with these six nations defending the overnight attacks and warning of further action to protect the free flow of Red Sea trade if the Houthis did not back down.

A source in Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's office said Italy had declined to sign the statement

and as a result was not asked to participate in the attacks. However, a government source said Italy had been asked to take part but declined for two reasons—firstly because any Italian involvement would have needed parliamentary approval, which would have taken time, and secondly because Rome preferred to pursue a “calming” policy in the Red Sea.

Hours later, a government statement added that “Italy supports the operations of allied countries, who have the right to defend their vessels, in the interest of global trade flows and humanitarian assistance.”

GENEVA: Israel is consistently blocking humanitarian convoys into northern Gaza, making it increasingly difficult to bring desperately-needed fuel and other aid to hospitals there, the United Nations said.

After planning aid missions to the north, UN agencies said their convoys were subjected to slow and unpredictable inspections and then a near-systematic refusal from the Israeli side to proceed.

“Operations in the north (are) increasingly more complicated,” Andrea De Domenico, head of the UN aid agency OCHA's office in the occupied Palestinian territories, said.

Speaking from Jerusalem to a virtual press briefing, he described how detailed coordination was required with a network of checkpoints.



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken meets with Chinese Communist Party International Liaison Department Minister Liu Jianchao at the State Department in Washington, U.S.

Mexican president to put lofty reforms on agenda ahead of election

Monitoring Desk
MEXICO CITY: Mexico's president will propose a package of constitutional reforms early next month, including measures to overhaul the judiciary, elections and pensions, four months before voters head to the polls. President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's term ends in September. By law, Mexican presidents can only serve one six-year term. The leftist Lopez Obrador and his allies do not have the two-thirds super majority in Congress needed to change the constitution, but analysts speculate the reforms could still shape the political debate ahead of the June vote.

Since winning a landslide election in 2018 on an anti-establishment message, Lopez Obrador has moved to centralise.

Massive protest in Sanaa after US, UK strikes on Yemen rebels

Monitoring Desk
SANAA: Hundreds of thousands of people, some carrying Kalashnikov rifles, massed for a major demonstration in Yemen's rebel-held capital Sanaa on Friday after US and UK attacks.

Crowds under a sea of Yemen and Palestinian flags chanted “Death to America, death to Israel!” as they massed in the giant Sanaa square in the historic city's centre.

The Iran-backed Houthi rebels, who seized Sanaa in 2014 and have been at war with a Saudi-led coalition, came under heavy bombardment overnight with a series of military targets hit.

Large-scale demonstrations have been a regular occurrence since the Israel-Hamas war flared in October, but Friday's protest was particularly passionate.

“If America and its allies decide to declare open war on us, we're ready for it and we won't have any choice but to bring victory or fall as martyrs.”

Boeing's blowout forces travellers to check plane model before trips

Monitoring Desk
NEW YORK: More travellers are checking the model of an aircraft before booking flights after a midair cabin blowout forced a new Alaska Airlines-operated Boeing jet to make an emergency landing and grounded more than 170 planes, several travel operators said.

A piece of fuselage tore off the left side of the 737 MAX 9 jetliner operated by Alaska Airlines as it climbed following takeoff last Friday, forcing pilots to turn back and land safely with all 171 passengers and six crew on board.

Regulators have since grounded 171 737 MAX 9 planes for safety checks while Alaska and United Airlines, which together have 70 per cent of the 737 MAX 9 fleet, have cancelled hundreds of flights this week.

The Alaska crew have been praised for swiftly landing the plane, with only minor injuries to those on board. But photos on social media showing oxygen masks deployed and a portion of the aircraft's side wall missing, as well as provisional checks turning up loose bolts in some grounded planes, stirred concerns it would dent passenger confidence in Boeing planes. Boeing CEO Dave Calhoun on Tuesday acknowledged mistakes and told staff he and many customers had been “shaken to the bone”.

Somali president's son reportedly testifies in Turkey as he is accused of killing motorcyclist

Monitoring Desk
ISTANBUL: The son of Somalia's president testified at an Istanbul court about the death of a motorcyclist courier in the city, Turkish media reported.

An arrest warrant had been issued for Mohammed Hassan Sheikh Mohamud after a diplomatic car he was driving allegedly hit Yunus Emre Gocer, 38, on a highway in Istanbul on Nov. 30. Gocer died in a hospital six days later, by which time Mohamud had left Turkey.

