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RAWALPINDI: General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) visiting the front lines along Line of Control (LOC) in Sarian Sector.

Any aggression to be responded with full military might: COAS

Pakistan Army well versed with full threat spectrum and perpetually ready to respond effectively; Gen Asim Munir lauds operational readiness of troops

RAWALPINDI (APP): Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir has reaffirmed that any aggression or violation of the territorial sovereignty of Pakistan will be responded with full national resolve and military might.

He was addressing the troops deployed on the front lines along the Line of Control in the Sarian sector near Muzaffarabad today.

The Army Chief said the Pakistan Army is well-versed in the full threat spectrum and is perpetually ready to respond effectively. He mentioned that Indian state-sponsored terrorism in Pakistan has now extended to the heinous targeting of individual Pakistani citizens on its soil. Such a callous disregard for international law and norms of the international system is becoming a routine occurrence, and India is now be-

ing openly called out by many countries worldwide, exposing its sham credentials.

General Syed Asim Munir said Pakistan would continue to expose all such attempts and ensure the security of its citizens.

During the occasion, the Army Chief was briefed about the latest situation along the Line of Control. He appreciated the operational readiness, high morale, and effective response of troops to Indian ceasefire violations.

Earlier, upon arrival at the Jammu and Kashmir Monument in Muzaffarabad, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, Prime Minister Azad Kashmir, and the Army Chief laid floral wreaths at the Martyrs' Monument and paid rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices of Shuhada.

They acknowledged that the fortitude, resilience, and unwavering faith of Kashmiris in the face of unabated brutality of Indian occupation forces in IIOJK are exemplary. They said the brewing humanitarian and security crises in the IIOJK seriously threaten regional peace and stability. Pakistan would always stand with Kashmiris in their just struggle for the inalienable right to self-determination in light of UN Security Council resolutions.

They noted that India is attempting to change the demography of IIOJK through illegal administrative and unilaterally imposed draconian laws and security clampdowns. Such machinations cannot suppress the will of the Kashmiri people to attain their legitimate objectives.

Nawaz Sharif pressuring administration, elections must be fair: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has addressed various issues ahead of the upcoming general elections and accused former prime minister Nawaz Sharif of pressuring the administration to influence the decision.

In an interview with VOA Urdu, he emphasized his party's focus on contesting the polls independently, warned against alleged political pressure, and stressed the need for fair and transparent elections.

Bilawal reiterated that

the PPP was not forming alliances with other parties and will fight the elections based on its own manifesto.

"I am contesting the elections and trying to ensure that the People's Party wins and forms a government," he told the news outlet.

He accused former prime minister Nawaz Sharif of the PML-N of pressuring the administration, warning him against any interference in the electoral process. He expressed confidence that the administration will resist such pressure.



KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing the election rally.

Kashmir Solidarity Day observed in big way: Peace of region linked with solution to Kashmir issue, says Mir Zubair Jamali

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Home, Captain (Retd) Mir Muhammad Zubair Jamali has stated that the peace of region is linked with the solution to Kashmir issue.

Therefore, this issue must be resolved so as to ensure peace in the region.

In an official statement issued here on eve of Kashmir Solidarity Day observed on Monday, the caretaker Provincial Minister said that the people of country including Balochistan express solidarity with the Kashmiri people.

He said that independence from the clutches of India is basic right of the people of Occupied Kashmir.

He said that we are standing shoulder to shoulder with the Kashmiri people in their struggle.

The caretaker Minister strongly condemned the brutalities unleashed by the Indian forces against Kashmiri people for last seven decades.

He urged the international community especially United Nations to take notice of the Indian atrocities in the Occupied Kashmir.

It may be mentioned here that Kashmir Solidarity Day was observed in big way all over the province. Rallies were taken out and seminars were organized to express solidarity with the Kashmiri people in almost all districts of the province.

India a terrorist state, committing worst atrocities against Kashmiris: PM Kakar

"On this day, I make it clear that that India should not have any such illusions. We believe in peace and are showing maximum patience and tolerance, but any misadventure in this regard will be forcefully responded"

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday said that India was a terrorist state, which had been committing the worst atrocities and brutalities against the innocent people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir for decades.

The world was, however, silently watching the Indian state terrorism against the Kashmiris, he regretted while addressing the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on the occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day.

The prime minister said for last many years, India was presenting a false narrative and trying to weaken the indigenous movement of the



Kashmiris for freedom by wrongly labeling them as terrorists.

There was a clear difference between terrorism and the people's struggle for independence, he added.

PM Kakar said that

showing maximum patience and tolerance, but any misadventure in this regard will be forcefully responded."

He reaffirmed that Pakistan did not want any conflict in the region, however, it was fully capable of strongly retaliating any attack on its soil.

India, he said, had for many times tested Pakistan's capacity, and if still had any desire in that regard then "we are fully ready to show our might".

He said if India was a true democracy then it should give the people of Kashmir their just right to self-determination, besides restoring all the basic human rights in the IIOJK.

PM Kakar said India

must also stop the gross violations of human rights in the region along with releasing all the political prisoners. It should also abrogate all the strict emergency laws, besides removing its heavy military presence from the villages and towns of Kashmir.

It should allow the Kashmiris to hold peaceful gatherings, he added.

The prime minister said that India must allow unrestricted access to the observers of UN and Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), international media and human rights organizations to IIOJK to get first-hand information about the situation there; and investigate and report human rights violations.

Solangi says: Media helpline launched for quick redressal of journalist's complaints

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister of Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Monday that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MOIB) has launched a media helpline to redress complaints of both local and foreign journalists during election.

Addressing the launch ceremony of the media

helpline, he said, in the present era of digital media it was imperative to upgrade and improve working.

The media-complaint application will be accessible through any browser, Murtaza Solangi remarked.

He said the application was launched for the convenience of local and international journalists and media persons covering the general election 2024.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi launched Media Helpline app at Press Information Department.

Terrorists killed in Mach operation belonged to banned organization; Jan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has categorically stated that the terrorists killed in Mach operation belonged to a banned terrorist organization.

He said that the heirs of the terrorists killed by the security forces in Mach themselves confessed in written that they were the members of the banned organization and were involved in the terrorism activities. In a tweet on his social media account "X" on Monday, the Minister Information said that the bodies of terrorists are not handed over to the heirs anywhere in the world, and the state takes care of their misled children.

He said that the heirs of terrorists have given assurance that no terrorist would participate in their funeral prayer.