Turkish Justice Minister Yilmaz Tunc said last month that he had discussed the case with his Somali counterpart to arrange Mohamud's return.

Britain's Sunak, in Ukraine, announces increase in military aid

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak visited wartime Kyiv to sign a new security agreement and announce an increase in military funding for Ukraine to buy drones, including surveillance, long-range strike and sea drones.

Britain, one of Ukraine's closest allies during the Russian invasion, will increase its support in the next financial year to 2.5 billion pounds (\$3.19 billion), an increase of 200 million pounds on the previous two years, Sunak said.

“Our opponents around the world believe that we have neither the patience nor resources for long wars.

So waver now, and we embolden not just Putin, but his allies in North Korea, Iran and elsewhere,” Sunak told a press conference.

His trip comes at an important juncture for Kyiv in the nearly two-year-old war as political infighting in the United States and European Union has held up two major packages of assistance.



A man carries away an injured girl following an Israeli strike on the Bureij refugee camp, in Gaza Strip.



People sit inside the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the day of the trial to hear a request for emergency measures by South Africa, who asked the court to order Israel to stop its military actions in Gaza and to desist from what South Africa says are genocidal acts committed against Palestinians during the war with Hamas in Gaza, in The Hague, Netherlands.

UN decries systematic blocking of aid to north Gaza hospitals

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: Israel is consistently blocking humanitarian convoys into northern Gaza, making it increasingly difficult to bring desperately-needed fuel and other aid to hospitals there, the United Nations said.

After planning aid missions to the north, UN agencies said their convoys were subjected to slow and unpredictable inspections and then a near-systematic refusal from the Israeli side to proceed.

“Operations in the north (are) increasingly more complicated,” Andrea De Domenico, head of the UN aid agency OCHA's office in the occupied Palestinian territories, said.

Speaking from Jerusalem to a virtual press briefing, he described how detailed coordination was required with a network of checkpoints.

Israel pounds Gaza on 99th day of war

Monitoring Desk
GAZA STRIP: Israel pounded Gaza on Saturday as the Palestinian territory suffered under a dire humanitarian situation and grappled with a telecommunications blackout on the 99th day of the war.

Fears of the conflict widening have grown after US and British forces struck pro-Hamas Houthi rebels in Yemen following attacks on Red Sea shipping, with a fresh US air strike confirmed Saturday.

EU weighs proposal to send naval mission to Red Sea

Monitoring Desk
BRUSSELS: The European Union will discuss next week a plan to set up a naval mission to help protect Red Sea shipping, diplomats said.

The proposal, in the pipeline in Brussels for several weeks, was mooted before US and British forces struck Yemen early on Friday.

Any EU effort would seek to complement a US-led coalition, which includes numerous countries from the bloc, which is already operating in the vital shipping route.

The details of the size and scope of any EU mission remain to be hammered out and European diplomats said a first discussion would take place in Brussels on Tuesday.

Spain said on Friday that it would not take part in any EU naval mission in the Red Sea.

Its defence minister, Margarita Robles, said that “Spain's position on this subject has always been clear.” The EU last year initially mulled a plan to expand its Atalanta mission focused on protecting shipping off Somalia, but that move was blocked by Spain. Madrid gave no official reason, but Spanish media reported that domestic politics was behind the refusal, with a hard-left partner in Spain's governing coalition.

New Zealand ex-Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern weds longtime partner

Monitoring Desk
WELLINGTON: New Zealand's former Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern married her longtime partner Clarke Gayford in a private ceremony on Saturday, finally tying the knot after cancelling ceremonies during strict COVID-19 controls she imposed on the country.

Ardern, 43, and Gayford, 47, got engaged in May 2019 and were meant to be married in early 2022, but the ceremony was cancelled due to her “go hard, go early” approach to the pandemic, which allowed New Zealand to keep

Beijing wants closer ties with Europe, says Xi

Monitoring Desk
SHANGHAI: China is willing to strengthen relations with Europe, President Xi Jinping said, at a meeting with Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo in Beijing.

De Croo arrived in China on Thursday, attending the inauguration of the new Belgian embassy in Beijing and meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the same day.