He said that the terror-

ists have baffled out after the operation conducted by the security forces and their conspiracy was uncovered.

Jan Achakzai also said that the bloody plot and network of the conspiracies hatched on behalf of the Indian masters have also been exposed to the world.

He said that the mastermind of the drama Mah Rang is making allegation of the extra judicial killing just to hide her shame.

The caretaker Minister Information said that the pro-India banned organization had played holi of blood and ingre in Mach and Kolpur. He insisted that India is behind the incidents of terrorism and lawlessness in Balochistan.

In the end, Jan Achakzai asked Mah Rang Baloch as why she had gone to Dubai prior to the Turbat protest sit-in and what guidelines she had taken from the "RAW" agents.

1651 polling stations declared most sensitive: All set to hold elections in Balochistan; preparations finalized, maintains PEC

Muhammad Farid Afridi says around 82,000 polling and security personnel to be deployed all over Balochistan for election duty

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Election Commissioner Balochistan, Muhammad Farid Afridi has stated that all the preparations have been finalized for the general elections to be conducted on February 8 in the province.

He said that we are determined to conduct the elections in peaceful manner.

The Provincial Election

Commissioner was addressing press conference at his office on Monday.

He said that the elections would be held on 16

10 policemen martyred in terrorist attack on DI Khan police station

Six policemen were also injured when terrorists targeted the police station in Tehsil Daraban

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): At least 10 policemen were martyred and six others got injured as a group of unidentified militants attacked Chaudhwan police station here in Daraban tehsil in the wee hours on Monday.

According to the police spokesman, the terrorists employing heavy weapons attacked the Chaudhwan police station at around 03:00 a.m.

The police retaliated and an exchange of gunfire continued for around two and a half hours. However, the attackers managed to escape the scene.

In the attack, 10 policemen were martyred and nine others got injured. The martyrs

Muhammad Aslam, Ghulam Farid, Muhammad Javed, Muhammad Idrees, Muhammad Imran, Saifdar, ASI Kausar, Ehtram Syed, Rafi Ullah and Hameed ul Haq while the injured policemen included Ahmad Hasan, Akbar Zaman, Inayat Ullah, Shehrab Khan, Ibrahim and Naqeeb Khan. The injured were immediately shifted to District Headquarters hospital Dera Ismail Khan.

RPO Nasir Mehmood Satti and DPO Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani along with a heavy contingent of police and security forces reached the site and launched a search operation to arrest the perpetrators.

Later, the funeral prayers of the martyred

police officials were offered here in Ejaz Shaheed Police Lines with full official protocol and honor. The funeral were also attended by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Chief Minister Arshad Hussain Shah, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Akhtar Hayat Khan, Regional Police Officer (RPO) Dera Nasir Mehmood Satti, Commissioner Dera Zafarul Islam, Deputy Commissioner Mansoor Arshad, District Police Officer (DPO) Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani, Senior military and civil administration's officials, besides a large numbers of people hailing from different segments of the society.

Visit Muzaffarabad Monument PM, COAS pay tribute to sacrifices of martyrs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Ch. Anwar ul Haq and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Monday visited the Muzaffarabad Jammu and Kashmir Monument to lay wreaths and pay rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices of the martyrs.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release, the leadership acknowledged that the fortitude, resilience and unwavering faith of the Kashmiris in the face of unabated brutality of Indian occupation forces in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK) had been exemplary.

They observed that brewing humanitarian and security crises in the IIOJK seriously threatened regional peace and stability.

Pakistan would always stand with the Kashmiris in their just struggle for the inalienable right to self-determination in light of the United Nations Security Council resolutions, they added.

Nawaz asks Murree constituents to vote wisely for a new dawn

MURREE (INP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) supreme Nawaz Sharif and party chief organizer Maryam Nawaz on Monday pledged to redevelop the country after coming to power.

During the power show in Murree just days before the general elections, Nawaz reiterated that the cost of



essentials was much less when he was the prime minister than the present prices. He said he rid the people of the menace of loadshedding.

During his last stint in power, Nawaz claimed that the economy was flourishing and businesses were thriving.

He urged the people to vote responsibly as "vote can change the destiny of their generations." He asked the constituents to stamp on the "tiger" (electoral symbol of PML-N) on Feb 8 and become part of development and progress.

He criticised the judges who disqualified him. He said the country was devastated after his removal from office and today they (a reference to judges) were tendering resignations.

Kashmir Solidarity Day: Protests, calls for freedom echo across Pakistan, AJK

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: On Kashmir Solidarity Day, being observed on February 5, the passion for Kashmiri self-determination burned bright across Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Large-scale demonstrations, symbolic gestures, and passionate speeches marked the day, highlighting the ongoing struggle and demanding international intervention.

In Muzaffarabad, the capital of Azad Kashmir, a grand ceremony unfolded at Azadi Chowk. Participants waved flags, chanted slogans, and formed a chain of human hands connect-

ing them to their brethren across the Line of Control. A special session of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Assembly was also held, with speeches reiterating support for the Kashmiri cause.

Meanwhile, thousands marched on Constitution Avenue in Islamabad, led by Foreign Ministry officials. Children, politicians, and citizens alike joined the rally, paying homage to Kashmiri martyrs and chanting "Kashmir Banega Pakistan." Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Aneeq Ahmed also participated, delivering a strong message against the Indian occupation.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Economic rhetoric

On Thursday, voters will elect a new government tasked with managing one of the country's worst-ever economic crises: growth shrank, inflation soared to record highs, the rupee weakened rapidly, and foreign reserves dwindled in the last two years. However, the 'economic programmes' articulated by the three major contenders for power — the PML-N, PTI and PPP — in their respective election manifestos show that none has an actionable short-to long-term strategy to tackle the daunting economic challenges.

More crucially, no party talks of how they intend to accomplish the immediate task of approaching the IMF for another larger and longer funding programme — critical to economic revival — once the current \$3bn facility expires in mid-April, to avoid the prospect of default. Rather than giving the party's roadmap for achieving macroeconomic and other targets in their manifestos, and outlining economic objectives, priorities and policy intentions, each party has made frivolous promises instead. For example, the PML-N, whose leadership likes to harp on the party's 'development narrative' and building a network of motorways and roads, has pledged to create 10m jobs, enhance wages to match inflation and cut electricity bills by 20-30pc. How? They don't explain.

Likewise, the PPP has promised to double salaries, and provide free electricity up to 300 units and subsidies to alleviate the impact of inflation on voters, as well as generate employment opportunities for young labour market entrants.

Though the PTI has avoided populist commitments, its economic plan, like those of the PML-N and PPP, is also heavy on rhetoric, hardly giving concrete strategies to achieve the macroeconomic goals its manifesto defines. Elections are the best time for political parties to send their message to the voters and rally support around their socioeconomic priorities. However, in Pakistan, parties usually avoid providing quantitative, evidence-based policy targets with a detailed overview of how and when they intend to implement their economic promises. A PIDE study of past election manifestos of the major parties shows that these documents did not contain concrete plans and largely comprised empty promises, with no homework done vis-à-vis future goals. While the PML-N is seeking votes for its promise of delivering 'speedy development', PTI is staking its claims on the basis of its 'economic performance' during the Covid pandemic, and PPP on its social welfare agenda. That means these parties do not have any ready economic policy blueprints to work on if voted into power.

Both the PML-N and PTI may have given some abstract macroeconomic, export and other targets and priorities in their new manifestos, but do not offer any specifics or practical strategies to achieve these goals if elected to power. Little wonder these parties are unable to consistently pursue their economic policies even through a single budget cycle.

Anti-colonial ally?

Huma Yusuf

Many will recognise the name of the great Russian poet, Alexander Pushkin. Fewer people will know that he is partially of African origin, and that his heritage is routinely touted by Moscow as proof that it is not a European-style imperial power. We may not know this detail, but it is widely appreciated across the Global South, particularly in Africa, where Russia is increasingly valued as an ally helping to balance the excesses of the Global North.

The sense in the Global South that Russia is an anti-colonial ally (despite its imperial past, and its colonising aims in Ukraine) is apparent in the recent documentary *Inside Wagner: The Rise of Russia's Notorious Mercenaries*. The film shows how the narrative that Russia is anti-West, and so pro-Global South is becoming entrenched, driven further by Russian propaganda, including the production of slick action films glorifying Wagner and the co-option of African social media influencers. Russian mercenaries' violent tactics and human rights abuses are reframed as sacrifices in the name of stability, particularly in places like Central African Republic, and swept aside in favour of finally standing up to European (and by extension Western) colonial powers.

Why is this relevant to Pakistan? In some ways, we are an outlier. Russia features less in our public discourse, particularly after former prime minister Imran Khan's awkwardly timed visit to Moscow on the eve of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Khan's populism was plugged into these emergent global narratives, and he briefly flirted with pro-Putin positioning as an extension of his anti-US

stance. However, that flirtation was quickly replaced by military pragmatism and pro-Ukrainian messaging, particularly in the run-up to the IMF deal.

Islamabad of late has tried to better balance its ties with Moscow, with celebrations of 75 years of diplomatic engagement last October, and promises to boost trade ties and security cooperation.

But the potential for a serious bilateral relationship is complicated, particularly with the Middle East developments. Pakistan has never been a foreign policy priority for Russia, with most engagement from Moscow being perfunctory. Russia's growing proximity with Iran is another twist: Tehran is allegedly supplying Moscow drones for the Ukraine conflict; Moscow has responded with a pivot towards Palestine in the context of the Israel-Palestine war. This pivot is largely driven by domestic political considerations. As Fiona Hill points out in an interview with Brookings, Moscow is worried that Gaza's fate will stir memories of violent Russian interventions in Chechnya, and pro-Palestinian positioning is considered a way to appease Russia's Muslim population. Still, this also facilitates Moscow's affinity with Tehran. While Russia's pro-Palestine positioning will win it more fans across the Global South, its pro-Tehran, anti-US stance will leave it in murky political waters given the post-conflict scenario shaping up in the Middle East. Given plans for a two-state solution to be tabled in exchange for Saudi recognition of Israel — and all the security guarantees that would entail — the current Muslim unity over Palestine's plight

could fragment along the lines of US/ Saudi vs Russia/ Iran.

Where will Pakistan find itself? While Islamabad's diplomatic balancing act will continue, pro-Russian sentiment is unlikely to become a major feature of public discourse. Indeed, in Moscow's calculations, ours is a geopolitical space already dominated by Russia-friendly Beijing, and so not worth the effort to shape through overtures and propaganda. But that does not mean that Pak-is-tan is completely disengaged from broader Global South narratives.

Pro-Russian narratives in the Global South are in fact anti-colonial and pro-justice. And anti-colonial sentiment will express itself in various ways in an increasingly stressed and resource-scarce world — as demands for climate justice, labour rights, equitable service delivery and more. Indeed, as authoritarianism creeps, civil resistance will soar. And as I wrote recently, Pakistan is not immune to these trends.

Even during a carefully engineered election cycle, our powers that be have been distracted by civil movements, which they have sought to address through both soft and hard approaches. Wheat subsidies are being deployed to calm tensions in Gilgit-Baltistan, while a security crackdown is intensified in Balochistan. The game of whack-a-mole to manage protest (whether in the form of social and political movements or violent uprisings) will continue in the post-poll settlement as well, and may intensify in response to the political orchestration of this week. As such, Pakistan is firmly in step with the Global South. -- Courtesy Dawn

Living longer

ArifAzad

Education is a strong determinant of higher remunerations in the course of a lifetime and generally, higher education levels result in increased incomes. For instance, a university graduate is likely to earn more than a college graduate. These higher earnings levels create better health outcomes in terms of longer lifespans, healthy lifestyles and enough funds to spend on health maintenance and improvement activities.

However, the link between the years of schooling, adult mortality and longevity has been under-researched. This under-examined connection has been somewhat established recently, and estimates for years of schooling and gains in lifespan were produced in a recent global meta-analysis and systematic review. The Centre for Global Health Inequities-Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (Chain-IHEME) issued a global meta-analysis and systematic review that estimates the magnitude of education on mortality risks and lifespans. The study covers 70 locations in 59 countries in 10 languages, including the UK, US, Brazil and China. The findings of the study are far-reaching in terms of policy implications and resources. It goes beyond previous studies on the subject as it is not restricted by time, location and language.

While previous studies on educational inequalities focused on high-income countries, this study includes varied economic contexts and regions and produces estimates of adult mortality in the age group 18 to 70 years. The importance of this analysis lies in its identification of under-examined benefits of education by systematically identifying and quantifying the impact of number of years of education on adult mortality risk at a global level.