“China is willing to work with the European Union to promote steady progress in China-EU relations in the new year,” Xi told De Croo when the two men met on Friday at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, according to a read-out by state broadcaster CCTV.

“In the face of the chaotic international situation, it is necessary to build more bridges between China and Europe,” Xi said, adding that the two sides should “jointly promote world peace, stability and prosperity.”

Beijing and the EU are major trade partners but the bloc has recently signalled a desire to reduce reliance on China in technology and other areas.

The EU has launched an enquiry into China's subsidies for homegrown EV makers after accusations that their cheap products undercut European competitors — claims denied by Beijing.

And deteriorating ties between China and the West in recent years have given rise to concerns in Brussels over the potential vulnerabilities posed by AI, misinformation, and data security.

S. Arabia in ‘tight spot’ as West takes on Houthis

Monitoring Desk
RIYADH: The US and British strikes in Yemen have set off alarm bells in Saudi Arabia, which craves de-escalation in its war-torn neighbour so it can focus on domestic reforms, analysts said.

Explosions lit up the night sky early on Friday as the United States and Britain pounded scores of targets with more than 100 precision-guided munitions.

The strikes came in response to weeks of attacks on Red Sea shipping by the Houthis, who control northern Yemen and say they are firing on Israel-linked ships in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza.

Saudi Arabia has led an anti-Houthi coalition since 2015, launching thousands of air strikes of its own against the Houthis over the years — but is now angling for a ceasefire and military exit from the Arabian Peninsula's poorest nation.

Even as the scale of the US and British strikes was still coming into focus before dawn on Friday, the Saudi foreign ministry published a statement expressing “great concern” and calling for “self-restraint and avoiding escalation”.

Anna Jacobs, senior Gulf analyst for the International Crisis Group think tank, said Saudi Arabia found itself “in a tight spot”.

“They are balancing record-low public opinion about the US and Israel with their security concerns about the Red Sea and their desire to deter further Houthi attacks,” she said.

Hamas's unprecedented raid in Israel on Oct 7 and Israel's withering military response have scuppered Saudi Arabia's hopes for sustained peace in the region, which officials see as crucial for Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's sweeping Vision 2030 agenda for economic and social reform.

Opposing visions clash in Taiwan's election as China looms large

Monitoring Desk
NEW TAIPEI: Hundreds of thousands of people attended final pre-election rallies in Taiwan ahead of critical presidential and parliamentary polls that China has warned could take the island closer to war.

Taiwan, a neighbouring island China claims as its own, is separated by a narrow 180-kilometre strait from China and is a major producer of vital semiconductors.

Vice President Lai Ching-te, the front-runner candidate of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), paints the election as a choice between “democracy and autocracy” — criticising his main opponent Hou Yu-ih of the Kuomintang (KMT) for being too “pro-China”.

“After I get elected as the president, I will continue to take the path of democracy and peace. I will stand with the international camp of freedom and democracy. What's more, I will forever stand with Taiwan's people,” he said.

In a stadium nearby, Mr Hou called for his red-and-blue-clad supporters to kick out the DPP, which has been in power for eight years. “This is a choice between war and peace... If Lai Ching-te is elected, the Taiwan Strait is very likely to fall into unrest,” said Hou.

“Don't say that we are pro-China,” said supporter Minai at Hou's final rally. “We just want the peaceful co-existence of both sides... I don't want there to be a war.”

China, which has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control, has framed the elections as a choice between “peace and war”, calling the DPP dangerous separatists and urging Taiwanese to make the “right choice”. In the run-up to Saturday's election, China repeatedly denounced Mr Lai and rebuffed repeated calls from him for talks. China's defence ministry, responding to a question earlier on Friday on Taiwan's air force upgrading F-16 fighter jets and buying more from the United States.

El Nino can make 2024 hotter than record-shattering 2023

Monitoring Desk
GENEVA: The year of 2024 could be hotter under El Nino's influence than the record-shattering 2023, the United Nations warned, as it urged drastic emissions cuts to combat climate change.

The UN's World Meteorological Organisation said new monthly temperature records were set every month between June and December, and the pattern is likely to continue due to the warming El Nino weather phenomenon.

The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicted there is a one in three chance that 2024 will be warmer than 2023 — and a 99 per cent certainty that 2024 will rank among the five warmest years ever.

The UN's WMO weather and climate agency said July and August last year were the two hottest months ever recorded, as it officially confirmed 2023 had been the warmest year on record “by a huge margin”.