Broadly, the review shows that the number of years spent in education have a relationship with longevity and mortality. In this way, education exercises not only protective effects on adult mortality but also serves a longevity-boosting function.

According to the study, every two years spent at school or university reduces the risk of mortality by two per cent. For 18 years of education, the mortality risk declines by a whopping 34pc, while completing secondary education cuts the risk by an impressive 25pc. Therefore, you can add more years to your life with a longer stay at school.

Conversely, those missing out on school years or dropping out of school find themselves deprived of health benefits. The report claims that adults not receiving any education face higher risks of ill-health throughout their lives — the effects are comparable to consuming five or more alcoholic drinks daily or smoking 10 cigarettes per day for a decade. It also demonstrates that mortality risk is moderated by health behaviour. Higher education, in turn, shapes access to better healthcare and wholesome lifestyles.

Pakistan has one of the highest number of out-of-school children in the world; the dropout rate is elevated as are school absences. These factors have a direct impact on the number of years spent in education and the cumulative effect on mortality risk and healthy lifespans. In Pakistan, education has, so far, been narrowly con-

ceived. Its impact on mortality risk reduction has not been considered in public health strategies. Therefore, pouring more and dedicated money into education and making concerted efforts to keep children in school and beyond can result in better health outcomes for population health, which, in turn, saves governmental and individual expenditure on health, especially in poor households.

Policymakers and politicians should see both education and health as intimately connected and focus on improving educational outcomes and retaining as large a number of youngsters as possible from school to university — the best investment in health and education.

A strategy that combines education and health will see not only prosperity but also improved health for the nation in the long term. Our younger generations are affected more by education inequalities that plague our education system. Therefore, enhanced schooling policies and increased resources towards education can act as proactive investment in health, which reduces disparities in learning and well-being.

Education is an essential component of the Sustainable Development Goals, which target inclusive and quality education for everyone, gender equality and reduction of inequalities within and between countries. Pakistan has been lagging behind on SDG targets. Dedicating sustained and stipulated funds to education with an 'education-health' lens as the bedrock of investment and policies can turn the tide on low educational attainment and associated low health outcomes. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

AGPR conducts study on loans to employees on direction of President

ISLAMABAD (APP): Auditor General identifies violations of rules in granting of loans to govt employees, recommends to improve existing mechanism on the direction of the President. In response to the concerns raised by President Dr Arif Alvi over the violations of merit and criteria for granting loans to government employees, the Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) has identified weaknesses and violations of rules in the existing system of granting long term Advances (House Building and Conveyance

advances) to Federal Government employees by conducting a special study that suggests recommendations for improving the system. President Dr Arif Alvi, in a letter to AGP, had urged the need to evaluate the current system of granting loans to government employees to ensure transparency, merit and fair play. He had raised concerns over the non-observance of criteria as two separate lists, called the "regular list" and the "out of turn list/priority", were being maintained for granting loans. He observed

that there seemed to be no criteria as to when, why and how an employee was to be moved from "regular list" to "out of turn" (priority) list. This issue had come to light during hearing of representations, filed by different government officers/ organizations, wherein incidents of preferential treatment and violations of merit were reported as loans were extended to some of the government employees in violation of General Financial Rules (GFR) and the approved criteria of 07-12-2015. In his letter to the

AGP, the President had also observed that the Principal Accounting Officers (PAOs) of various ministries send lists of employees to AGPR based on their discretion. These out-of-turn loans to employees on the basis of priority were causing grievances and litigation.

In response to President's letter, AGP conducted a special study on the long-term advances to Federal Government employees that found violations and discrepancies due to non-observance of the existing rules and procedures.



Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani speaking at the roundtable discussion on "Shared Prosperity, Economic Resilience, and Investments" at the Third EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum in Brussels.



ISLAMABAD: Women wearing traditional Kashmiri dresses as looks warm shawls on a stall at Lok Virsa Museum in the Federal Capital.

Pak mobile industry thriving despite dire economic indicators

Monitoring Desk
ISLAMABAD: As Pakistan battles its prevailing dire economic indicators, it seems that the country's mobile industry has managed to thrive despite rampant inflation and the declining purchasing power of the people. The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority's (PTA) annual report has revealed that local mobile phone manufacturers produced a whopping 84.4 million devices in the last five years.

As per the report, 25 million of these were smartphone devices that were manufactured between January 2019 and September 2023.

Furthermore, the regulatory authority said that 33 local and foreign companies locally established manufacturing plants under the Mobile Device Manufacturing (MDM) Regulations introduced in 2021 — with these companies, operating both as standalone entities and through joint ventures, obtained a 10-year MDM

authorisation.

The country also has initiated the export of locally manufactured handsets, with 120,000 SEEGO brand mobiles labelled as "Manufactured in Pakistan" exported to the African market in December 2022.

The Device Identification Registration and Blocking System (DIRBS), introduced by the PTA, has provided a level playing field for foreign investments in the mobile device manufacturing industry in Pakistan.

CM distributes allotment letters among landless farmers of Cholistan

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi distributed allotment letters for 12.5 acres of land to 26,000 landless farmers in Bahawalpur. The allocation of land to Cholistan farmers is poised to uplift the impoverished community and pave the way for prosperity.

Under this transformative initiative, each farmer has been granted a lease for 12.5 acres of land for a period of five years. This momentous decision addresses the long-standing grievance of the

underprivileged farmers spanning three districts in south Punjab, namely Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalnagar, and Bahawalpur, according to a handout issued here Monday.

The occasion holds immense importance for the Bahawalpur division, commemorating a historic day for the Cholistanis. Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi expressed heartfelt congratulations to the landless farmers of Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan, and Bahawalnager for securing their rightful allotment.

Pakistan's exports to China up by 46pc in 7 months

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan's export of goods and services to China witnessed an increase of 46 percent during the seven months (July to January). According to sources, the overall exports to China were recorded at US \$1.7214 billion during July-January (2023-24) against exports of US \$1.18 billion during July-January

(2022-23). On the other hand, the imports from China into the country during July-January were recorded at US \$7.71 billion against US \$7.66 billion last year, sources added. On January, Pakistan's export of goods and services to China witnessed an increase of 39.44 per cent during the first five months.

PTA committed to ensuring safe online environment for country's youth: Chairman

ISLAMABAD (APP): P a k i s t a n Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Chairman, Major General Hafeez ur Rehman, has said that the PTA is committed to ensuring a safe online environment, particularly for the country's youth and children.