The WMO said the 2023 annual average global temperature was 1.45 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels (1850-1900).

The 2015 Paris climate accords aimed to limit global warming to well below two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels — and 1.5C if possible.

The WMO's new secretary-general Celeste Saulo warned that El Nino, which emerged mid-2023, is likely to turn up the heat even further in 2024.

The naturally occurring climate pattern, typically associated with increased heat worldwide, usually increases global temperatures in the year after it develops.

“The shift from cooling La Nina to warming El Nino by the middle of 2023 is clearly reflected in the rise in temperature,” she said.

“Given that El Nino usually has the biggest impact on global temperatures after it peaks, 2024 could be even hotter.”



SANAA: Houthi supporters rally against air strikes launched by the US and Britain on Yemeni targets.

Ecuador's Noboa seeks tax hike to fund security, as families of hostages protest

Monitoring Desk
QUITO: The administration of Ecuadorian President Daniel Noboa has asked lawmakers to weigh an increase in value added tax (VAT) to finance efforts to combat crime gangs, as the armed forces increased operations in violent areas. A dramatic spike in violence this week — including the on-air storming of a TV station, the hostage-taking of 178 prison staff by inmates and the kidnapping of police officers — appears to be a response by gangs to Noboa's plans to tackle a dire security situation, the government has said.

Noboa, who took office in November, has declared a state of emergency and named 22 gangs as “terrorist” organisations.

A total of eight prison staff have been released since late on Thursday, prisons agency SNAI said in a statement on Friday.

Three were being held in Azuay prison in Cuenca, where 21 hostages have also been attended to by the Red Cross.

North Korea halts radio broadcasts, curbs exchanges with South

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea stopped operating a radio station used to send coded messages to its agents in South Korea, the Yonhap news agency said on Saturday, the latest sign the isolated country is shaking up the way it handles relations with Seoul. North Korea has been stepping up pressure on Seoul in recent weeks, declaring it the “principal enemy”, saying the North will never reunite with the South and vowing to enhance its ability to deliver a nuclear strike on the US and America's allies in the Pacific.

North Korea to welcome Russian tourists in February, the country's first since the pandemic

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: Russian tourists reportedly going on a ski trip to North Korea will be the first international travellers to visit the country since border closings in January 2020 amid the global pandemic lockdown.

The tour, published by the Russian state-run Tass news agency and advertised by a Russian tour agency this week, underscores deepening cooperation between Moscow and Pyongyang. It follows the meeting last September between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin at a cosmorama in Russia's Far East.

The trip scheduled for February was a surprise to Asia observers, who had expected the first post-pandemic tourists to North Korea to come from China, the North's biggest diplomatic ally and economic pipeline.

The webpage of the tour agency, Vostok Intur, says the four-day trip is to start on Feb. 9.

According to a Tass report Wednesday, an unspecified number of tourists from Russia's far eastern region of Primorye will first fly to the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, where they will visit monuments such as the “Tower of Juche Idea.”

Poland to change process for judges' nominations

Monitoring Desk
WARSAW: Polish Justice Minister Adam Bodnar outlined a bill that aims to correct the way judges are appointed as a first step in rolling back the previous government's judicial reforms with a view to unfreezing EU funds.

The former Law and Justice (PiS) party government had for years been stuck in a row with Brussels over its court reforms and the rule of law, resulting in billions of European Union's funds for Poland being frozen.

AJK PM seeks int'l community's role to help resolve Kashmir issue without further delay

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq, while voicing his serious concern over the worsening political and human rights situation in the Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) state, urged upon the international community to play its due role to help resolve the lingering dispute without further loss of time.

"The much-delayed global Kashmir conflict has been the main cause and consequence of rights violations in the region," the AJK Prime Minister said while talking to the AJK Muslim Conference chief former Prime Minister of AJ&K Sardar Atique

Ahmed Khan, who called on him at Jammu Kashmir House in the federal metropolis late Friday.

Speaking on the occasion, the PM said that the situation in IOJK has further deteriorated since the Modi government stripped the region of its special status. The Indian government's unilateral move, he said, was in violation of the UNSC resolutions.

He said that the Indian Supreme Court's verdict on 370 has further compounded the issue of Kashmir.