In a message on the occasion of "Safer Internet Day", to be celebrated on February 6, he said, "PTA

recognizes the critical role that the internet plays in our lives. We are steadfast in our commitment to ensuring a safe online environment, particularly for our youth and children."The chairman asserted that it is the collective responsibility of all to create a secure and protective digital space, allowing Pakistani users to continue their online activities in a safer environment. He further

mentioned that PTA has collaborated with Meta, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), TikTok, and other organizations to pursue the cause of promoting a safer online environment in Pakistan.

"Our efforts for the cause have been recognized, and PTA received the SAMENA Council international LEAD award under the category of "Enabling Child & Youth Safety Online," the

Tokyo shares open higher after US rallies

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Tokyo stocks opened higher Monday, driven up by the strength of US tech shares that pushed Wall Street indices to new records.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 index climbed 0.69 percent, or 248.99 points, to 36,407.01, while the broader Topix index added 0.61 percent, or 15.61 points, to 2,555.29.

The dollar stood at 148.40 yen, compared with 148.30 yen on Friday in New York.

Pakistanis drank tea worth over \$336m in six months!

Monitoring Desk
LAHORE: Tea imports into the country witnessed an increase of 5.53% during the first half of the current fiscal year compared to last year's corresponding period, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) data showed. The tea imports into the country increased up to \$336.423 million during July-December (2023-24) compared to the imports of \$318.798 million in July-December (2022-23),

according to PBS data. In terms of quantity, the imports surged by 9.12% as the country imported 139,751 metric tonnes of tea during the period under review compared to the imports of 128,068 metric tonnes.

Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, the tea imports during December 2023 decreased by 16.80% to \$58.869 million from last December's \$70.759 million.

PM Kakar says: Entire nation stands with Kashmiris to support their right to self-determination

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday said the entire Pakistani nation stood shoulder to shoulder with its Kashmiri brothers and sisters to support their struggle for the right to self-determination. "Pakistan will continue to provide moral, political and diplomatic support to its Kashmiri brothers and sisters until they realise their right to self-determination as per the UNSC resolutions", the prime minister said during his visit to Muzaffarabad, Azad Kashmir on the

occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day. Talking to the Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Anwarul Haque and Speaker Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Chaudhry Latif Akbar here, PM Kakar said the final and just solution of the Kashmir issue was possible only under the free and impartial referendum according to the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). He said the Indian atrocities in Jammu and Kashmir under the illegal rule of India were

not hidden from anyone and the silence of the international community on Indian atrocities on innocent Kashmiris was alarming and reprehensible. The speaker of the Legislative Assembly and the prime minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir welcomed the prime minister's visit to Muzaffarabad. They said the PM Kakar's visit to Muzaffarabad on the occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day had sent a clear message to India that the hearts of Pakistani and Kashmiri brothers and sisters beat together.



LAHORE: Governor of Punjab Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman addressing during ceremony in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day at Al-Hamra Hall, in Provincial Capital.

Pakistan always keeps Kashmir issue alive at global forums: Governor

LAHORE: Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman said on Monday that Pakistan has always played its role in keeping the issue of Kashmir alive at all forums of the world including the United Nations Organization (UNO) and Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). He was addressing the ceremony in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day organized by Punjab

Department of Information and Culture here at Al-Hamra Arts Council where Secretary Information Danyal Saleem Gilani, Director General Public Relations Punjab, Rubina Afzal, Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Mushtaq Mehmood and a large number of people from different walks of life were present. The Governor said that today Pakistanis and millions of Kashmiris living around the world, are

observing Kashmir Solidarity Day against India's invasion and illegal occupation of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. He added that the purpose of observing this day is to draw the attention of the international community towards the Indian usurpation and oppression of the occupied state of Jammu and Kashmir so that the oppressed Kashmiris get their right to self-determination.

CM Punjab inaugurates upgraded BVH, safe city project in Bahawalpur

Independent Report BAHAWALPUR: Caretaker Chief Minister of Punjab Mohsin Naqvi arrived in Bahawalpur on Sunday for the inauguration of the OPD, Surgical Ward Upgradation Project at Victoria Hospital. He also inaugurated the Safe City project in Bahawalpur. He inaugurated the upgraded building of the Civil Lines Police Station. Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi also virtually inaugurated other model police stations of Bahawalpur. He visited the wards of Bahawal Victoria Hospital. He also inspected the Medical Emergency, Plastic Surgery, and ENT wards. He talked

to the patients, doctors, and paramedical staff. Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi said, "This is your hospital, take care of this lovely building." Talking to the media he said that Bahawal Victoria Hospital was built in 1906, and renovating the old building was a difficult task. The team of the Department of Buildings and Communications is credited with upgrading the historical building of Bahawal Victoria Hospital beautifully. If a new hospital is built, it will not be as upgraded as Bahawal Victoria Hospital. The old building of the hospital has been completely renovated.



MUZAFFARABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar being presented guard of honor upon his arrival at AJK Legislative Assembly.

Two more children succumb to pneumonia in Punjab

LAHORE (INP): Pneumonia claimed two more lives of children during the past 24 hours in Punjab. Punjab Health Department, a total of 605 new cases of pneumonia were reported during the last 24 hours. The health authorities said Lahore logged 177 fresh cases of pneumonia during the last 24 hours. Punjab has reported 318 pneumonia-related deaths, while over 20,872 cases have been

reported in the province whereas Lahore only reported 58 deaths and 4,050 cases. Health experts attribute the rapid increase in cases and deaths in Punjab to the environmental pollution caused by smog during the winter season. Pneumonia is an infection in the lungs, often caused by viruses. It can manifest after symptoms of a cold or flu and can range from mild to severe. Typically, pneumonia is more common in children aged five or younger.



MUZAFFARABAD: Students hold placards to showing solidarity with the people of Kashmiri, during protest rally to mark the Kashmir Solidarity Day.

KP Governor says: India breaks all records of atrocities, human rights violations in IIOJK

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali here Monday said that India has broken all records of oppression and brutalities after illegally invaded the Occupied Kashmir and demanded international community take notice of it. He also demanded dignity and respect for the people of the held valley. Addressing the Kashmir Solidarity Day rally, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor said that hundreds

of thousands of Kashmiris were martyred, children orphaned and women were sexually abused at IIOJK. He said that India's involvement in state terrorism and human rights abuses were serious threats to the world and regional peace. Paying rich tributes to sacrifices, bravery and courage of the oppressed Kashmiris of IIOJK for right of self-determination, the Governor said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government.

Gas leakage leaves 2 dead in Havelian

ABBOTTABAD (INP): Two more people on Monday lost their lives in a gas leakage incident in Haavalian village, during the current season death tolls caused by the gas leakage crossed 12.

According to the Rescue 1122 sources, dead persons were identified as Yasar and Mehtab, hailed from the village Tatrila an area of Rajoi Police Station. Responding to the incident, the rescue medical team shifted the bodies of Yasar and Mehtab to Type-D Hospital Havelian. Despite the issuance of guidelines for the use of gas heaters during the winter season by Rescue 1122, district administration, and Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL), it is disheartening that people continue to neglect these guidelines, leading to the loss of precious human lives. This was the fifth incident of gas leakage in the district of Abbottabad where 12 people lost their lives.

Children-plants WHO's 'Own a Tree' initiative fosters strong bond of attachment

PESHAWAR (APP): The unique idea of involving school children in the promotion of green cover by launching an 'Own a Tree' plantation programme has shown an encouraging response of fostering a strong bond of attachment between minors and the plants planted with their nameplates. The plantation drive was carried out by the World Health Organization (WHO) with the

cooperation of the Health Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by involving school children in planting saplings within the premises of four Basic Health Units (BHUs) in Charsadda district. "The activity was held on April 7, 2023, in connection with the observance of World Health Day (WHD) April which also marks the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1948."

Kashmir Solidarity Exhibition starts in Bahawalpur BAHAWALPUR (APP): A three-day Kashmir Solidarity Exhibition has started at the art gallery of Bahawalpur Arts Council here. President, Board of Management, Bahawalpur Arts Council, Prof-Dr. Aslam Adeb along with Director, Bahawalpur Arts Council, Sajjad Hussain inaugurated the Kashmir Solidarity Exhibition at the Arts Council premises. It was a pictorial exhibition displaying pictures and photos of Kashmiris who were victimized by Indian forces.

International News

127 more Palestinians killed as fighting rages in Gaza

GAZA (INP): Battles raged in Gaza's south Sunday ahead of another visit to the region by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in a bid to secure a new truce as the Israel-Hamas war approaches its fifth month. Blinken set off Sunday on what is his fifth Mideast trip since the October 7 attack by Hamas that set off the crisis. He is expected to begin his trip on Monday in Saudi Arabia before visits to Israel, Egypt and Qatar. The health ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza said at least 127 people were killed in Israeli strikes in the previous 24 hours in the territory. The Hamas government media office said a kin-

dergarten where families were sheltering was hit in the southern border city of Rafah, which is teeming with Palestinians displaced by the war. "There is no safe place in the Gaza Strip, from north to south," displaced man Mohammed Kloub told foreign media in Rafah, which according to UN figures now hosts more than half of Gaza's population. Israel has warned its ground forces could advance on Rafah as part of its campaign to eliminate Hamas. Israel's army said its forces had raided a Hamas training facility in Khan Yunis where militants prepared for the October 7 attack. The Al-Qadisiya

compound contained models of Israeli military bases, armoured vehicles, as well as entry points to kibbutzim, the army said in a statement. During the raid, the army "neutralised" several militants, it said. The Palestine Red Crescent Society said that at the nearby Al-Amal hospital there were "alarming signs (of) a humanitarian disaster... after 14 days of continuous siege". Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the army had "destroyed 17 of 24 (Hamas) battalions. Most of the remaining battalions are in the southern Strip and in Rafah, and we will deal with them."



Palestinian children wait to receive food cooked by a charity kitchen amid shortages of food supplies, as the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas continues, in Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip.

2 killed in Bangladesh as fighting rages on Myanmar border: police

DHAKA: At least two people were killed in Bangladesh on Monday after mortar shells fired from Myanmar during clashes there landed in a village across the border, police said. Parts of Myanmar near the 270-kilometre border with Bangladesh have seen frequent clashes since November when rebel Arakan Army fighters ended a ceasefire that had largely held since a 2021

coup. "The two were killed at around 2:15pm (0815 GMT) in the firing at Jalpaitoli village," local police chief Abdul Mannan told AFP. Police said a Bangladeshi woman, named 48-year-old Hosne Ara, and an unnamed ethnic Rohingya man had been killed. "They were sitting in the kitchen... when a mortar hit the place," Ara's daughter-in-law said, too distraught to give her name.



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken is welcomed upon arriving at King Khalid International Airport, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

US intends further strikes on Iran-backed groups

WASHINGTON (INP): The United States intends to launch further strikes at Iran-backed groups in the Middle East, the White House national security adviser said on Sunday, after hitting Tehran-aligned factions in Iraq, Syria and Yemen over the last two days. The United States and Britain unleashed attacks against 36 Houthi targets in Yemen, a day after the U.S. military hit Tehran-backed groups in Iraq and Syria in retaliation for a deadly attack on U.S. troops in Jordan.

"We intend to take additional strikes, and additional action, to continue to send a clear message that the United States will respond when our forces are attacked, when our people are killed," White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan told NBC's "Meet the Press" program on Sunday. The strikes are the latest blows in a conflict that has spread into the Middle East since Oct. 7, when the Iran-backed Palestinian militant group Hamas stormed Israel from the Gaza Strip, igniting war.

Turkey completes new homes in area hit by devastating earthquake

ANKARA (Internews): Turkey on Saturday handed over keys to newly-completed homes to some of those left homeless after last year's devastating earthquake, one year after the country's deadliest disaster in its modern history. Powerful quakes on Feb. 6, 2023 in southern Turkey killed more than 50,000 people in 11 provinces and left millions homeless.

Australia PM says government 'examining' claims against UN Palestinian agency

MONITORING DESK SYDNEY: Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said on Sunday his government was probing claims that some staff of the U.N. Palestinian refugee agency (UNRWA) were involved in the Oct. 7 Hamas attacks on Israel, after Australia paused funding to the aid agency last month. Australia is one of several countries to have halted funding for UNRWA, a critical source of support in Gaza, after Israeli claims of U.N. employees' complicity with Hamas. "We're examining it, along with other like-minded countries like Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States. We want that to be resolved," Albanese told the Australian Broadcasting Corp regarding the allegations, according to a transcript. Albanese said his government wanted to make sure the accusations were "fully examined" so that all funding was "going to the purpose for which it is given".