The PM said that the Kashmiri people have neither accepted India's belligerent military occupation nor do they accept the bi-

ased verdict of the Indian Supreme Court. He said that the government of Azad Kashmir would utilize all available resources to promote the Kashmiris' just cause at the international level, besides sensitizing the world about the early resolution of the Kashmir issue in line with the UNSC resolutions.

Referring to the recently held conference in Kotli, the PM said that the massive gathering held in support of Kashmiris' right to self-determination was organized against the backdrop of the All Parties Kashmir Conference, which was attended by the representatives of all the political parties of Azad Kashmir and the All Parties

Hurriyat Conference (APHC).

Anwaar said that besides highlighting the Kashmir cause, the government had stepped up its efforts to establish good governance and rule of law in the state. He said that the welfare of people was among the government's top priorities.

Former Prime Minister Sardar Atique Ahmed Khan assured the PM of his party's full support to strengthen Kashmir's ongoing freedom struggle.

He also appreciated the good governance initiatives taken by the Prime Minister.



LAHORE: Activists of Civil Society holds protest in the support of oppressed Muslims of Ghaza, outside Press club in Provincial Capital.



ZHOB: Commissioner Zhob Division Tariq-ur-Rehman presenting a memorial shield to Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan

Asghar Achakzai says Implementation on party's manifesto to be ensured if voted to power

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Provincial President of Awami National Party (ANP) Asghar Khan Achakzai has stated that implementation on the party's manifesto would be ensured regarding provision of basic human needs if the people voted the party to power in next elections. He also vowed to complete all the projects which remain incomplete after coming in power.

It would be our priority to complete the projects if people reposed confidence on the party in Chaman.

The ANP leader and candidate for PB-51, Chaman was addressing different party events and programmes in Chaman on Saturday.

The events he participated and addressed were included ulasi jirga at residence of Abdul Nafay

No tickets issued to PTI candidates: PTI-N chief

LAHORE (INP) - PTI-Nazriati Chairman Akhtar Iqbal Dar has stated that his party has not issued any tickets to election candidates from the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), adding that they submitted fake tickets.

During a press conference at the Lahore Press Club, Dar said that rumours were circulating from 12 o'clock that PTI-Nazriati had issued tickets to PTI candidates.

Earlier in the day, there were reports that as part of Plan B, the PTI has instructed its candidates to submit tickets with the symbol of the "batsman" which is the electoral symbol of its splinter group, the PTI-Nazriati.

Dar clarified that these were fake tickets and questioned where PTI candidates got the PTI-N tickets.

Counsel for PTI levels grave allegation against CJP, Ali Zafar regrets

ISLAMABAD (Online): Niaz Ullah Niazi counsel for PTI has leveled grave allegation against Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa during live broadcast.

The CJP however refuted the allegation and Ali Zafar counsel for PTI regretted over it.

A 3-member bench of Supreme Court (SC) presided over by CJP Qazi Faez Isa took up Election Commission (EC) appeal plea against Peshawar High Court (PHC) decision.

During the hearing of the case the CJP said to counsel Ali Zafar why he or Hamid Khan was not nominated in intra party election case. All new people have come in PTI. Where old people have gone. When new people came all of a sudden then can it be so party has been grabbed politically.

In the mean time Counsel Niaz Ullah Niazi said to CJP he should not talk about it how the new faces came. You can say anything. I have been appearing before you since three years.

He alleged CJP that his son came to him to give interview for the post of law clerk and he asked questions about PTI from him. "I know why it is being done with me."

The CJP while expressing annoyance said to Ali Zafar should we issue notice to him.

Ali Zafar said I regret in his place.

The CJP remarked live broadcast is going on. Son of Niaz Ullah Niazi has never come to him for interview. We ask questions to understand. We don't hear case if such attitude has to be kept.

However interval was announced after the counsel Ali Zafar regretted.

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Parvez Elahi out of election race, wife gets go-ahead for polls

LAHORE (INP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) has rejected Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Parvez Elahi's plea against the rejection of his nomination papers, however, his wife Qaisara was granted permission to contest the February 8 general elections from two constituencies.

A three-member bench headed by Justice Ali Baqar Najafi issued the verdict on pleas filed by the embattled party's president and his wife challenging the appellate tribunal's and returning officer's (RO) decisions.

The high court upheld the verdicts given by the RO and appellate tribunal regarding the rejection of Elahi's nomination papers from NA-64 and PP-32.

Additionally, the LHC full bench also rejected Moonis Elahi's appeal against the rejection of his nominations from NA-64, NA-69, PP-32, and PP-34.

However, Qaisara's nomination papers from NA-64 and PP-32 have been accepted for contesting the forthcoming general polls.

ECP warns candidates seeking symbol of other party of consequences

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Saturday warned candidates, who were members of one political party and were seeking allocation of symbol of other political party, of consequences. "In exercise of powers, conferred upon the Commission under section 4 of the Election Act, 2017, the Commission hereby direct that no symbol of any political party be allocated to any such candidate who is member of one political party and seek allocation of symbol of other political party."

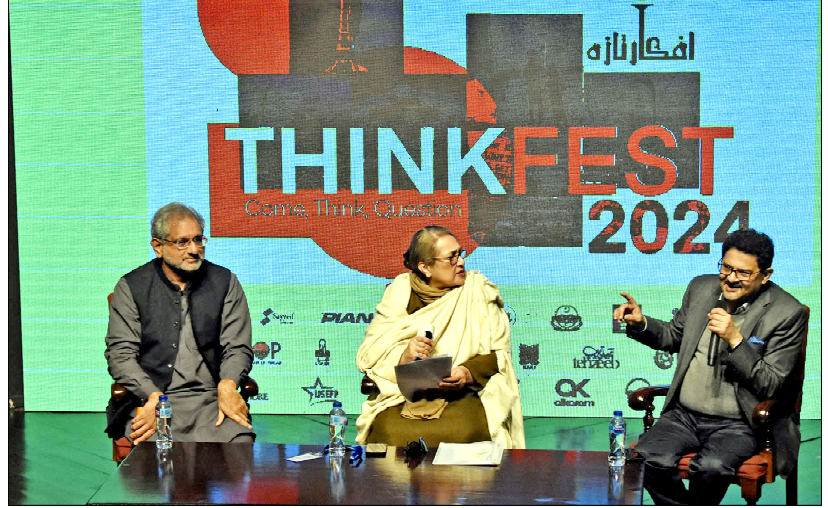
The bench headed by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja and including members Nisar Ahmed Durrani, Shah Muhammad Jatoti, Babar Hassan Bharwana, and Justice (Retd) Ikram Ullah Khan also directed the ROs to reject all such applications proceeding strictly in accordance with law and in term of the direction of Apex Court.

The ECP observed that in accordance with the Election Act 2017, a candidate providing a party affiliation certificate could not be a

member of more than one party simultaneously.

Emphasizing adherence to legal procedures, the Commission referred to the Supreme Court's decision in the Habib Akram case. Referring to section 66 of the Election Act, 2017, the ECP stated that "candidates who submit incomplete nomination papers, especially those omitting the required affidavit, will face rejection".

The ECP also noted that it had received a multitude of applications from candidates, raising concerns about manipulation of the system, deception, and potential violations of electoral laws, and warned the candidates of "consequences for false statements in their nomination papers' affidavits". Referring to the Supreme Court's direction, the Commission said, "Misrepresentation is clearly defined in the Constitution and law. Misrepresentation in nomination papers equals misrepresentation before the Supreme Court, with candidates facing the same consequences as making false statements before the highest judicial authority."



LAHORE: Former Finance Minister of Pakistan Miftah Ismail addressing during the Think Tank Seminar "Do We Need a New Social Contract" at Al-Hamra Arts Council in Provincial Capital

QWP opposes elections postponement

PESHAWAR (APP): Opposing the calls for delaying the polls, Quami Watan Party (QWP) Chairman Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao on Saturday said that the general election must be held on its scheduled date to enable the people to elect their representatives.

Speaking at a gathering of party workers in Sherpao village in Charsadda district, he opposed postponing the elections on the pretext of deteriorating law and order and harsh weather, adding that this would further complicate the situation.

He maintained that elections were the only way to bring political and economic stability to the country.

Aftab Sherpao said the political parties should join hands to help steer the country out of the prevailing crises.

He said after the polls,

FBR to suspend SIMs of non-filers across Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Following the latest condition of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Federal Bureau of Revenue (FBR) is set to launch a nationwide crackdown against non-filers.