Russian cosmonaut sets record for most time in space

MONITORING DESK MOSCOW: Russian cosmonaut Oleg Kononenko on Sunday set a world record for total time spent in space, surpassing his compatriot Gennady Padalka who logged more than 878 days in orbit, Russia's space corporation said. At 0830 GMT Kononenko broke the record, Roscosmos said. Kononenko is expected to reach a total of 1,000 days in space on June 5 and by late September he will have clocked 1,110 days.

Maldives vows to boost defences after telling Indian troops to leave

Monitoring Desk MALE: The small but strategically placed Maldives will strengthen its military to defend its vast maritime territory, the new president vowed on Monday after ordering Indian troops to withdraw from the archipelago. Mohamed Muizzu said in his first address to parliament he would turn the modest Maldivian National Defence Force (MADF) into a modern military capable of patrolling its seas, which straddle key global shipping lanes. The pro-China leader reiterated that India will begin withdrawing its troops operating three maritime reconnaissance aircraft from March 10 and complete the process within two months. New Delhi considers the Indian Ocean archi-

pelago to be within its sphere of influence. However, the Maldives has shifted into the orbit of China — its largest external creditor — with September's election of Muizzu, who demanded the Indian troops leave. "I believe that the modern military capability to defend the country by road, sea and air should be strengthened in the Maldives," Muizzu said. "We have started to do that now." He said the MADF will soon be able to conduct surveillance of the country's 900,000 square kilometre (347,000 square mile) Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) around the clock. The Maldives accused India's coastguard last week of entering the north of its EEZ and intimidating three Maldivian fishing vessels.

'Unprecedented catastrophe' in Chile as wildfires kill 51

Monitoring Desk VIA MAR: Chileans on Sunday feared a rise in the death toll from wildfires blazing across the South American country that have already killed at least 51 people, leaving bodies in the street and homes gutted. Authorities warned of "complicated" conditions as they battled fires in the coastal tourist region of Valparaiso amid an intense summer heat wave, with temperatures soaring to 40 degrees Celsius over the weekend. Dense gray smoke blanketed the city of Vina del Mar on the country's central coast Saturday, forcing residents to flee. The fires are being driven by a summer heatwave and drought affecting the southern part of South America caused by the El Nino weather phenomenon, as scientists warn that a warming planet has increased the

risk of natural disasters such as intense heat and fires. The rising temperatures threaten to engulf more of South America, as brigades in Argentina have been fighting a fire that has consumed more than 3,000 hectares in Los Alerces National Park, famed for its beauty and biodiversity, since January 25. Rosana Avendano, a 63-year-old kitchen assistant, was away from home when the fire began to sweep through the El Olivar neighbourhood, where she lives with her husband. "It was terrible because I couldn't get (to my house). The fire came here... we lost everything," Avendano said. "My husband was lying down and began to feel the heat of the fire coming and he ran away." She feared the worst for hours, but eventually was able to contact her spouse.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi leading Kashmir Solidarity Day Walk from Foreign Office Gate, Constitution Avenue to D-Chowk in front of Parliament House organized by Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Rulers answerable to Almighty Allah, people: Maryam

MURREE (Online): PML-N chief organizer Maryam Nawaz has said rulers are answerable to Almighty Allah and people. "People of Murree should seek account from that ruler where he was when they were dying here. I appeal to elders and youths that vote is not a piece of paper. They should cast it thoughtfully, she said this while addressing a public meeting here Monday. She inquired from people that when Nawaz Sharif comes to power then people get jobs. Affix stamp on tiger and Nawaz do Pakistan, she added. Raising slogans in the perspective of Kashmir solidarity day she said Kashmir Banay ga Pakistan.

OIC reiterates call for just, peaceful settlement of Kashmir issue as per UNSC resolutions

JEDDAH (APP): The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Monday reiterated its call for a just and peaceful settlement of the Kashmir issue in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council. OIC Secretary-General Husein Ibrahim Taha said this while addressing at a photo exhibition held in the OIC premises to highlight gross human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Taha also expressed the OIC's pleasure in hosting the event organized by the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Pa-

kistan to the OIC on the occasion of "Kashmir Solidarity Day". He reiterated the call for the full implementation of the relevant UN resolutions, which emphasized the right to self-determination for the people of Kashmir. The secretary-general recalled that during the 49th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in March last year in Nouakchott, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, the Council urged India to reverse all illegal and unilateral measures taken on or after 5th August 2019; stop the gross, systematic and widespread human rights abuses in the Indian occu-

Minister lauds Pakistan Rangers' performance, professionalism

ISLAMABAD (APP): A news release issued here. The interior minister offered a special prayer for the martyrs of Kashmir in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day besides the Rangers Martyrs. He was briefed on the professional affairs of Pakistan Rangers Punjab. Major General Atif bin Akram said that Pakistan Rangers Punjab will leave no stone unturned in the performance of professional duties.



JEDDAH: The OIC Secretary General, H.E. Husein Ibrahim Taha graced the Kashmir Solidarity Day event as a 'Chief Guest', organized by the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to OIC at the OIC Secretariat.

Bilawal vows to change Karachi's fortune in five years if PPP elected

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Monday stated that if the people of Karachi elected PPP candidates from at least 20 National Assembly seats, the city's landscape will change within five years. The Pakistan's financial capital 22 and 47 national and provincial assembly seats, respectively. As part of his electoral campaign, Bilawal addressed the public in various areas of Karachi today, delivering speeches in the form of rallies. Speaking at a gathering in Keamari's PT Ground, he expressed his vision for the city, emphasizing the potential changes that could occur if the people choose PPP representatives. "If the people of Karachi elect my representatives, then like local government, the provincial government will also be in our hands, and with your votes, even the federal government will be in our hands," Bilawal declared during his speech. "Give 20 [NA] seats to PPP, and then within five years, we will change Karachi. We will form our government at the federal level and work on historic projects in Karachi. This city will be given representation as it deserves."



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment, Mushaal Husseini Mullick addressing at a poster exhibition organized by National College of Arts (NCA) in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day.