The FBR officials have issued final notices to hundreds of thousands of non-filers and warned them of severe consequences including disconnecting electric, gas, and mobile sim suspension from January 15, 2024. Sources revealed that a total of 145 district tax officers have been granted 'special powers' across the country to bring in 1.5 million people in the tax net this financial year.

Sources claimed that the FBR will initiate stringent action against those who fail to comply with tax obligations.

The IMF's move to issue notices to hundreds of thousands of non-filers is part of a broader strategy to boost tax compliance in Pakistan.

LHC dismisses petition against Nawaz Sharif's nomination papers

LAHORE (INP): The Lahore High Court on Saturday dismissed a petition against rejection of appeal against approval of Nawaz Sharif's nomination papers from NA-130.

A three-member bench of the high court headed by Justice Ali Baqar Najafi heard the petition against Appellate Tribunal's decision.

The petition was filed by Pakistan Awami Mahaz chief Advocate Ishtiaq Chaudhry. He had challenged acceptance of the nomination papers of

Paramedical schools of Balochistan to be recognized with AHC Pakistan

Independent Report
QUETTA: The paramedical schools operating in Balochistan would be recognized with the Allied Health Council Pakistan.

The decision to this effect was made in the meeting of the Secretary Allied Health Council Ibrar Rafiq with the Secretary Health, Abdullah Khan here on Saturday.

Also present in the meeting were the Additional Secretary Health, Abdul Hameed Zehri, Chief Planning Officer, Abdul Rasool Zehri, Divisional Director Quetta, Dr. Lubna, Assistant Sec-

retary Balochistan Medical Faculty Board, Asad Ali and other concerned officials.

It was also decided to upgrade the Medical Faculty Examination Board to Allied Examination Board besides giving status of college to the Multipurpose School.

Addressing the meeting, Secretary said that the courses would be increased for upgrading the Multipurpose School as College.

He stressed the need to promote the allied health professional services in the province.

Four terrorists killed in separate KP operations

RAWALPINDI (INP): Four terrorists were killed by security forces in two operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as the country continues its fight against terrorism.

In a statement, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that an intelligence-based operation (IBO) was conducted in Mir Ali, North Waziristan district.

During the operation, after an intense exchange of fire, high-value terrorist commander Tabassum alias "Qadarmat" along with another militant Sajid alias "Sarkandi", was sent to hell by the security forces.

Meanwhile, two wanted militants were gunned down in another joint operation conducted by the security forces and police in Dera Ismail Khan district's Kulachi area.

"Weapons, ammunition, and explosives were also recovered from the killed terrorists, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against security forces as well as extortion and target killings of innocent civilians."

29,177 patients treated in Trauma Center Quetta: Managing Director

Independent Report
QUETTA: A total of 29,177 patients have been provided medical treatment during year 2023 in the Trauma Center adjacent to the Sandeman Provincial Headquarter Hospital Quetta.

Out of these total patients, 2,760 patients were admitted in the Trauma Center and surgeries of 5,088 patients were performed there.

Similarly, 25,511 X-Rays, 1,482 ultrasounds, 60,828 laboratory tests and 18,594 CT scans were also conducted during the last

year in the Trauma Center.

In addition to this, blood transfusion was also done in 2,434 patients in the Trauma Center.

These details were shared in an official statement issued here on Saturday.

According to the MD Trauma Center, we are extending best medical treatment facilities to the patients at the Center free of cost. He said that we would not leave any stone unturned in provision of quality medical services to the patients approaching the Trauma Center.

Five brothers from Gujrat contest polls against each other in elections 2024

GUJRAT (INP): Five brothers from the same district, Gujrat, will contest polls against each other in the general elections 2024.

The eldest brother, Chaudhry Abid Raza, will contest for the National Assembly seat, while the other four brothers will fight for the provincial assembly seat.

Chaudhry Shabbir

Raza, Chaudhry Naeem, and Chaudhry Shahid will contest the polls against each other for the Punjab Assembly constituency PP-28.

Meanwhile, Chaudhry Muhammad Ali will be the contesting candidate of the PMLN for PP-33. Chaudhry Shabbir Raza is the ticket holder for PMLN, while Chaudhry Naeem Raza is from PMLQ.



QUETTA: Provincial Health Secretary Abdullah Khan presiding over meeting of Steering Committee of Health Department