Streets of Barcelona, Paris echo with 'Free Kashmir' & 'Free Palestine' slogans

ISLAMABAD (APP): Qureshi lent her support, affirming the right to self-determination for Kashmiris under international law. She pledged to advocate for their cause in the British Parliament and called for a ceasefire to alleviate the suffering in both Kashmir and Gaza. Safa Chaudary, a Spanish human rights activist, passionately spoke about the shared resistance against occupation forces in Kashmir and Palestine. She confidently asserted that the oppressors would fail, as the global community stood firmly with the aspirations of both regions. Turgay Evren, a Turkish songwriter, and various leaders, along with representatives from Pakistan and Spain, reiterated their commitment to the ongoing struggle. British MP Yasmin

Participation of youth vital to strengthen democracy, political system: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): The prime minister asserted that Pakistan wanted a friendly government in Afghanistan as was the desire of other countries in the region. He was of the view that the government of Taliban was formed in Afghanistan after the world squandered its opportunities despite spending \$ 2 trillion. He said the Taliban forcefully took over the government as the United States and NATO abandoned Afghanistan. To a question, he said during his tenure, he interacted with the students from the educational institutions of Balochistan, Azad Kashmir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and Balochistan, and shared his views with them and listened to their perspectives. He said in Balochistan, armed insurgents were masquerading as civil society and speaking the language of human rights for achieving a certain goal. Those elements never belonged to a mainstream political party but were part of the proscribed organizations in the province, he added.

PM Kakar said some groups in Balochistan wanted to carve out a new country on the basis of identity and through armed struggle, and they had declared a war on the state of Pakistan. The stance of those elements was against morality, and the Constitution and laws of Pakistan, he remarked. The prime minister said most of the people left the country for better jobs and due to economic reasons, however, millions of youth saw their future in Pakistan. Those people who send remittances from abroad were assets of Pakistan and they were contributing to its economic growth, he remarked. He opined that there were many people who wanted to return to Pakistan after living their lives in Europe and North America. In future, more people will return to Pakistan because of their Islamic roots and attachment to eastern values, he observed. He said during his tenure he tried to take decisions in the best interest of Pakistan.



RAWALPINDI: A convoy of army patrols at Rawal road in the city ahead of the upcoming general elections.

Solangi flays terrorist attack on police station in DI Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi strongly condemned the terrorist attack on the police station in DI Khan on Monday. In a statement, the caretaker minister expressed sorrow over the martyrdom of 10 police personnel in the terrorist incident and condoled with the bereaved families of the martyrs.

Ji to continue unwavering support to freedom struggles of Kashmir, Palestine: Siraj

ISLAMABAD (INP): Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan, Siraj-ul-Haq on Monday clarified that party's steadfast commitment to the freedom struggles of Kashmir and Palestine. He emphasized the need for a strong political stance and expressed the party's top priority the independence of Kashmir, while talking to PTV News. Siraj-ul-Haq affirmed the unwavering dedication of Jamaat-e-Islami to the freedom causes of both Kashmir and Palestine. He urged politicians to adopt a solid stance on the issues of Kashmir and Palestine. The JI chief assured that the Pakistani nation would persist in providing unyielding support to the people of Kashmir. Responding to a question, he said JI has a comprehensive plan for Karachi if elected.

Pakistan Navy rescue 9 Indian seamen stranded at sea

ISLAMABAD (PR): Pakistan Navy in coordination with Pakistan Maritime Security Agency saved the lives of 9 Indian seamen at sea. An Ocean Tug SAS-5



registered at St Kitts & Nevis was disabled for last few days near the Indian coast at a position 167 NM South East of Karachi. The tug suffered a failure of its electric generators and had no electrical supply. The Tug began its voyage from Indian port of Debol at Maharashtra on 1st Feb 24 and was heading to Sharjah, UAE. Upon receipt of information, Pakistan Navy in coordination with HQ

PMSS KASHMIR secured the Tug alongside and after three hours of strenuous repair efforts the defect was rectified. Besides technical assistance, medical facilities, fresh water and cooked meals were also provided to the fatigued crew of the Tug.

IPP wants a stable govt after general polls: Tareen

LODHAN (INP): Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) Chief Jahangir Khan Tareen has said that IPP wanted a stable government after general elections 2024 which must complete its five-year term. Addressing an election rally in Lodhran on Monday, Jahangir Tareen wished that as a result of the general elections a strong government should be formed as a weak one always caused problems and uncertainty in the country. He said the culture of rumors against the governments in Pakistan is not a good omen and desired a government which must complete its five years in office. Jahangir Tareen said this time Lodhran election will be historic and the IPP will win with big margin. Elaborating his political agenda if voted into power, Tareen reaffirmed that his party would work on improving economic indicators to address unemployment as well as increase the salaries of those who are already employed.

Faculty members of Pak, China Vocational Institute to get training from China

GWADAR (INP): Pakistan China Vocational and Technical Institute (PCV&TI) has announced to send its faculty members (lecturers and instructors) to China for a 6-month training program in March this year. Shandong Institute of Commerce and Technology, which is among the four stakeholders of the Institute will host the visiting faculty, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Monday. Last month the Institute had hired the services of 16 teachers in fields of Maritime Business and Port Management, Software/Information Technology, E-commerce, Tourism and Hotel Management, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical engineering, English, Mathematics, Statistics and Chinese language.

Work continues on restoration of diversion on Hub river bridge

Independent Report QUETTA: The work has been started on restoration of the diversion built on the Hub river bridge in Hub, on war footing grounds. According to the Assistant Commissioner Hub, Syed Samiullah Agha, the heavy machinery has been made available at the site after the flood water recedes in the area. The Assistant Commissioner Hub visited the site along with Deputy Director of National Highway Authority (NHA) Muhammad Sami. Speaking on the occasion, the Assistant Commissioner said that work has been started on restoration of the diversion passage of the Hub river affected due to the recent rains. He said that the administration is taking steps for resolving the public issues in Hub.



LAHORE: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Chief, Siraj-ul-Haq joins hands with other leaders during demonstration rally to express solidarity with the people of Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) and condemn brutality of Indian Army in Kashmir on the occasion of "Kashmir Solidarity Day", held at Mall road in Lahore.

General elections should be peaceful in country, insists Senator Allama Sajid Mir

Independent Report QUETTA: The Ameer of Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadith, Senator Allama Sajid Mir has stressed that the upcoming general elections should be conducted peacefully and the democratic government is need of the country. Senator Sajid Mir was addressing a press conference here at the Quetta press club on Monday. On the occasion, the candidate of Jamiat Ahle Hadith, Maulana Masood Madni announced to withdraw in favour of JUI Chief Maulana Fazalur Rehman on the NA-265. Senator Sajid Mir said attempts were made to create hatred in the elections. Referring withdrawal of candidate of his party, Sajid Mir mentioned that Maulana Madni has with-